

Bits & pieces

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Wellness & Safety Fair 2002

By: David L. Dolanar, Deputy Executive Officer

Are you ready to “Be A Safety Star”? If you haven’t registered yet, its not too late! Talk to your Safety Representative to find out who your registrar is and ask them to get your registration processed! The Wellness & Safety Fair 2002 is only 20 days away!

The days you need to reserve for this specialized training and information are May 21, 22, 23. The information you receive will help teach you to be more healthy, well and safe at

work and at home. Along with the training and information that will be provided to all attendees, there will be approximately 50 health, wellness and safety related exhibitors set up at the Modesto Centre Plaza prepared to show YOU their products and services. In addition, a great lunch will be served on the day you are attending and there will be lots of fun entertainment including the ever popular henna artists, caricaturists and many more “stars”.

The exhibit hall will be open on Tuesday from 8:30 am – 4:00 pm and from 9:00 am – 4:00 pm on Wednesday and Thursday. Lunch will be served from 11:00 am – 2:00 pm each day.

We look forward to seeing you again at this year’s exciting event for more training, convenience of exploring new products and excellent networking opportunities.



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Dragon Speech

By: peggy huntsinger, Disability manager

Melissa Moe and Casi Persons in the CEO-Risk Management Division are talking to their computers. No they have not gone over the deep end, they are actually getting their work done by talking rather than keying. Dragon Naturally Speaking V6.0 converts the computer operator’s speech into written words. By wearing a special headset they are able to easily transition between speaking to their computers and speaking to their customers over the phone. Once their

PCs are fully trained, that is right they are training their PCs to recognize their voices, they will be able to type as fast as 80 words per minute. This is accomplished through the combination of voice and actual keystrokes. Another way that they have found to increase their productivity is through the use of Macros. Macros are a short cut to tell the system to generate a formatting command to issuing a standard letter.

The funniest thing about watching these two work, is when they are telling the computer what to do - not just the typing part - but when giving a command *STRIKE THIS, CAP THAT, MOVE THIS...*



**Watch you thoughts, they become words,
Watch your words, they become actions,
Watch your actions, they become habits,
Watch your habits, they become character,
Watch your character, it becomes your destiny.**

Protect your hearing

By: Dixie Barrigar, RN, Medical Review nurse

Noise damages the ears in two ways. It can strike in an instant or it can develop slowly over decades. A blast from a high-powered hunter's rifle can rip apart the ear's inner tissues and leave scars that will interfere with hearing for life. Any sound louder than 85 decibels (dB) can be tolerated for only a certain period of time without damage.

To calculate 85 dB, consider the sound of a vacuum cleaner. At a rating of 80dB, there's virtually no limit to the amount of time you can hear it continuously without damage. At 90 dB—the rating for most power lawn mowers—you could suffer hearing damage after eight hours of continuous exposure.

Consider these other sounds, their decibel ratings and time limits for safe exposure.

Power Drill	100 dB	2 hours
Rock Concert	120 dB	7.5 minutes
Jackhammer	140 dB	3.8 minutes
Gunshot	140 dB	None

To preserve your hearing, doctors at the League for the Hard of Hearing in New York City recommend that you:

- Wear earplugs when you're in a noisy environment to reduce 20 to 30 dB.
- Give your ears a rest after several hours of noise.

Disability Management recommends that if your job requires you to be exposed to loud noises, check with your supervisor to see if annual screening is necessary. Also, when using hearing protection, be sure to check the amount of protection afforded by the method you use and that you are using it correctly so you are assured of getting enough of a reduction in noise level to adequately safeguard your hearing from damage.

What To Do When You Experience A "Life Change"?

By: Barbara cooper, employee benefits manager



Whether you are getting married, having a baby or getting divorced.....If you have County benefits, your benefits clock is **ticking!** Hurry.....pick up the phone and talk to your Payroll/HR clerk. The clock is **ticking!**

Employees who are covered on Stanislaus County benefits (health, dental or

vision) have a **30 day window** to add or delete dependents on their insurance coverage. The clock starts **ticking** on the date of the **event**. The date of your marriage, date of your baby's birth or date your divorce is finalized, **these are event dates.....your benefits clock is ticking!!** Your Payroll/HR clerk will assist you by providing the necessary change forms and a blank 2002 Stanis-

laus County Benefit Enrollment form. The completed forms (along with a marriage certificate, birth certificate or finalized divorce decree....whatever is appropriate) should be sent to the Employee Benefits Unit in the CEO-Risk Management Division for processing within the 30 day window. **Remember.....the benefits clock is ticking.**

Home Safety / Home Security

Submitted by Ed Fenton, Liability Claims/Insurance Manager

1. Various sources indicate that simply displaying WINDOW DECALS and/or yard signs can decrease your chances of being burglarized by up to 75%.
2. You can help secure your WINDOWS from being slid open by placing pins in the window frames.
3. A solid door with a double deadbolt lock can delay a burglar; and time to a thief is synonymous to their own safety.
4. A piece of wood placed in the window track or pins through the window frames prevent SLIDING GLASS doors from sliding open for the wrong person.
5. To get a DOG or not to get a dog (for protection), "that is the question". The

real thing (guard dog) may protect you from burglary, but may cause a danger to others. Modern technology now provides many simulated dog alarm models ranging from motion to noise vibration sensors.

6. You may want to first try any kind of alarm before committing to it because "FALSE ALARMS" can become a nuisance as well as potentially dangerous. In lieu of contracting for a professionally installed security system and service, you can choose very carefully from different "do-it-yourself" remedies.
7. WIRELESS systems are often the easiest to install, but often are also the fastest to cause false alarms. These sys-

tems can be hooked up to a central monitoring system and there are many available.

8. Check with the local police for any advice they may be able to offer before you buy and especially, before you install a system. FALSE ALARMS for police have become a national epidemic and one that you don't want to contribute to. You may need to register your system, depending on local laws.

9. A strong motivator to a buying security system is that most home owner INSURANCE policy premiums will be REDUCED. Make sure to first consult with your insurance agent before making a final decision as to the type of system you want.

AED Update

By Kevin Watson, Safety Analyst/Trainer

The Stanislaus County AED program is up and running. We would like to take this opportunity to let everyone know some of the particulars as far as placements, testing and law changes.

First, the best news, SB 911 has been modified to eliminate the 90 day testing requirement. This should take effect in the fourth quarter of this year. We are geared up to handle the testing for the first 3 quarters, but it looks like after that, it is going to become an annual event. The fourth quarter can not come quick enough!! With approximately 800 Authorized Users, keeping on top of testing every 90 days is a major project. I think I can speak for everyone involved when I say that testing once per year will be greatly appreciated.

Also on the legal side of things, Cal/OSHA has gone on record as saying it would like to see all employers have AED's available. Historically, what OSHA would like to see today, becomes a requirement in the future. As for Stanislaus County, we are ahead of the curve on this one!

This brings us to the next topic, placements. There are currently 92 AED units placed throughout the county.

They are located from La Grange to Del Puerto Canyon and Salida to Turlock. There are only a few more to place and as soon as some training issues are completed, they will be placed. If you are in a facility that does not have an AED and you think it should, contact your Safety Representative.

There are a couple of questions that have been missed by a large number of people. We would like to take this opportunity to review the questions and remind everyone of the rationale involved.

If you encounter a victim that has a nitroglycerin patch, you should carefully remove the patch, dry the victims chest of any moisture or medication and then attach the AED electrodes (pads). The rationale is that the electrodes need to be in full contact with the chest and a medication patch will interfere with that contact.

If an AED is immediately available, it is vital that it be used before starting CPR. This is true because for every minute that an AED is delayed, there will be approximately a 10% reduction in the successful outcome of the event. The key is, is the AED immediately

available? If the AED is a minute or two away, then it is not immediately available and CPR should be started.

You should always check the person to see if he or she is breathing first. Should they not be breathing, then you must give two slow breathes to assure that the airway is open. If the airway is open, then check for circulation. Remember that rescue breathing is not the same as CPR.

When using an AED under medical control, the rescuer is operating under standing orders from a licensed physician. In our case this is Dr. Walker and he is responsible for the AED care rendered. Dr. Walker is kept updated on testing issues as well as training issues because we are all operating, as stated, under his standing orders. If there are any questions regarding what is proper use, refer to Stanislaus County AED Protocol.

The vast majority of all people taking the AED quarterly tests pass. Between 25 and 43% are passing with perfect scores ! Great job and keep up the good work.



When one door of happiness closes, another opens; but often we look so long at the closed door that we do not see the one which has opened for us."

-Helen Keller

Walk Your Way To Better Health

By Dixie Barrigar, RN, Medical Review Nurse

Walking can add years to your life and life to your years. And it couldn't be easier. You don't need to join a health club, wear special equipment or go into training to reap the rewards.

Walking conditions your heart and lungs and raises your body's ability to use oxygen more efficiently. Fact: In one study, women who walked briskly (3-4 miles per hour) at least three hours a week cut their risk of heart attack and stroke by more than half.

Walking helps beat other health problems, too. It reduces your risk of some forms of cancer and osteoporosis. It



helps fight the battle of the bulge, taking off fat and building muscle. Walking can even help people with diabetes reduce or eliminate their need for medication.

Walking can burn about as many calories per mile as jogging does. But it delivers only about a quarter of the jolt, so it's much easier on your joints and muscles.

Walking is easy on your mind, too, since it lessens stress and lightens depression. Beginning walkers usually report that they feel better, sleep better and that their mental outlook improves.

Best of all walking has the lowest drop-out rate of any form of exercise. So you're more likely to stick with it and get all these benefits and more, like better digestion, improved regularity and lower blood pressure.

There's nothing to it. Just put on a sturdy, comfortable pair of shoes and go. How fast should you go? That's easy, too. Just use the "talk test." Move at a steady clip that makes your heart beat faster and causes you to breathe more deeply—but doesn't leave you too breathless to carry on a conversation. You'll do yourself a world of good!



**Chief Executive Office -
Risk Management Division**

1010 10th Street, Suite 5900
P.O. Box 1723
Modesto, CA 95353
Phone: 209-525-5710
Fax: 209-525-5779



MAY 2002

◆ **Mental Health Month**

Promote mental health awareness in your workplace. The National Mental Health Association (NMHA) encourages mental health awareness activities in May. For more information visit their website @ www.nmha.org

◆ **Employee Health & Fitness Day —
May 16**

Celebrate the importance of a healthy work place. Visit National Association for Health and Fitness @ www.physicalfitness.org for ideas and resources.



Did you know...



- ~It is impossible to lick your elbow.
- ~A crocodile can't stick its tongue out.
- ~A shrimp's heart is in their head.
- ~People say "Bless You" when you sneeze because when you sneeze, your heart stops for a millisecond.
- ~If you sneeze too hard, you can fracture a rib.
- ~It is physically impossible for pigs to look up into the sky.
- ~In every episode of Seinfeld there is a Superman somewhere.
- ~The bone in the ear is the only bone that is fully grown at birth.
- ~Sealed envelope—Put in the freezer for a few hours, then slide a knife under the flap. The envelope can then be resealed. (hmmm..)
- ~Cure for headaches: Take a lime, cut it in half and rub it on your forehead. The throbbing will go away.
- ~One cup of black tea has enough fluoride to help prevent tooth decay - and green tea has twice as much.
- ~A cup of coffee flavored yogurt contains about as much caffeine as a 12-ounce can of cola.
- ~Einstein couldn't speak fluently when he was nine. His parents thought he might be retarded.
- ~In Los Angeles, there are fewer people than there are automobiles.
- ~There are approximately ten million bricks in the Empire State Building.
- ~From space, the brightest man-made place is Las Vegas, Nevada.
- ~Over 75% of people who read this will try to lick their elbow!!!

BITS & PIECES SURVEY RESULTS



Following is a summary of the results of the survey which appeared in the February 2002 issue. The first three statements were rated using 5 being the highest and 1 the lowest. A summary of comments follow for the last two questions.

The newsletter has been informative to me as an employee.

5 – 44.4%; 4 – 44.4 %; 3 – 11.2 %; 2 – 0; 1 – 0

The articles included in the newsletter are relevant and timely.

5 – 39% 4 – 44.4%; 3 – 16.6%; 2 – 0; 1 – 0

The newsletter has provided tips and advice that I can or have utilized.

5 – 55.5%; 4 – 38.8%; 3 – 5.5%; 2 – 0; 1 – 0

What do you like most about the newsletter?

- Various articles and the trivia.
- Stories about heroes, health tips, Fun Facts/Did you know.
- There is always something I can use from one article ...
- Human interest stories.
- Layout and information.
- Information informed style of writing – done by real people.
- Important and useful information and also "fun facts".

- Practical information, humor, inspirational, true stories.
- I read "Bits and Pieces" from cover to cover... you have improved a lot...keep up the good work.
- Enjoyed and appreciated the article about a Child's Life is saved.
- Practical information that I do use.

What suggestions do you have for improvement?

- List classes in the community that deal with chosen house topics.
- Highlight programs involving county employees involved in community service.
- The lightning article.
- Poetry corner.
- Would like more of the "personal" points of employees from different departments.... More people need to know this.
- How folks are applying the things they have learned ... I can learn to do for myself...
- More information on how the County as a whole is doing in avoiding injuries.
- Thanks, great, good work, etc. (Seven comments.)

We thank you for your positive responses and we will strive to improve the newsletter using your feedback.