

# BITS & PIECES

Volume 10, Issue 2

May 2009

## Responsibility

By David L. Dolanar, Deputy Executive Officer

I often wonder if we will ever see the end of budget cuts which are now necessary to fund the basic essentials of operating a level of government that the public has grown accustomed to enjoying. I also wonder if the economy will ever improve to a level where people can enjoy life without carrying a burden for expenses that used to be routine and are now basic requirements to our survival.



In these hard economic times we must show more respect for others and become responsible for the things we say and do. It just isn't enough to act out our responsibilities without showing care and meaningful actions. Responsibility is said to be a commitment without.

The ancient Greeks highlighted the importance of responsibility with the tale of an aged sculptor. The sculptor was carefully carving the capital to set high atop a temple column. A passerby asked why he exerted such care for something that would be set so far from scrutiny: "No eye will see the detail of your work!"

"But God will see it," the sculptor is said to have replied, turning back to his rock and tools. Responsibility is finishing each task in such a way that it is ready for inspection, even if it seems

unlikely the detail will be checked by human eyes.

Responsibility is also a reward at a later time! A farmer diligently plants in the spring and responsibly tends through the summer to harvest in the fall. Responsibility does not labor only where the reward is immediate. Responsible efforts to do what needs to be done because it is *right*, trusting that in the long run, good character always yields the best results.

President Woodrow Wilson said, "Duty is a very handsome word.....but let every man look at it that he comprehend what it really means. It conveys an obligation from within, not merely from without. We have not done our duty, we have not even earned our wages, when we have done merely that which we were obliged to do. We have done our duty only when we have done that which we know completes the service, when we have put the best that was in us into the task, our hearts....."

We *are* up to the task of being responsible Stanislaus County employees, to measure up to the services expected by the public, especially during hard economic times, and to care and be sensitive to the circumstances that surround us.

### Inside this issue:

Getting Wise with Your Eyes	2
The New Pepsi Challenge	2
Beach Safety	3
Lower Your Breast Cancer Risk	3
Did You Know...	4
Safety Corner—Bites & Stings	4

### Donate Blood

**Why Give?... Every two seconds someone in the United States needs blood. That's a lot of blood. But only 5% of the eligible US population donates blood in any given year. Healthy donors are the only source of blood. Currently there is no substitute. Your donation can make the difference between life and death.**

**Sign up to donate now!  
Call 1-800-GIVE-LIFE or  
go to [www.givelife.org](http://www.givelife.org)**

Mark your calendars for this year's Health & Safety Training to be held October 6, 7, & 8. Watch for our August newsletter for more details.

## Getting Wise with Your Eyes: What Products are Right?

Submitted by: Casi Persons, Employee Benefits Coordinator

Do your eyes ever glaze over as you're standing in the grocery or drug store's beauty and health section? The sheer number and variety of products can leave you shaking your head. Same goes for eye care products. Just how do you know what to buy that will be kind to your eyes?



Vision Service Plan talked with VSP doctor, David Jones, O.D., to get some tips.

"With hundreds of different products sitting on the drugstore shelf, it's quite easy to become confused about which cleaning solution is most appropriate for cleaning the contact lenses you wear, or which artificial tear product to buy for dry eyes," he says. Here are some of Dr. Jones' suggestions:

- \* Symptom: Itchy and watery eyes that often look red and bloodshot. Likely enemy? Allergies. Ask your eye doctor if anti-allergy medications might help you. And ditch the over-the-counter "redness relievers" - no matter the brand. They may promise relief, but the solutions are cosmetic only and will just mask your symptoms, nothing more.
- \* Symptom: Dry eyes likely caused from hours on end in front of the computer. What to do? Give them a drink - in the form of artificial tear products. They actually contain a lot of the natural lubricating products your eyes produce on their own.
- \* Problem: Container confusion.

Imagine the pain if you got some unfriendly ointment in your eyes by mistake. The lesson here is - keep products that don't belong in the same "family" away from each other. Use separate drawers or other dividers to keep your eye products isolated.

- \* Problem: Bad blends. Not all contact lens solutions like each other. Solutions for cleaning, disinfecting and storing them overnight need to be compatible, or eye problems can result.

"The best approach is to ask your eye doctor for a list of contact lens preparations," says Dr. Jones. "If you stick with the list, you won't have to worry about incompatibility."



Source: VSP

## The New Pepsi Challenge

By: David Becker, Safety Officer



This is the name of an article that I read in the February 2008 Occupational Hazards magazine. The full title of the article was, "The New Pepsi Challenge: World-Class Safety". The article made some excellent points that I would like to pass on for your use. I also wanted to add some of my own comments on what I see as the County Safety Officer.

**Point #1:** "Management that cares about safety, recognizes how closely it is linked to performance. We often see a direct correlation between financial performance and a safe workplace. Simply said, top performing operations are safe operations"

**Comment #1:** Based upon my experience with Workers' Compensation, General Liability and Em-

ployee Benefits, I agree with their statements. To be a top performer in any field, or even at home, safety must be as important as operations or any other aspect of the business or life.

**Point #2:** "...The biggest obstacle ... was a corporate culture that took something of an inconsistent approach to risk reduction. The attitude toward safety was that while accidents and injuries should be controlled, they were an unavoidable part of our business."

**Comment #2:** "An unavoidable part of our business." Boy have I heard that one before. Remember an accident is defined as an unforeseen, uncontrolled event, with a negative outcome. This is not what I see in the reports that come to my desk, that we call an accident. These events should well

have been seen before they occurred. I see auto accidents that people say they just could not stop in time before the accident. When you read the investigation we find that they were following too close, speeding and multi-tasking (Cell phone use) just before the incident. I would say that when one person breaks two laws, that are safety related, and are multi-tasking at the same time, and then they have a crash we would have to say this was foreseeable.

Should the event be foreseeable then we have a responsibility under the law (in the above case) and to ourselves, our families and others to control the events leading up to the collision to prevent it. In other words slow down, open up following distance and put the phone down. Now could you have

(Continued on Page 3)

# Beach Safety

Submitted by: Peggy Dominguez, Administrative Assistant

- **Protect your skin:** Sunlight contains two kinds of UV rays -- UVA increases the risk of skin cancer, skin aging, and other skin diseases. UVB causes sunburn and can lead to skin cancer. Limit the amount of direct sunlight you receive between 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. and wear a sunscreen with a sun protection factor of at least 15.

- **Drink plenty of water** regularly and often even if you do not feel thirsty. Your body needs water to keep cool.

⇒ Avoid drinks with alcohol or caffeine in them. They can make you feel good briefly but make the heat's effects on your body worse. This is especially true with beer, which dehydrates the body.



- **Watch for signs of heat stroke:**  
⇒ Heat stroke is life threatening. The person's temperature control system, which produces sweating to cool the body, stops working.

⇒ The body temperature can rise so high that brain damage and death may result if the body is not cooled quickly.

⇒ Signals of heat stroke include -

1. Hot, red, and usually dry skin, but in some cases such as during athletic activity while wearing a helmet, the skin may be moist;
2. Changes in consciousness;
3. Rapid, weak pulse, and
4. Rapid, shallow breathing.

⇒ Call 9-1-1 or your local EMS number.



ber.

⇒ Move the person to a cooler place.

⇒ Quickly cool the body by wrapping wet sheets around the body and fan it. If you have ice packs or cold packs, place them on each of the victim's wrists and ankles, in the armpits and on the neck to cool the large blood vessels.

⇒ Watch for signals of breathing problems and make sure the airway is clear.

⇒ Keep the person lying down.

- **Wear eye protection**

⇒ Sunglasses are like sunscreen for your eyes and protect against damage that can occur from UV rays.

⇒ Be sure to wear sunglasses with labels that indicate that they absorb at least 90 percent of UV sunlight.

# Lower Your Breast Cancer Risk

Submitted by: Melissa Parikh, Disability Coordinator



It's true that certain risk factors for breast cancer are beyond a women's control. **Examples:** family history and aging. Fortunately, researchers are finding that certain lifestyle choices may lower risk:

**Cure the fat.** Countries with high-fat diets have the highest rates of breast cancer; exactly why isn't

certain. **Smart:** Choose foods high in fiber, such as beans, bran, whole grains, fruits, and vegetables such as cabbage, Brussels sprouts and broccoli.

**Stay active.** Research suggests that exercise helps prevent breast cancer. One study found that women who exercised at least four hours a week cut their breast cancer risk by 60%, while those who worked out 1-3 hours a week re-

duced their risk by 30%.

**Limit alcohol if you drink.** More than 40 studies have linked heavy alcohol use to an increased risk of breast cancer.

**Keep screening.** Do monthly self-exams and see your health care provider regularly. **Lifesaver:** Ask about having mammograms - when to start and how often to have one.

(Pepsi Challenge continued from Page 2)

accident and it is not a part of doing business.



**Point #3:** Safety is everyone's responsibility.

**Comment #3:** I agree. In my past, for today, and in my future, I will view safety not only from my safety point of view, but safety for those around me to include my co-workers and family. Safety must

be everyone's responsibility. The cost of failure is just too high for everyone involved.

**Point #4:** "When safety is a core value, it transcends the workplace and becomes part of your everyday life both at work and at home. It is a responsibility, a commitment to our families and our colleagues."

**Comment #4:** Another way of say-

ing this from a business point of view is that Workers' Compensation, General Liability or Employee Benefits all come from the bottom line financial figure. People are hurt, the organization hurts, and families hurt because of an injury. Who pays the bill never changes the pain.

How about you? Can you join "The New Pepsi Challenge"?

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*Did you know...*

- ◆ In the 1600's in England, there was an annual observance called "Mothering Sunday." It was celebrated during Lent, on the fourth Sunday. On Mothering Sunday, the servants, who generally lived with their employers, were encouraged to return home and honor their mothers.
- ◆ Although it wasn't celebrated in the U.S. until 1908, there were days honoring mothers even in the days of ancient Greece. In those days, however, it was Rhea, the Mother of the gods that was given honor.
- ◆ President Woodrow Wilson, in 1914, made the official announcement proclaiming Mother's Day a national observance that was to be held each year on the 2nd Sunday of May.
- ◆ Sonora Dodd of Washington, first had the idea of a "father's day." She thought of the idea for Father's Day while listening to a Mother's Day sermon in 1909.
- ◆ Sonora wanted a special day to honor her father, William Smart. Smart, who was a Civil War veteran, was widowed when his wife died while giving birth to their sixth child. Mr. Smart was left to raise the newborn and his other five children by himself on a rural farm in eastern Washington state.
- ◆ Sonora's father was born in June, so she chose to hold the first Father's Day celebration in Spokane, Washington on the 19th of June, 1910.
- ◆ President Calvin Coolidge, in 1924, supported the idea of a national Father's Day. Then in 1966 President Lyndon Johnson signed a presidential proclamation declaring the 3rd Sunday of June as Father's Day. President Richard Nixon signed the law which finally made it permanent in 1972.

By the time we realize our  
parents were right,  
we have children who  
think we're wrong.

~Guillermo Hernandez

# Safety Corner



## Bites & Stings

By: Kevin Watson, Safety Analyst/Trainer

Before assisting in any emergency, please remember to follow the basic rules of:

**Assess** - the scene. If safe, approach and then **Assess** the victim

**Alert** - call or have someone call 9-1-1

**Attend** - to the injured to the best of your abilities with the resources available to you at the time



Bites and Stings can be, to some extent, put into the "high risk lifestyle" category. For example, if you are someone that doesn't ever leave the valley and / or venture into the ocean, you have no reason to be concerned with marine life bites and stings. If on the other hand you have a higher risk lifestyle and go into the ocean, knowing how to deal with marine life bites and stings becomes very important.

Bites or stings from bees, scorpions, snakes, spiders and the like have become much more common in our area.

Rattlesnakes used to be only found up in the hills, unless adverse weather made them seek shelter other places - like in the valley. Nowadays, with all the building going on in the foothills and mountain communities, rattlesnakes are becoming more common on the valley floor. We also find scorpions and black widow spiders around here. There is some argument as whether or not brown recluse spiders are in our area. I would rather be safe than sorry, so I *assume* they are here. Bees of course are plentiful in the valley due to the agriculture industry. We import them for pollination.

With any of the above mentioned bites or stings, Anaphylaxis is always a concern ! If you are highly allergic to any of the above, or any chemical for that matter, please do yourself and others a favor, let people close to you know you are allergic and where your epinephrine auto injector pen is located. Treatment for bites and stings varies by the critter doing the biting or stinging. Generally speaking, the following

is true:

Venomous snake bites - apply a compression type wrap and transport the victim to a hospital.

Bees - remove the stinger using a scraping motion with the edge of a credit card, knife blade etc...monitor for anaphylactic shock.

Dog or human bites - clean the area thoroughly with soap and water, apply anti-biotic ointment, a clean dressing and monitor for signs of infection.

Marine life stings - remove the barb or stinger, clean the area with warm to hot water and apply hot packs, monitor for signs of infection, seek medical attention if necessary.

For anyone that is not comfortable with their level of technical expertise and would like to learn more about the current CPR / AED / First Aid instruction, please contact the CEO-Risk Management Division, Safety Unit at 525-5781 to sign-up for a class.