

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE -  
RISK MANAGEMENT DIVISION

# Bits & pieces

Volume 3, Issue 3  
August 2002



## Wellness & Safety Fair

By: David L. Dolinar, Deputy Executive Officer



We have concluded our review of the Wellness & Safety Fair held in June and want to share with you the following information.

Overall the Wellness & Safety Fair was a great success with 3,911 attendees, 89 short of our goal of 4,000, but 95 more than the previous year.

On a scale of 1-5 with 5 being the highest, the following ratings were submitted from attendees:

- Training – Overall Average 4.2
    - Presentation 4.3
    - Stated objectives met 4.3
    - Personal objectives met 4.1
    - Content of classes 4.4
    - Interest level 4.4
    - Classroom participation 4.1
    - Use of visual aids 4.0
    - Physical setting 4.1
    - Recommend to others 4.3
  - Exhibitors 3.2
  - Food 2.9
  - Entertainment 2.9
  - Transportation 1.4
  - Theme and Décor 3.7
  - Management/Registration 3.7
- Overall Average Rating 3.1**

The above ratings were within tenths of a percent compared with the Wellness & Safety Fair 2001. We received many positive comments and suggestions for improvements from participants, instructors, sponsors, registrars, the management team and our own staff. As in prior years, this feedback is always taken into consideration for the upcoming annual events. Thank you again for your participation and comments on the Wellness & Safety Fair.

**The Wellness & Safety Fair 2003 will be scheduled on October 14 –16, 2003** instead of the typical May – June dates we have scheduled for the past six years. This will avoid any budget preparation activities, vacations should be completed as school resumes in September, there are minimal conflicts with other events and it should be cooler weather. Look for additional information in future editions of this newsletter, as planning efforts will begin in early 2003. **Mark your calendars now for October 14 –16, 2003.**

**What lies behind us and  
what lies ahead of us  
are tiny matters  
compared to what lives  
within us.**

*~Oliver Wendell Holmes*

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE -  
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1010 10th Street, Suite 5900  
P.O. Box 1723  
Modesto, CA 95353

Phone: 209-525-5710  
Fax: 209-525-5779

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# Protect Yourself from Harmful Rays

By: Dixie Barrigar, R.N., medical Review Nurse

Well, here we are again, smack dab in the middle of summer in the Central Valley; long days and lots of warm weather and sunshine. But, like everything else, too much of a good thing can be bad for you. Extended periods in the sun can cause sunburn, premature aging and skin cancer. It is vitally important that you take steps to protect yourself from the harmful ultra violet (UV) light produced by the sun that causes the damage.

There's no doubt about it that ultra violet light damages the skin. Damage caused by UV light is cumulative. That means that the sunburn you received when you were a child and the great, dark tans you worked on each summer damaged your skin and those effects are still with you. While UV rays are inevitable, you can limit your exposure to them in a variety of ways. The UV index is one tool to help you monitor your UV exposure by providing a gauge of the intensity of the UV rays for the upcoming day.

By checking the UV index, you can know when to take special precautions

when going outside and plan your outdoor activities accordingly. The UV index is as follows:

- 0-2 Minimal (more than 60 minutes of exposure to damage skin)
- 3-4 Low (45 minutes to damage skin)
- 5-6 Moderate (30 minutes to damage skin)
- 7-9 High (15 minutes to damage skin)
- 10+ Very high (less than 10 minutes to damage skin)

To check the UV index in your area, visit the National Weather Service's website at [www.weather.gov](http://www.weather.gov). It is under the heading Safety Tips.

Although you should always do everything you can to limit overexposure, you should be even more careful when the UV index is moderate or higher.

The following are tips for protecting your skin from UV damage:

- Limit the amount of time you are out in the sun. Stay out of the sun at midday when rays are the strongest, usually between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Infants under 6 months old should stay out of the sun

completely.

- Cover up. Wear long-sleeved shirts and pants whenever possible, as well as sunglasses and a wide-brimmed hat. Most cases of skin cancer occur on the parts of the body not covered by clothing.
- Wear a broad-spectrum sunscreen with a SPF of 15 or higher. Reapply it every two hours when working, exercising, or playing outside. No, applying SPF 15 twice does not give the protection of SPF 30.
- Don't be fooled by cloudy weather. Approximately 80 percent of the sun's rays can penetrate through clouds. Sand, water, snow and concrete can reflect up to 85 percent of the sun's rays.
- Avoid using a tanning booth or sun lamp. The UV rays used in these methods are similar to the sun and can cause similar damage.
- Watch your medications. Certain medications can make skin burn more easily so be sure to check with your doctor or pharmacist about medications you are taking.

## AED Testing update

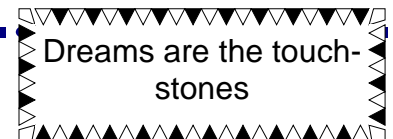
By: Kevin Watson, safety analyst/trainer



For some time now we have been working to have the ninety-day AED testing requirement modified to once a year testing. This process was slowed first by the events of September 11, 2001. We have now been informed that due

to other more pressing issues in the state of California, (the budget) the legislature has not, as of this writing, modified the ninety day AED testing requirement. Until this legislation moves forward we will be required to continue doing the quarterly AED testing for all Authorized Users. We are as

disappointed as you are with these events. So, until further notice, we can all look forward to continued AED testing. Thank you for your continued support in this matter, and rest assured that we will continue to work to move this legislation forward as well as keeping you advised.



## Locker Loss Fills Backpacks

By: David Becker, safety officer

Is your child carrying a heavy load of homework? A recent study indicates children are packing around heavier loads than ever in their backpacks. Not only are schools increasing the amounts of homework, but also some have eliminated lockers at school as an anti-violence strategy. This means the youngsters have to carry their books

and belongings around all day. Keep an eye on your child for signs the backpack is too heavy, including a struggle to get it on or off, complaints of discomfort and changes in posture. Supply the child with a pack designed to distribute the weight across the shoulders and to the hips. Set up a routine with your



child for a daily inventory of the backpack so he or she is not carrying unnecessary items such as a book that is not needed that day. Carrying too heavy a load can cause a back injury that could haunt the child for life. Remember, safety practices and principles begin at home.

# Questions & Answers on Personal Safety

By: David Becker, safety officer

Q: What are the most common misconceptions about safety?

A: The big one is, "It can't happen to me." Crime happens to anyone, in any neighborhood, in any city.

Q: What type of victim do criminals look for?

A: The easiest one.

Q: What can you do to appear less vulnerable?

A: Walk with your head up. Use body language, be self-confident, make eye contact, even speak in passing to the person.

Q: How can you prepare for an attack?

A: Have a plan.

Q: What should your plan include?

A: First, deny privacy. Don't let the bad guy get you alone. Don't walk alone.

Q: What about places where you find yourself alone, like parking garages and elevators?

A: Learn to manage potentially dangerous places. In the restroom, check under the doors for shoes that don't belong there. Avoid secluded ATM machines. In a parking structure, if possible, get an escort to your vehicle. Park as close to the door as you can or near a lighted area.

Q: Don't like who's on the elevator?

A: Don't get on. If you're on alone and you don't like who gets on, get off.

Q: But won't you appear paranoid, or possibly offend someone who's harmless?

A: Don't worry about what the guy on the elevator thinks.

Q: Should you ever get into a car with an attacker?

A: Never, under any circumstances, get into a car with a person who you don't know or let the person take you anywhere.

Q: What if the person has a weapon?

A: Escape if you can.

Q: What else should your plan include?

A: Attract attention.

Q: Should you ever fight back?

A: If someone's trying to get you into a car, resist. If he just wants your wallet, car or jewelry give them up.

Q: Do you recommend carrying a self-defense spray?

A: I like pepper spray. It causes excruciating pain but no permanent damage. The down side is it does not work on everyone.



## THINGS YOU CAN DO NOW TO PREVENT BACK PAIN

Submitted by: Ed fenton, liability claims/insurance manager

Adapted from the Agency for Health-care Policy and Research (AHCPR) Guidelines

- Make sure your work surface is at a comfortable height for you.
- Wear comfortable, low-heeled shoes.
- Use a chair with good lower back support that may recline slightly.



- If you must sit for long periods of time, try resting your feet on the floor or on a low stool, whichever is more comfortable.
- If you must drive long distances, try using a pillow or rolled-up towel behind the small of



your back. Also, be sure to stop often and walk around for a few minutes.

- If you have trouble sleeping, try sleeping on your back with a pillow under your knees, or sleep on your side with your knees bent and a pillow between your knees.

### Confused About Lab Tests?

Submitted by: Dixie Barrigar RN

While doing some reading recently, I ran across a great web site for employees looking to decipher the clinical lab tests ordered by their doctors. It is LabTestsOnline.org, a non-commercial site run by laboratory professionals that provides information on common blood and screening tests, plus facts about the diagnosis and treatment of common conditions and diseases. You can search by lab test, age group or condition. Check it out at: [www.labtestsonline.org](http://www.labtestsonline.org).

# Stanislaus county health insurance OPEN ENROLLMENT

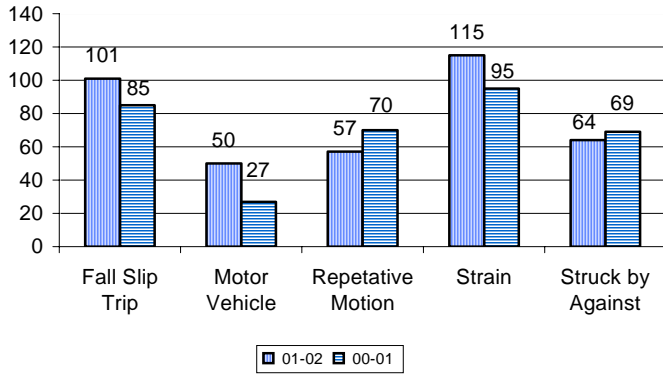
## September 2002

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2 Labor Day	3	4 Pay Day	5	6	7
8 Grandparents Day 	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18 Pay Day 	19 Open Enrollment begins	20	21
22	23 HSA Main Conference Room 9:00 am to Noon 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm	24	25 1010 10th Street Basement 9:00 am to Noon 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm	26 CSA Cafeteria Training Room 9:00 am to 6:00 pm	27	28
29	30					

## October 2002

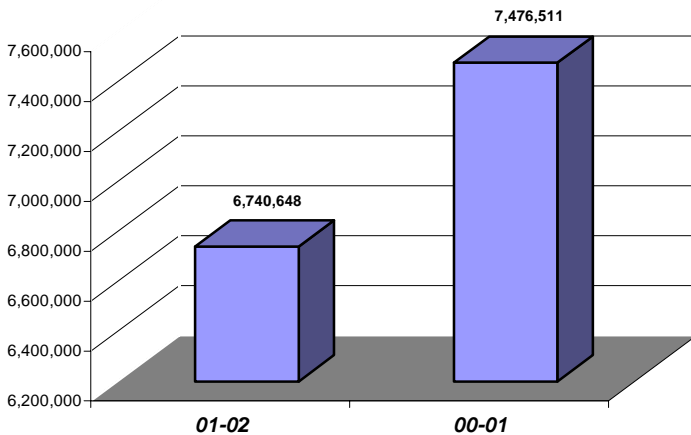
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 Sheriff's Conf #152 6:30 am to 9:30 am 3:30 pm to 6:30 pm	2 Pay Day	3 Ag Center 8:30 am to Noon	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14 Columbus Day 	15	16 Pay Day National Boss Day	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25 Open Enrollment Ends—Forms to Personnel Clerks	26
27 Daylight Saving Time Ends 	28	29	30 Pay Day	31 Halloween 		

**Cause of Loss Most Frequent**



The chart below illustrates the number of hours actually worked on a County wide basis for fiscal year 2001-2002 compared to 2000-2001. The decrease in the number of hours worked can be directly related to the Courts and StanCOG breaking away from the County.

**Hours Worked**

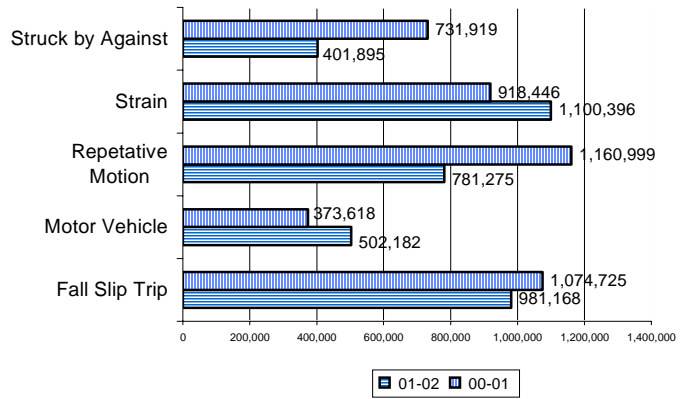


The final chart on this page lists the ratio of 100 employees to claims with lost time for 2001-2002 compared to 2000-2001. This ratio can be used to compare the County's lost time claims against any other organization. While we don't have a national average to compare to other governmental agencies, the national average for service organizations in 1999 was 1.5. This ratio is calculated by taking the number of claims where employees lost time from work due to the injury and divide that number by the number of hours worked multiplied by 200,000.

Why is 200,000 used? The average work week is 40 hours. If an employee works 50 weeks (two weeks off for vacation and/or sick leave) then  $40 \times 50 = 2000$ . This is then multiplied by 100 to determine the lost time claims per 100 employee ratio.

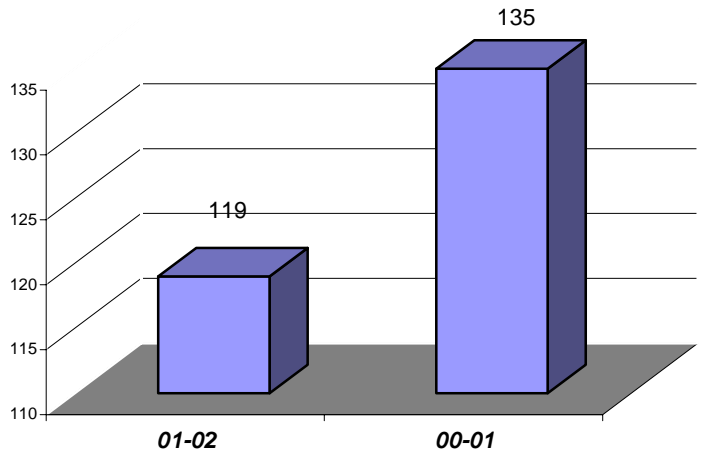
The Chart on the left illustrates the top five most frequent causes for injury. The chart below illustrates the associated cost.

**Cause of Loss - Severity**



The chart below illustrates the number of on-the-job injuries that resulted in lost time from work during the fiscal year 2001-2002 compared to 2000-2001. A contributing factor to the reduction in claims is again related to the Courts and StanCOG breaking away from the County.

**Lost Time Claims**



**Claims per 100 Employee Ratio**

