

BITS & PIECES

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HEALTH & SAFETY TRAINING

By: David L. Dolanar, Deputy Executive Officer

Registration for the annual Health and Safety Training for 2006 is currently underway. There are 24 classes from which you can select. All class descriptions are on the County website under CEO-Risk Management Division, Health and Safety Training.



by that date as registration will be on a first come first served basis.

All employees have been given registration forms and brochures. If a registration form or brochure is misplaced, copies are posted on our website. Make sure you provide

your employee ID number when you complete the registration form.

All registration will be processed by the CEO-Risk Management Division staff. All forms must be submitted to Melissa Parikh by no later than February 15, 2006. It is imperative that employees submit their requests

We look forward to another successful Health and Safety Training event.

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HEART DISEASE: HOW TO FIGHT BACK

Submitted by: Barbara Cooper, Employee Benefits Manager



Compared to other ethnic groups, African-Americans are four times as likely to suffer from heart disease and to die from stroke. Making simple, healthy lifestyle

changes, such as cutting fast foods from your diet, can reduce risk. But also talk to your doctor. Your doctor can check your cholesterol level, blood pressure and BMI (body mass index) to determine your risk.

If you have diabetes, it's also crucial to know your hemoglobin A1C, which tells you whether your blood sugar is under control. Having diabetes puts you at a much higher

risk for heart disease.

Also, know the signs of a heart attack. These include:

- ♥ Pain or pressure in the chest, arm, shoulders, stomach and/or jaw
- ♥ Headache or dizziness
- ♥ Shortness of breath
- ♥ Nausea

If you or someone you know may be having a heart attack, call 911, or its local equivalent, right away.

Source: Healthbeat—PacifiCare

You will find as you look back upon your life, that the moments when you have truly lived, are the moments when you have done things in the spirit of love.

Henry Drummond (1851-1897) Clergyman and writer

GET IN THE ZONE

Submitted by: *Peggy J. Huntsinger, Disability Manager*



OSHA recently released "Ergonomics for the Prevention of Musculoskeletal Disorders Guidelines for Retail Grocery Stores". A great deal of these best practices apply to many of us at work and most if not all of us at home.

OSHA has identified the Best and Preferred Work Zones. Performing work is safest when lifting and reaching is performed in these zones. Working outside these work zones results in non-neutral postures that may increase the risk of injury. It is particularly important to perform heavy lifting tasks within the best work zone.

The Best Work Zone

- as far forward as your wrist when you hold your arm slightly bent;
- as wide as the shoulders;
- upper level at about heart height; and
- lower level at about waist height.

The Preferred Work Zone

- as far forward as your hand when you hold your arm out straight;
- a foot on either side of the shoulders;
- upper level at shoulder height ; and
- lower level at tip of fingers with hands held at the side.

Simple Steps to Stay in the Zone

- keep the object close to the body;
- use the body's strongest muscles - lift with your legs;
- keep your back in midrange posture - bending into the end of your body's limits will lead to injury; and
- don't jerk objects.

FIRST AID—BURNS

By: *David Becker, Safety Officer*



The bad news first. Burns hurt. Now for the good news. Burns can be prevented and proper first aid can reduce the degree of damage if properly applied at the time of the event. Burns are caused by; sun, wind, radiation, chemicals, contact with flames, hot surfaces, or electricity. Most of these can be prevented by protecting ourselves in advance. For sun or wind, cover up or use a sun screen cream with a good SPF rating. Chemicals and radiation are something that we should see coming in advance and we should again cover up with PPE Personal Protective Equipment or avoid any such contact. Hot surfaces can be avoided or again PPE can be worn. As for electrical dangers the best way to prevent these is to work only with equipment that is in good working order. Should something not work call for a repair person.

Now lets review burns.

Minor Burns (First Degree): Only affects the outer layer of the skin. Cool the burn until the pain subsides, then cover with a dressing.

Serious Burns (Second Degree): Deep burns with blisters. Proper first aid starts with immersing the burned area in cool fresh water for up to 15 minutes. Then cover with a clean cloth non adhesive dressing. The person should seek medical attention.

Severe Burns (Third Degree): Full thickness burns. Edges of the burn may be charred. Proper first aid starts again with immersing the burned area in cool fresh water. Seek medical help immediately. Check for and treat for any loss of airway, breathing or circulation. Use CPR if required and treat for shock. Cover with a light sterile dressing non adhesive and get help.



Chemical burns: You must know your chemical. Should this be a water reactive chemical, you must know the first aid directions and be ready to respond. For most chemicals flush with water for at least 15 minutes in the beginning. Get medical attention if you have any question of the severity of the burn or exposure.

HOW TO MANAGE CONFLICT

Submitted by; Ed Fenton, Liability Claims/Insurance Manager

Conflicts with co-workers are unavoidable, but they don't have to make your life miserable. Most conflicts are caused by misunderstandings that result from poor communication skills or develop when different personalities or behaviors collide. By improving your communication and problem solving skills, you can learn how to create effective solutions out of stressful situations.



Improving Communication Skills

Effective communication is vital to solving conflicts. Sometimes when we're tired, angry or frustrated, we don't hear what the other person is trying to tell us. In order to really listen and understand the other person's feelings and needs, you should:

Don't talk, listen. Give the other person a chance to get his or her own ideas and opinions across. Listen for understanding rather than spending the time in preparation for your next remark.

Ask questions. Guard against assuming that you know what the person meant or felt by asking him or her questions to assure you're understanding. Ask questions that result in a more informative answer than "yes" or "no"

Keep an open mind. Don't just listen for statements that back up your own opinions and support your beliefs. Be willing to listen to someone else's point of view and ideas.

Don't jump to conclusions. Don't assume you have the gist of the conversation or think you already know what the speaker is going to say next. If you don't listen, you may miss several points the speaker is trying to get across.



Listen "between the lines". Remember, a lot of clues to meaning come from the speaker's tone of voice, facial expressions and gestures. Body language is usually an accurate indication of the speaker's attitude or emotional state. Concentrate on what is not being said as well as what is being said.

Provide feedback. Make eye contact with the speaker. Nod your head when you understand a specific point or provide other feedback that shows you are really listening.

Summarize. When the person finishes speaking, repeat what the speaker has said in your own words to confirm that you understand. Summarize points of argument for disagreement.

Conflict Management Style

Although we all deal with conflict differently, there are five primary ways people respond to conflict:

Avoidance: People who hate confrontations which might result in another person's anger, sarcasm, rejection, and so on, withdraw from the situation rather than face up to it. They are usually sensitive to their own and other's feelings, and are afraid to be hurt themselves or to hurt others.

Accommodating: These people suppress their own needs, opinions, and feelings, sacrificing their own interests and needs in order to solve the conflict. Their attitude is "peace at any price".

Win/Lose: At the other end of the spectrum are those who see conflict as a competition in which there has to be a winner and a loser. Their attitude is "win at any cost." They force their interests and ideas onto the other person, often through violence, bribery or punishment. The outcome is usually a battle in which relationships suffer.

Compromising: Both sides meet halfway in order to reach an agreement. In some cases, it is the best solution possible. But with both sides giving up something in order to reach an agreement, often the best solution is not achieved. Often times both parties feel cheated and dissatisfied with the outcome.

Problem Solving: If it can be achieved, the ideal solution is one where both parties emerge as winners. By defining both party's needs, then trying to equitably meet those needs while supporting and respecting both people's values, a win-win solution can often be achieved. Relationships are maintained and often enhanced.

The Problem-Solving Approach

In most cases, the problem-solving approach is the best way to resolve conflicts successfully. Follow these guidelines:

Acknowledge the Problem. Decide to discuss the problem or conflict. Determine your own conflict resolution style. Schedule a meeting.

Discuss the Problem. Decide what questions to ask. Be prepared to listen. Do you know what your point of view is? Do you understand the other person's point of view?

Agree on a Solution. Come up with as many ideas as possible and discuss each alternative. Review the ideas together with both people's interests and needs in mind. Decide on a mutually acceptable solution. Decide if anything else needs to be done.



By using a problem-solving approach to conflict, you are more likely to find solutions that are agreeable and fair to everyone involved. At the same time, you will be dealing with conflict in a positive and healthy way, encouraging open communication and strengthening personal and professional relationships.

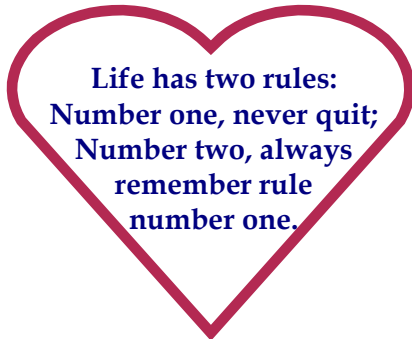
*We need old friends to help us grow old
and new friends to help us stay young.*

~Letty Cottin Pogrebin, Writer

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Did you know...

- ♥ Approximately 1 billion Valentine's Day cards are sent each year.
- ♥ Over 50 million roses are given for Valentine's Day each year.
- ♥ In order of popularity, Valentine's Day cards are given to: teachers, children, mothers, wives, sweethearts, Koko the gorilla.
- ♥ Valentine's Day, February 14 is the second most celebrated day in the United States, after December 25.
- ♥ Written valentines began to appear after 1400. The oldest "valentine" in existence was made in the 1400's and is in the British Museum.
- ♥ In the early 1800's, valentines began to be assembled in factories. Early manufactured valentines were black and white pictures that were painted by workers in a factory.
- ♥ Fancy valentines were made with real lace and ribbons, with paper lace introduced in the mid 1800's.
- ♥ By the end of the 1800's valentines were being made entirely by machine.
- ♥ About 3% of pet owners will give Valentine's Day gifts to their pets.

COFFEE POISON OR HEALTH ELIXIR?

Submitted by: Casi Persons, Employee Benefits Coordinator



Computers are very complicated, so computer professionals need to keep their brain synapses firing rapidly. To accomplish this, many computer professionals consume large amounts of coffee. Studies keep coming out that prove coffee is dangerous to our health. Other studies prove those findings to be false. Is coffee bad for us or not?

Does coffee raise blood pressure?

A 2002 study by John Hopkins University that tracked 1,000 former medical students found that heavy coffee drinking is associated with a small increase in blood pressure, but not enough to increase the risk for hypertension.

Does coffee cause heart attacks?

A 2000 Finnish study that surveyed more than 20,000 Finnish men and women about their coffee drinking habits and medical history found no evidence that coffee drinking is connected to heart disease.

The study did find that coffee drinkers have poorer health habits than those who drank no coffee. Those who drank coffee were more likely to smoke and have greater amounts of body fat. Those who drank less than one cup of coffee a day

were more likely have back problems, constipation, nausea, gallstones, and congestion, and deaths from heart disease were highest in those who did not drink coffee.

Does coffee cause diabetes?

A 2003 study by researchers at the Harvard School of Public Health found that people who drank four to five cups per day reduced their risk of type 2 diabetes by 30 percent. And men who drink six or more cups of coffee per day lowered their risk of type 2 diabetes an additional 20 percent. (The additional protection did not appear for Women).

Does coffee harm your brain?

A 2000 study by researchers in Hawaii that surveyed 8,000 men found that those who drank three or more cups of coffee per day were five times less likely to develop Parkinson's disease. Coffee appears to provide strong protection from Parkinson's disease.

These studies prove that coffee is not bad for us, but in fact it provides many health benefits. So computer professionals can continue to consume large amounts of coffee in order to keep their brain synapses firing. I would like to expand further on the health benefits of coffee, but it's time for my coffee break.