

Bits & Pieces

May 2001

Volume 2 Issue 2

WELLNESS AND SAFETY ON YOUR MIND?

By: David L. Dolanar,
Deputy Executive Officer



In just a few short weeks, the Wellness and Safety Fair will be upon us. This is a unique opportunity for all County employees to receive required training for compliance with the Stanislaus County Safety Manual.

The fair also provides you with information on wellness tips on how to feel better personally, and the activities you should pursue and those you should avoid.

The Board of Supervisors sponsors this event for **YOU** to assist **YOU** in being safe at work and generally healthy in your lives. This is one way the Board's goal, **to ensure a safe, healthy community**, is advocated and encouraged. It also addresses part of the Board's Mission of **promoting public health and safety**.

This year's event has been improved greatly due to your feedback from past year's fairs. We hope you will find many opportunities to participate and learn from the training classes and to network with vendors at the exhibitor's hall.



If you haven't already registered, it isn't too late!!! Please contact your department Safety Registrar. Register now or if your schedule appears currently to conflict on the days of the fair, on-site registration will be available at the Modesto Center Plaza.

Stanislaus County Changes Life Insurance Carrier

By: Barbara Cooper,
Employee Benefits Manager

Spring is a time of change and effective April 1, 2001, the County has changed its Life Insurance Company from Lincoln Financial to **ING Employee Benefits** (formerly ReliaStar Life Insurance). This change does not effect life, supplemental life insurance or management long-term disability benefits or premiums. The Employee Benefits Unit has given new enrollment, change and evidence of good health forms to all the Department's payroll/HR clerks for **new employees**.

Effective 7/01/01, ING will increase the premium 5 percent for the County's basic life insurance as well as the voluntary

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AUTOMATIC EXTERNAL DEFIBRILLATOR PROGRAM

By: Dixie Barrigar, R.N.
AED Program Administrator

Each year in the United States alone, an estimated 350,000 people die of Sudden Cardiac Arrest. That is nearly 1,000 people each day! Sudden Cardiac Arrest occurs when the heart's electrical impulse suddenly becomes chaotic, causing the heart to abruptly stop pumping blood effectively. The victim becomes unresponsive, has no detectable pulse and stops breathing. The only definitive treatment to restore effective heart rhythm is defibrillation; CPR alone is not effective. If a victim does not receive defibrillation in the first 4 minutes of the event, chances for survival are decreased by 60%. These facts are indeed sobering.

But now for the good news, the placement of Automatic External

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Safety Training Video's available:

Employee Safety:

- * Back Safety
- * Office Ergonomics
- * Powered Hand Tool Safety

Management Training:

- * Return the Injured Worker to the Job
- * How to Investigate an Accident

More Training Video's available.
See your Safety Manual

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Safe Boating, Mail Order Medication
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Automatic Defibrillators

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Practice Workplace Safety At Home

Submitted by: David Becker, Safety Officer

Many home-based workers don't think about workplace safety, yet the concerns that face employees at "regular" offices and business locations are just as real in the home. The American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA) recommends a few precautions to make the home office a safe place to work:

- Set up your computer workstation properly. Place your computer on a standard-height desk, preferably one that is recommended for computers. Choose a standard, five-legged office chair to minimize the risk of injury.
- Work in an area with proper lighting, bright enough to read your documents, but no more than 10 times brighter than the monitor. Add a glare filter to the monitor. To decrease eyestrain, work with at least some natural light.
- Reduce the risk of fire by not overloading electrical circuits and by keeping a fire extinguisher handy. Just in case, have a fire escape route planned.
- Keep your indoor air quality high by reducing the presence of tobacco smoke or excessive dust or allergens. Work in a well-ventilated area. If necessary, add a small fan to your workspace. Also, be sure to install a carbon monoxide detector.

- Walls, woodwork and trim should be tested for lead-based paint if your property was built prior to 1977. Lead exposure can cause irritability, poor muscle coordination and nerve damage.
- If you have small children, babies or pets in your home, either childproof your office as you would the rest of your house or lock the door to the workspace. *

Set a Course for Safe Boating

By: David Becker, Safety Officer

When the Titanic sank, 1,517 people died. When the Exxon Valdez spilled 11 million gallons of oil into Prince William Sound, 1,200 miles of shoreline suffered. The size of these disasters grab our attention in ways that recreational boating incidents never will. While small boat mishaps don't damage entire coastlines, all too often they do cause injury or death.



According to the U.S. Coast Guard statistics, some 12.5 million recreational craft, were registered in 1998; about one for every 21 Americans. Due to an increase in boater popularity, incidents are on the rise.

"I cannot say whether things will get better if we change,' what I can say is they must change if they are

Are you ready for the waterways? Find out with this boating-safety quiz.

1. **In 1998, how many people died as a result of boating incidents?**
 - a 2,531
 - b 815
 - c 901
2. **What percentage of boating fatalities involves alcohol?**
 - a 75 percent
 - b 50 percent
 - c 27 percent
3. **True or False? Large boats don't have to be equipped with personal flotation devices (PFDs) or life jackets.**
4. **True or False? Weather or other uncontrollable factors cause most boating incidents.**
5. **Which month brings the greatest risk of dying in a boating incident?**
 - a December
 - b July
 - c August
6. **What should all boaters leave behind?**
 - a Fishing gear
 - b Spouses
 - c A float plan
7. **Which of these boating incidents account for the most deaths?**
 - a Fires on board
 - b Falls overboard or capsizing
 - c Collisions
8. **True or False? Boaters on small inland lakes don't need to carry many supplies.**

Mail Order Medication

By Dixie Barrigar, Medical Review Nurse

If you are taking a medication on a regular basis and expect to continue for an extended period of time and your medication is related to an **occupational injury or illness**, have I got a plan for you!

Disability Management has arranged for your medication to be sent directly to your home at no cost to you. This is a great way to help ease the stress in your busy lives. Just think: Never running out of your medication because you forgot to call the pharmacy or go pick it up, and no more monthly trips to the pharmacy.

If you are interested, please contact me at 525/5775.

Check your answers on page 3

**Check out our new Website on the County's Homepage
www.co.stanislaus.ca.us/riskmgt**

Life Insurance Changes continued from page 1

supplemental life insurance plans. The new rates remain in effect until 7/01/03.

Employee Benefits will hold a special open enrollment for Life Insurance with an effective date of 7/01/01, to provide all employees an opportunity to decrease their voluntary supplemental life insurance levels. More information will be communicated to all employees as we get closer to July.

The good news.....existing employees do not have to complete any new paperwork. Within the next few months, the County will receive a supply of Insurance Certificates and will forward them to all Payroll/HR clerks for distribution to employees. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the Employee Benefits Unit at 525-5717 or GroupWise us at: Benefits. *



Safe Boating Quiz continued from page 2

Answers:

- 1) b
- 2) c
- 3) False
- 4) False
- 5) a. Boaters face a greater risk of dying during fall and winter than in summer. Besides colder weather and water, fewer boaters and patrols are in the area to provide assistance.
- 6) c
- 7) b. People who spend a day fishing with a six-pack also have to relieve themselves. When they stand up in the boat, it's not uncommon for them to fall overboard. It's no joke-50 percent of drunken men who drown have their zipper unzipped.
- 8) False

Ergonomics

By: Peggy J. Huntsinger, Disability Manager

We talk about ergonomics a great deal, but what is ergonomics? According to Webster's definition "an applied science concerned with designing and arranging things people use so that the people and things interact most efficiently and safely - called also human engineering". If we break down the word into root form, Ergo is work and Nomics is the study of. I think all too often we get wrapped up in making people conform to their work environment rather than fitting the work environment to the person or people performing the job.

The County has spent considerable sums of money buying "ergonomic" equipment, yet we still see a great deal of "ergonomic" claims. It is great that we purchased the necessary equipment and have prepared training classes that are available to all

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BIKE SAFETY

By: Ed Fenton, Liability Claims / Insurance Manager

Now that the weather is getting nice and many of you want to ride your bikes to work or just get some exercise, here are some tips to keep you safe.

1. **Always ride on the RIGHT. Remember to go with the flow. Never, ever ride against traffic. Cars will not be expecting to find a biker when they round a corner or go over a hill.**
2. **Ride single file. When passing other bikers or pedestrians, let them know your position by shouting out something like "On your left!"**
3. **Always check behind you when changing lanes.**
4. **Watch out for dangerous things in the road way. Road litter, potholes, gravel and storm drains can cause you to lose control.**
5. **Stop at all stop signs and at all street lights. Be careful at crossroads.**
6. **Always signal before making a left or right turn. To make a left turn: look behind you, hold your left arm straight out and proceed carefully. For a right turn, hold your left arm out and up in an "L" shape.**
7. **Keep control of your bike. Don't swerve or make sudden turns. Drivers may not be able to react fast enough to avoid colliding with you.**
8. **Ride at least 3 feet away from parked cars. Someone could open their door unexpectedly and well, nail you to their door.**
9. **Listen for cars approaching from the side or behind you.**
10. **Don't follow cars too closely (you may be in their blind spot).**
11. **Know your road signs and obey them.**

Occupational Medical Providers

On the Job Injury or Illness

by: *Peggy Huntsinger,
Disability Manager*

We are conducting an employee satisfaction survey with respect to the performance of our existing occupational medical panel. If you have strong opinions either way, please contact our office and let your voice be heard.



We have added the Urgent Care facility with Health Services Agency located at 830 Scenic Drive and Sutter Gould Medical Group to our list of accepted Occupational Medical Providers. Remember to call the medical facility to schedule an appointment.

Health Services Agency
830 Scenic Drive
Modesto, CA 95350
558-7629

Sutter Gould
600 Coffee Rd
Modesto, CA 95355
521-6038

US Health Works
1524 McHenry Ave., Suite 500
Modesto, CA 95350
575-5801

California Occupational Physicians
1500 Florida Ave.
Modesto, CA 95350
572-2114

Memorial Prompt Care
1700 Coffee Road
Modesto, CA 95355
526-4500

Ergonomics continued from page 3

staff. What we need to work on now is the reinforcement of knowledge learned at the ergonomic training. We need to adjust our equipment to fit our individual needs. We purchase ergonomic chairs that can be adjusted to fit both the particular task and the individual using the chair. We need to listen to our bodies when we first feel pain and readjust our bodies or take a task break, etc.

Rather than just focus on ergonomics let's bring bionomics into the picture. If ergonomics is the study of work then bionomics is the study of the body. Because we use and/or abuse our bodies approximately 16 hours a day, that is if we allow ourselves 8 hours of rest a day, then we need to concentrate how we use our bodies both on the job and off.

A micro trauma is a minute injury. While a micro trauma may seem insignificant, thousands of micro traumas occur to our bodies each day. If you take the example of a slight bend of a ballpoint pen, the first bend is insignificant, but make the same bend over and over and eventually the pen will break. The same is true for our bodies. While our bodies are of superior design and have healing capabilities, we still have to take care of them. They

Defibrillator Program continued from page 1

Defibrillators throughout County facilities are now in full swing. Many people have been trained but we need even more people trained in the use of this life saving device. Actually, it is easier to learn how to use an AED than to learn CPR.

Following is a current list of the locations where AED's have been placed based on a logistic survey prepared by an outside independent firm. It is important that you know where the AED in your area is located. Even if you are not trained in its use, you can provide a vital service by getting it to where it is needed, and contact an individual in your department who has been trained.

Please feel free to call me at 525-5775

the AED Program. To register for the CPR/AED Training, please call Pat Wade at 525-5781. *

Automatic Defibrillators Ready for Action	
1010 10th Street	1) Security Desk, 1st floor 2) Reception area, 3rd floor 3) Medical Review Nurse's desk, 5th floor
Agricultural Commissioner	1st floor by fire extinguisher at base of stairs
Aging/Veteran	Break Room by First Aid Kit
BH & RS	Reception Desk, Bldg. D
1) Children's System of Care	Reception Area
2) West Modesto Regional	Reception Area
3) Turlock Counseling Center	Clerical Area by First Aid Kit
Community Parks	Parks Office
Court House	Main Entrance by X-Ray
CSA	1) Hallway behind reception, 1st floor 2) Motorpool 3) Outside John Turner's Office
District Attorney	Communication area, 2nd floor
Fleet Services	Fleet Services Office
Sheriff's Office	Coroner's Office

