

HEALTH AND SAFETY TRAINING: ANOTHER SUCCESS

By: David L. Dolanar, Deputy Executive Officer

The annual Health and Safety Training held on March 8, 9 and 10, 2005 was as successful as in prior years. A total of 2,770 County employees attended 13 classes in the following areas:

- Back Ergonomics
- Blood-Borne Pathogens (BBP)
- Car Seat Safety
- Disaster Preparation
- Drivers Safety (DIP)
- Fire Prevention/Fire Extinguishers (PPFX)
- General Ergonomics
- Hazard Communications
- Injury Illness Prevention Plan (IIPP)
- Injury Prevention of the Foot and Ankle
- Office Ergonomics
- Slip/Trip/Fall
- Security/Violence in the Workplace (SVWP)

All but five classes were taught by County personnel. Evaluations for all classes showed that 77 percent were rated Excellent or Above Average. Registration for classes was done on PeopleSoft and coordinated through the CEO-Risk Management Division (CEO-RMD) Disability Management Unit. Compilation of reports and evaluations were prepared by the RMD Safety staff. All in all

this internal process worked efficiently and effectively and the results of the training were superior.



Health and Safety Training

Planning efforts have already been initiated for Health and Safety Training in 2006. To further meet its customer's needs, the Division will survey each County department to determine if the same classes should be offered and if the following requested classes are of

interest to departments:

- Asbestos
- Lead Awareness
- Respirator Fit Testing
- Forklift Safety
- Chain Saw Safety
- Hearing Screening
- Accident Investigation

Finally, if any County department would like to see a class offered in 2006 which is not listed above, the Division will give consideration to meet those needs.

We are appreciative of all the efforts of the County Safety Representatives, registrars and everyone who made this event a success.

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"The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen nor even touched, but just felt in the heart."

- Helen Keller, 1891

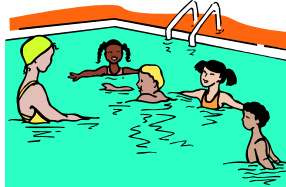


SWIMMING SAFETY TIPS

Submitted by: Lisa Milotte, CA II

An afternoon at the pool or beach is a great way to escape summer heat. Understanding the risks of being around water and following some basic safety rules greatly reduces your chance of injury or drowning. Follow these tips to keep you and the young swimmers in your life safe in the water.

- **Learn to swim** - This might seem obvious, but the best way you can stay safe around water is to know how to swim. Teach your children to swim at an early age—you can start them in classes as early as age 4. Enroll them in classes that stress proper technique and injury prevention. And if you're the one who doesn't know how to swim, it isn't too late. Community facilities, such as the YMCA or YWCA, often have adult classes. Learning to swim and learning to be safe around water is your best defense against drowning.
- **Use life jackets** - A Coast Guard-approved life jacket is essential for safety, especially for beginning swimmers or young children. Don't substitute air-filled devices—such as water wings or inflatable raft—for a life jacket. If such devices suddenly shift position or deflate, a novice swimmer will be in trouble.



- **Supervise children closely** - Keep an eye on your children at all times when they're near or in the water. Be vigilant - distractions such as talking on the phone and reading a book take your attention away from the kids at play. Never let small children swim alone.
- **Avoid unsupervised area** - Whenever possible, swim in an area that has a lifeguard.
- **Don't dive into the unknown** - If you're swimming in a new place, check the water depth before getting in and avoid diving. Severe neck injuries and paralysis can result from diving into water that's too shallow. Play it safe with this rule: Never dive into an unknown body of water.
- **Avoid alcohol** - Stay sober in the water. Alcohol affects your balance and coordination and can impair your swimming skills. It may also alter your sense of judgment—which might lead you to do something that you wouldn't risk otherwise.

Know that water related tragedies happen in the blink of an eye. Assure your safety and that of your kids by swimming smartly.

From CNN/Health/Mayo Clinic

GYM RATS, GYM BUGS

By: Dixie Barrigar RN, Medical Review Nurse

We have been inundated with statistics about the risks of a sedentary lifestyle. At every turn we are urged to exercise, exercise, exercise and many of us have tied on the old Reeboks and headed for the gym. Not a bad idea. There are many benefits to regular exercise, from improved health to increased emotional well being. Of course, in our zeal to reap the benefits of exercise, we can overdo and spend the next few days in pain. Another risk we face at the gym is the possibility of contracting an infection.

Working out in someone else's sweat can be worse than icky. Some professional teams have reported outbreaks of a potentially deadly, antibiotic-resistant bug called MRSA (methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus) in their training facilities. Health experts worry that more gyms are at risk.

Prevention Magazine offers these tips for germ-proofing at the gym.

- Cover up. The less skin-to-equipment contact you have, the better. And keep cuts clean and bandaged.
- Carry two towels—one for yourself and one to wipe down the machines and mats before you use them.
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer such as Purell before and after your workout.
- Launder workout clothes after every use.
- Shower as soon as possible after your workout.

I am not offering you an excuse not to exercise. Sorry. Just be aware of the possible dangers, take the appropriate action and keep on exercising!



ID THEFT - HAS SOME CLOWN TAKEN OVER YOUR GOOD NAME?

Submitted by: Ed Fenton, Liability Claims/Insurance Manager



Criminals don't always need sawed-off shotguns and ski masks to make a big haul—your social security number, or a pre-approved credit card application from your trash, could be all they need.

Identity theft is the nation's fastest growing crime according to FBI statistics and identity theft/fraud is the fastest growing category of Federal Trade Commission (FTC) complaints. Last year's identity theft losses to businesses and financial institutions totaled over \$48 billion and consumer victims reported over \$5 billion in out-of-pocket expenses.

What is identity theft?

Identity theft refers to crimes in which someone wrongfully obtains and uses another person's personal data in some way that involves fraud or deception, typically for economic gain. Criminals also use identity theft to fraudulently obtain identification cards, driver licenses, birth certificates, social security numbers, travel visas and other official government papers.

Unlike your fingerprints, your personal data can be used to allow criminals to profit at your expense. Plus, according to the FTC, on average, most victims don't even know their identity has been stolen until more than a year later.

Identity theft can have devastating consequences for you, as the victim, who may face long hours of closing bad accounts, opening new ones, and repairing your wrecked credit record. And it may take significant out-of-pocket expenses to clear your good name. In the meantime, you may be denied jobs loans, education, housing, and cars, or even get arrested for crimes you didn't commit. Unfortunately, it may require months, and even years, to navigate the frustrating, identity-recovery process.

How identity thieves get your personal information.

Business Record Theft: They get your information from businesses or institutions by stealing files out of offices where you are a customer, employee, patient or student; or bribing an employee who has access to your files; or even 'hacking' into the organization's computer files.

Shoulder Surfing: A 'shoulder surfing' identity thief, stands next to you in a checkout line and can memorize your information while you write a check. They can listen while you are on a phone and watch you as you punch in your phone or credit card or ATM numbers.

Dumpster Diving: They rummage through your trash looking for personal data.

Under the Color of Authority: They use their employer's authorized access to credit reports or pose as landlords, employers or others who may have a legitimate need/right to the information.

Skimming: They steal your credit/debit card account numbers as your card is processed at a business location using a

special data collection/storage device known as a 'skimmer.'

And of course there are the 'old fashioned' ways:

- Stealing wallets and purses containing identification and credit and bank cards.
- Stealing mail.
- Completing a 'change of address form' to divert your mail to another location
- Stealing personal information from your home.
- Using personal information you share on the Internet.
- Scamming information from you, often through email, by posing as legitimate companies or government agencies.

Once the thieves have your information they can go on spending sprees buying 'big-ticket' items. They can open new credit card accounts and of course don't pay the bill. They can buy cars by taking out auto loans in your name. They can establish phone or wireless service in your name. They can counterfeit checks or debit cards and drain your bank account. They can open a bank account in your name and write bad checks on that account. They can file for bankruptcy under your name to avoid paying debts they've incurred under your name or to avoid eviction. They can give your name to the police during an arrest and if they're released from police custody, but don't show up for their court date, an arrest warrant is issued in your name.

How can I tell if I'm a victim of identity theft?

- Monitor the balances of your financial accounts. Look for unexplained charges or withdrawals.
- Failing to receive bills or other mail, which may signal an address change by the identity thief.
- Receiving credit cards, and /or statements of accounts, for which you did not apply
- A lender tries to repossess a car you didn't know you owned.
- Being contacted by the police after a crime is committed in your name.
- Being denied credit for no apparent reason...If you are ever denied credit, FIND OUT WHY, especially if you haven't reviewed your credit report lately. This may be the first indication you get that someone has stolen your identity and is racking up charges in your name.
- Receiving calls or letters from debt collectors or businesses about merchandise or services you did not buy.

Although any of these indications could be a result of a simple error, you should not assume that there's been a mistake and do nothing. Always follow up with the business or institution.



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**“When you change the way
you look at things,
the things you look at change.”**

~Author Unknown

Did you know...

- ☺ The fifth of May, Cinco de Mayo in Spanish, is a national holiday in Mexico. It commemorates the Mexican victory over the French at the battle of Puebla, May 5, 1862.
- ☺ Mother's Day was established in 1907. It was in 1914 that the United States Congress established the 2nd Sunday in May as National Mother's Day.
- ☺ Americans will send over 140 million cards on mother's day making it the third most popular card holiday.
- ☺ The largest toy distributor in the world is McDonald's.
- ☺ Koalas aren't bears. They aren't even related to bears. The koala is related to the kangaroo and the wombat.
- ☺ The reason the koala is called a koala bear is because the koala looks like a teddy bear.
- ☺ Every year some 500 million cars are added to the world's roads.
- ☺ Car making is now the largest manufacturing industry in the world.
- ☺ There are 206 bones in the adult human body and there are 300 in children (as they grow some of the bones fuse together).
- ☺ In Scotland, a new game was invented. It was entitled Gentlemen Only Ladies Forbidden.... and thus the word GOLF entered into the English language

MOVE IT OR LOSE IT

By: Casi Persons, Employee Benefits Coordinator

Move it or Lose it, says a new study. Becoming physically active, even at an older age, may help women live longer, according to data from four U.S. research centers that tracked 9,518 women, 65 and older, for about 12 years. As expected, the most active women were least likely to die. Equally important – and sobering,



active women who became sedentary developed similar mortality rates to women who had always been sedentary. Physical activity may not only prevent the onset of disease, the researchers say, but also slow the decline and enhance recovery in those already ill.

HARD HATS

By: David Becker, Safety Officer



Head protection

OSHA requires that head protection equipment (hard hats) be worn in any area where there is the possible danger of head injuries from impact, flying objects, or electrical shocks and burns. Do we ever face these very conditions at home? I bet you do. Are

there times when you are working above your head? Are there times when you are working on the ground to help another person on a ladder? In my home life this could be as simple as pruning a tree or putting up Christmas lights around the house. Do you have these pieces of safety equipment in your home?

What about hard hats in the office? In times of emergency fire, flood, earthquake or explosion is it possible that our everyday offices could become unsafe? Do you have first aid/CPR/AED trained people who would be giving aid to workers, while exiting the building, should they be injured in one of these events? If you do, will these first responders be working, for a short period of time, in an unsafe environment?

Should they be wearing a hard hat?

The most common hard hat is the high impact plastic. They are available with short or full brims, and some even have slots so that other safety devices can be attached. The outer shell is designed to deflect falling or flying objects and to absorb some of the shock of impact. Additional shock is then absorbed by the suspension system which distributes the force of the impact over a larger area of the head and neck.

Remember should a person be struck by a falling object such as a hammer or bolt, the damage to the bare unprotected head below could be severe if not fatal.

A hard hat is a marvel in safety equipment. The only bad thing is that they only work when you are wearing them. On or off the job, in construction or other work sites, lets buy a few of these marvels and put them to work for our safety or the safety of a person whom we care about.