



BITS & PIECES

Chief Executive Office—Risk Management Division

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Listening From Within

By David L. Dolanar, Deputy Executive Officer

In view of the many issues following the terrorist events of September 11th in New York, Washington D.C. and Pennsylvania, I wanted to step back for a moment and share some basic homegrown principles and values which I learned as a boy growing up.

Prior to September 11th, most Americans were engaged in what I will call a “general routineness of life.” We may have been somewhat complacent in our daily activities and could have taken many things for granted. Americans were generally consumed with going to and returning from work, attending various entertainment functions, struggling with basic life survival needs and trying to get along with others.

The events of September 11th and those following, have created a new way of life for many people. Awareness of self and what it means to others has taken on a new definition. Some folks are spending more time with their families and friends, recognizing

the spiritual capacity of themselves, paying more attention to their surroundings and thinking more about the whole idea of human life. And while all this has been ever impressed in our minds, we can't help from feeling remorse for the victims of these tragic events, anger with those who caused them and anxiety of the rippling effect of what may happen in the future – the despicable unknown!

Let's return to some of our principles and values and try to make sense of all this from a human being perspective. Take for example the words benevolence, charity and love, which generally stir up connotations of sensitivity and gentleness. These may be appropriate associations but consider this: Genuine love is also one of the toughest and most disciplined qualities of good character. **Benevolence** is looking outward to meet the needs of others. It is “sticking it out”, giving others what they truly need even when difficulties arise.

Another example is **virtue**, which is measured by personal character and especially by the moral force a person's character exerts upon others. It is defined as “moral excellence; right action and thinking; morality.” Virtue is not just doing the right thing; it is setting the precedent for others to follow. William Penn was a man of virtue who was committed to moral excellence. He set the precedent for moral excellence and left an enduring legacy of leading others in the right way.

Finally, let's consider the quality of **forgiveness**. This may be the most difficult of all! By definition forgiveness is, “a release from fault or offense; pardon; a renunciation of anger or resentment against an offender”. True forgiveness requires a personal investment, whether extending forgiveness to another person or asking for forgiveness from another person. Healing both physical and emotional wounds requires an investment, but the results are well worth the effort.

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If we fill our hours with regrets of yesterday and with worries of tomorrow, we will have no today in which to be thankful.
Turn your face to the sun and the shadows will fall behind you.

Have a bountiful Thanksgiving , a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

From the staff of the CEO-Risk Management Division



Inside this issue:

'Tis the Season.....for Colds and Flu

Submitted by Barbara Cooper, Employee Benefits Manager

Did you know that the flu typically affects 20 to 50 percent of the U.S. population each winter? And that colds strike some people as many as 12 times a year? That's why, now that we're approaching the peak cold and flu season, we want to answer some frequently asked questions about two of the most common - and misunderstood - maladies of our time.

Cold or Flu - Which is It? Typi-

cally, colds begin slowly, two or three days after infection. The first symptoms are usually a scratchy sore throat, followed by sneezing and a runny nose. Body temperature is usually normal or slightly elevated. A mild cough can develop several days later. Symptoms typically last from two days to one week and may be more severe in infants and young children.

Signs of flu - short for influenza - include sudden onset with head-

ache, dry cough and chills. Flu sufferers often experience muscle aches in the back and legs, and fever of up to 104 degrees. The fever typically begins to subside on the second or third day, then respiratory symptoms, like nasal congestion and sore throat, appear. Fatigue and weakness can continue for several days or even weeks.

How Can I Fight a Cold or Flu?

The bad news: there is no proven

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Christmas Tree Safety Tips

Submitted by: Ed Fenton. Liability Claims /Insurance Manager

Selecting a Tree

- Make sure the tree is fresh, not dry and losing its needles.
- If buying a pre-cut tree, make a new cut approximately one inch above the old cut to facilitate water movement through the cells.
- Leave the tree outside until you are ready to decorate it.
- Trees cut early are a greater danger than trees cut relatively close to Christmas.
- Christmas trees to be displayed in commercial and office buildings or stores, must be treated with a Fire Marshal approved flame retardant.



the bulbs and cords are in good condition, not loose or frayed as to cause a short.

- Be able to turn off the lights without having to crawl under the tree.
- Never leave the lights on when leaving the house or when going to bed.
 - Keep candles away from Christmas trees. *Never* use candles as Christmas tree decorations.
 - When shopping for Christmas tree ornaments, attempt to find those that are flame resistant.

Selecting Location

- When selecting a location to set up your tree, attempt to place it in a cool area.
- Avoid placing it in an area close to heating appliances or the fireplace. This will not only dry the tree out prematurely, but can also increase the chance of accidental ignition.
- Keep the tree out of high traffic areas, and away from stairways and doors.

- Secure the tree so that it cannot be knocked over by pets or a small child.
- Place the tree in water and make sure to check the water level daily.

When to Remove the Tree

- The Fire Department recommends that a tree be removed from the home in the event that it becomes dry and begins shedding needles. **DON'T TAKE A CHANCE.!**
- Remove the tree as soon as possible after Christmas. Dispose of all Christmas papers and boxes at once; do not allow them to accumulate.
- **NEVER** burn a tree in a fireplace! Dry Christmas trees burn very hot and extremely quick. The fire may rapidly leave the fireplace and move into your room. Also, a Christmas tree is very oily and may damage your fireplace.

Tree Decorating

- Before using lights on the tree make sure they are UL listed. Never use more than three strings of lights on one circuit.
- Make sure all connections are tight and

Calling All Leaders

By David Becker, Safety Officer

Are you a leader? Are you expected to lead others while on the job? Does your family expect you to lead while you are at home? Are you a member of different groups both on and off the job that look to you for leadership qualities? I am sure that all of us in today's world are leaders in many different roles of our lives. Did you know that leaders hold the responsibility for the safety of others under their supervision? Keeping this in mind I read an article entitled "Ten Roles Executives Should Assume for Safety," that I think any leader should keep in mind. Try to use these ten points to keep

others safe whenever you are the leader.

1. Consistently talk about safety in management meetings.
2. Write about safety in other management communications.
3. Talk about safety one-on-one to your subordinates.
4. Make sure that the risk profile of your organization is continuously improved.
5. Personally sponsor an annual team safety recognition award, and show up to present the award.
6. Make sure that the roles and responsibilities for safety and health are defined (in writing and practice) for every level subordinate to you.
7. Monitor the results of management system audits and provide feedback.
8. Assure there is a performance metric for industrial hygiene in the organization.
9. Assure that safety and health processes are being fully integrated into the primary management system process of your business.
10. Assure safety and health goals are in the executive incentive compensation plan.

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The principles of **benevolence**, **virtue** and **forgiveness** can most certainly be applied in our personal lives and in our lives here at work. Yes, we are all more aware of these principles now, but we had to have an unfortunate wake up call. I consider the workforce of Stanislaus County a great big family, my department and division smaller

families and my family at home, my guiding light. Think of all the many families you belong to – from a US citizen, to church, to whatever. If we were to treat the members of our many families with dignity and respect using the principles of **benevolence**, **virtue** and **forgiveness**, wouldn't we feel more secure, safe, happy and relaxed?

I urge you to consider these principles as we approach the holiday seasons of Thanksgiving and Christmas and strive to remember and understand why we celebrate them in the first place.

Thank you for listening – from within!
David



Traveling Safely

By Peggy J. Huntsinger, Disability Manager

Many County employees travel on business and most of us travel at one time or another on personal business. The following are some ideas to help keep you safe during your travels:

Driving:

- Potential problems while driving include unfamiliarity with the city and location including traffic patterns and fatigue.
- Any time you rent a car, check the tires and make sure you have a full tank of gas.
- Know where you are going and have directions.
- Always carry a cell phone and have the phone numbers handy of people you can call if you run into problems.
- If possible, rent vehicles from companies that do not affix rental stickers to their vehicles, which tips off offenders that you are probably from out of town.



Fire Safety:

- When you arrive at your hotel, identify the locations of the fire exits and walk them so you will know exactly where you are going if you need to use them.
- If a fire breaks out and your room is smoky, open a window. If the doorknob is hot, do not open the door. Place a wet towel under the door to keep smoke out, then hang bed sheets out the window to alert rescue personnel of your location.

The average hotel room has at least a two-hour burn-through time.

Personal Crime:

- First and foremost, be aware of your surroundings at all times. Offenders look for people who are self-absorbed.
- Carry no more than one or two credit cards with you and no more than one or two personal checks.
- Make sure your driver's license doesn't have your Social Security Number on it. With your SSN and date of birth you can end up suffering from identity theft.
- When carrying valuables in a briefcase or purse, be sure they are secured to your arm or leg when sitting or standing.
- Keep your wallet in your front pocket.
- Purchase a money belt or pouch to wear under your outer clothing either around your neck or waist.
- Purchase a battery-operated motion sensing alarm that hangs from a doorknob - available at hardware stores or general supply stores.
- If you are the victim of a theft, report it to the police immediately and ask for the report number.

Lodging:

- Lower floors are better in the event of fire, but for security purposes, upper

floors with rooms as far away from the elevators and stairwells are better. These rooms make it difficult for offenders to get in and out quickly.

- Never let the desk clerk say your room number out loud, if they do, ask for a different room.
- When entering the room, lock the door immediately, but do not put the chain on right away. Check under the bed, in closets and in the bathroom first.

In Public:

If you are accosted in public, yell fire and draw attention to yourself. If you are attacked and there are few people on the street, run into the street. You run a small risk of being hit by a vehicle, but the odds are better than staying with your attacker.

HEALTHSCOPE
Information to Help
You..... Choose the
Best!!

Stanislaus County, a member of the Pacific Business Group on Health (PBGH) has made available a great resource for use by all employees... Healthscope.

Go to www.healthscope.org or to our website at www.co.stanislaus.ca.us/riskmgt for information to compare the quality of care provided by California health plans and medical groups.

Holiday Dessert Recipes

Cranberry Fluff Salad

Submitted by: Dora Seeman

- 2 cups raw cranberries, ground (can use fresh or frozen cranberries)
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 2 cups diced apples, pared or unpared as desired
- 1/2 cup chopped walnuts
- 3 cups miniature marshmallows
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup heavy cream, whipped

Combine cranberries and sugar; cover and chill overnight. Add apples, walnuts,

marshmallows, and salt. Fold in whipped cream. Chill. Serve as a salad or as dessert. Makes about 12 servings.

Pumpkin Pie Dessert Squares

Submitted by: Dixie Barrigar

- 1 pkg. Yellow cake mix
- 1/2 cup butter, melted
- 1 egg

Topping:

- 1 cup reserved dry cake mix
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1 tsp. Cinnamon
- 1/4 cup butter



Filling:

- 3 cups pumpkin pie mix
- 2 eggs
- 2/3 cup milk

Grease bottom only of 13 x 9 inch pan. Reserve 1 cup cake mix for topping. Combine remaining cake mix, butter, and egg. Press into pan. Prepare filling by combining all ingredients until smooth. Pour over crust. For topping, combine all ingredients. Sprinkle over filling. Bake at 350 degrees for 45 to 50 minutes until knife comes out clean when inserted near center. If desired, serve with whipped topping.

(Tis the Season continued from Page 1)

cure for colds and flu except time. The good news: specific medications for the flu can reduce the severity and length of symptoms, and decrease the spread of the flu virus. Flu medications must be taken within the first 48 hours for desired affect. Additionally, over-the-counter (OTC) medications can relieve cold and flu symptoms to help you feel more comfortable. Getting plenty of bed rest and drinking lots of fluids can also help.

Should I Take Antibiotics for Colds and Flu? Antibiotics do not kill cold and flu viruses and they should be used only for bacterial

complications to cold and flu, such as sinus or ear infections.

What Should I Do if Symptoms Persist? Typically, it's not necessary to contact your physician immediately, unless you fall into a high-risk category. However, if symptoms persist, become severe or localized in your throat, stomach or lungs, or if other symptoms such as vomiting and behavioral changes occur, consult your Primary Care Physician (PCP).

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I Believe...

... you need to make time for fun.

... that money cannot buy happiness.

... books can take you anywhere.

... people are special the way they are.

... great things come to people who never give up.

... silence will teach you something if you listen hard.

... that true friends will last a lifetime.

... a simple smile can make anybody's day better.

... true love is there from the start.

January - April 2002 Ergonomic Workshops

The CEO-Risk Management Division has scheduled Ergonomics training workshops for all County employees for Fiscal Year 2001–2002. Following is the workshop schedule from January, 2002 through April, 2002.

As a reminder anyone who spends two hours or more during the workday doing repetitive office tasks is a candidate for the

Office Safety Ergonomics training class. The Back Safety Ergonomics training class is designed for those who perform materials handling and heavy lifting during the course of the workday.

All classes will be held at County Center III, 909 County Center III Court, Modesto. To RSVP for one of the classes listed below, please call 525-5781.



DATE	TIMES	CLASS
January 15, 2002	8:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m. 1:00 p.m.—5:00 p.m.	Back Safety
February 15, 2002	8:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m. 1:00 p.m.—5:00 p.m.	Office Ergonomics
March 12, 2002	8:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m. 1:00 p.m.—5:00 p.m.	Back Safety
April 16, 2002	8:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m. 1:00 p.m.—5:00 p.m.	Office Ergonomics