

BITS & PIECES

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Health and Safety Training 2006

By: David L. Dolener, Deputy Executive Officer

The Health and Safety Training was again very successful this year. There were 2750 enrollees in twenty three classes consisting of 68 individual sessions. This represented a total of 2063 employees. The top eleven classes by attendance were as follows:

Violence in the Workplace	243
Disaster Preparation	237
 Slip, Trip, Fall	174
General Ergonomics	172
Fire Extinguisher 	171
Injury Illness Prevention Program	164
Defensive Driving Training	156
 Accident Investigation	153
Info Technology Security	152
Healthy at Work	145
Fitness – Yoga 	140

As a note of interest, most employees attended classes which addressed the County's major accident causation factors or which provided accident prevention strategies.

The evaluations showed that the total overall rating for the classes was 51 percent Excellent and 31 percent Above Average. Another 14 percent rated the classes as Average.

Many people contributed to the success of this event. I want to express my appreciation to the Departmental Safety Representatives and other County employees who were instructors and also to those who helped monitor the classes. To those instructors outside of the County, I sincerely appreciate the time and effort given to the County at no cost. Finally, I am most appreciative to my staff in the CEO-Risk Management Division who went beyond the call of their everyday responsibilities to make this event one of the best. I want to especially recognize Melissa Parikh who took a leadership role in the overall organization of the event.

I hope the training provided you a learning experience this year. We look forward to your participation at next year's event.



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To accomplish great things, we must not only act, but also dream; not only plan, but also believe.

-Anatole France

We must look at what others have seen and see it a new way."

-Galleo

Quit Smoking – Your Lungs Will Thank You

Submitted by: Barbara Cooper, Employee Benefits Manager

Do you often wake up coughing? If you smoke, an early morning cough could mean your lungs are trying to tell you something. Quitting smoking is not easy. But it is possible—especially if you get the support you need to kick the habit.

Lungs Take a Hit Right Away

Every cigarette you smoke causes lung tissue to become red and swollen. Over time, smoking can cause scarring to the lungs, reducing your ability to breathe.

Smoking is also one of the main risk factors for lung cancer. Smokers are about 20 times more likely to get lung cancer than nonsmokers. The risk increases with the number of cigarettes you smoke and the number of years you are a smoker.

Lungs Renew After You Quit

But take heart: Many of the destructive effects of smoking are

reversible—by quitting. Once you quit, your lungs slowly return to normal for your age. As normal lung cells replace abnormal cells, you'll be better able to breathe.

If you continue to avoid cigarettes for 10 years after quitting, your risk for lung cancer will drop to nearly one-half the risk of people who continue to smoke.

It's best to seek help when you're ready to quit. Research shows that smokers who seek support are more likely to quit as those who don't get help.

There are many smoking cessation tools available that can help reduce the desire to smoke and ease withdrawal from nicotine. Your doctor can help you determine which tools will work best for you.

Source: Healthbeat – PacifiCare newsletter



Helmets

Submitted by: Ed Fenton, Liability Claims/Insurance Manager



Most parents know that for bike riders, wearing a bike helmet is the single most important thing you can do to protect your brain and your life. Each year, more than 500,000 children go to hospital emergency rooms or doctors' offices due to bicycle injuries. More than half of these collisions happen on neighborhood streets, sidewalks, or playgrounds. No matter what form of "speed on wheels" transportation your child prefers, she needs a good safety helmet, but studies show that nationally, only about 15 percent of all kids actually wear bike helmets. In a survey of school children conducted by AAA, 44% reported that they wore helmets rarely or never. For most parents, the question is not

whether a child needs a helmet; it is how to persuade him to wear one. Most bike shops carry a variety of helmets guaranteed to please kids. Let your child choose a helmet he likes. Let him decorate the helmet with stickers. Wear your own helmet and insist that your child wears hers. Store the helmet in an accessible spot - make it easy to grab and go. Children grow fast, so make sure last year's helmet still fits properly and isn't cracked or damaged. Make sure the helmet meets or exceeds the safety standards developed by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission. Teach your children that a helmet is not an accessory. It is a necessity.

5 Keys to Better Sleep

Submitted by: Casi Persons, Employee Benefits Coordinator

Do you have trouble getting a good night's sleep? What you are about to read may make a huge difference to your future health! Being well rested is essential to our well-being and is a major key in living an energetic lifestyle. Here are some of the benefits of a good night's sleep:

- ◆ You will look and feel your best.
- ◆ Relating to others will come easier with enough rest.

- ◆ You'll be a safer driver and be less likely to fall asleep at the wheel.
- ◆ More alertness on the job will be a major benefit.
- ◆ You'll feel less stressed.
- ◆ There'll be an increased ability to fight off illness.
- ◆ You'll enjoy life more.



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Reaching Tomorrow's Workers Today

By: David Becker, Safety Officer

Today I read an article in National Safety Council's, July 2005, Safety & Health magazine titled, "Reaching Tomorrow's Workers Today." The scope of the article was keeping young workers safe on the job. The article was interesting to me because I have noticed that younger workers who enter the workforce make errors that someone should have spotted and corrected earlier. So here is another article to the parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, supervisors and managers of young people. How can we keep our young people safe when they go where they have never gone before?



One of the largest injury risks in all workplaces is a new employee. All young workers will have a first job and they will be a new employee. Many of these workers will change jobs frequently, so for some time they are constantly, "new employees." Many of these first jobs will be in the retail or restaurant industry. These industries have a lot of hazards in terms of slip/trip/falls, cuts, burns and chemical exposures. So why do these young people get hurt? They do not understand the hazards. They cannot spot the hazards because they do not have any understanding of what the hazards are. Now we place them in industry where risk is always present and then wonder why they fail. As parents or other loved ones, we need to understand such risks from our own work and homes and teach hazard identification to them. Also, as supervisors or managers of young workers we need to understand we have a higher responsibility to train these workers in hazard identification than for other more experienced workers.

The article discusses surveys of high school students regarding the number of student employees who have received safety training when hired. The survey says, 50% of the respondents received no safety training. Even though we knew they were new employees and working in industries that have risks, we never told these children about the risks. Yes, children. As a worker, I know that an employer must provide safety-training to employees. As a Safety Professional I also know that many employers fail in that responsibility. Remember that the child will constantly be a new employee as they move around in different entry-level jobs. What does this do to the risk? The answer is, it increases it.

Now enter the parent or loved one of a young person getting ready to enter the workforce. When this child was growing up and living under our protections we talked to them about hot stoves. Did any of you cover electrical outlets so they would not become victim of electrical shock? Then let's rise to the occasion and talk to these young workers about the new world they will be entering and teach them about simple hazard identification and control methods. Let's also remember that first day we entered a new job. Were we comfortable

with asking a lot of stupid questions? Remember many kids find it difficult to confront adults with stupid questions or demands of their worker's rights under the law even if these adults are their supervisors or co-workers, who are senior to them.

Supervisors and managers, please note the article went on to say that inadequate supervision, inadequate training, unsafe equipment, stressful conditions and doing work inappropriate for their ages are additional accident causes. These conditions have nothing to do with the new young worker. If I were overseeing a highly skilled brain surgeon I would think that I need to use very little supervision over this skilled and experienced worker. But when I as a supervisor/manager hire a young and new person for low wages I should expect to increase the supervision and training for this worker. A new worker may not understand why a tool or piece of equipment is unsafe. How can we expect them to spot a danger before an injury if we do not teach them first? Some may wonder, "What stress is there in the workplace for entry level workers?" To start, it is your first day on the job. Is that stressful? Second, you are working the line in a fast food restaurant during the rush hour. And you are working in the kitchen surrounded by hot oil and grills. What is the risk of an error? Have you ever seen these young people rush to get your order filled fast and correct? Now mix this with no training and low supervision and you wonder why they fall, get a cut or a burn? This to me sounds like a job full of stress to a young worker. Stress and danger would both be present.

We as Supervisors/Managers must also check labels and signs. We can put reminders up all over the place for very little cost. Along with supervision and a little training these signs can protect a worker just like the old electrical outlet covers that I used to protect my children when they were young. Another thing that we can do is assign a new worker to an experienced older worker. Take someone who knows the ropes and has experience in this field and assign him or her as a helper or trainer.

Let's help these children out with some basic safety knowledge. Basic safety knowledge should include information on the items noted above and on the facts that:

1. They may look like adults, but because of rapid growth, they may not be fully developed yet. If we ask this big child to do heavy or dangerous work they may be susceptible to injuries. Also remember size and maturity do not have the same meaning. They may be big enough and old enough but they may not have the maturity or experience.

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Happy Mothers Day!



Did you know...

- More than 1 billion Easter eggs are hunted in the United States each year in parks, back yards and on the White House lawn.
- Americans spend 2 billion dollars on Easter candy, and eat 7.1 billion pounds of Easter candy each year!
- The most popular Easter candy, after chocolate, is marshmallow peeps. 600 million are sold each year!
- The first marshmallow Peep® took 27 hours to produce; now it takes six minutes.

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Here are some keys to getting a better night's sleep:

1. Set your body clock.

Choose a bedtime schedule by deciding how many hours of shut-eye you need and try to stick with it. That's because we are all creatures of habit. Try not to oversleep to often because this tends to throw your body clock off. If you are tired, try taking a short nap. However, it should not be longer than about one half an hour because more time than that and you will wind up not being able to fall asleep that night.

2. Be wise about eating and drinking.

Drinking too much fluid in the late afternoon and evening can cause you to wake up in the middle of the night to trot off to the bathroom. Also consuming food and beverages that contain caffeine before bedtime can cause you to toss and turn for hours. So it would be wise to avoid coffee, tea, soft drinks and chocolate before going to bed. However, a hot non-caffeinated drink can relax you.

3. Prepare your sleeping environment.

You have control over a number of factors in your sleeping environment that will make or break a good night's sleep. One of them is the temperature of your bedroom. Adjust the temperature of your bedroom so it's conducive to sleeping. It's usually best to have your room a little on the cool side, but be sure you have enough blankets on your bed. Another environmental issue is the darkness of our bedrooms. Many people prefer sleeping when it's totally dark, so turn off the lights except for night-lights. A key bedroom environment factor is your bed. Purchase the best mattress you can afford since you'll spend a good proportion of your life on it. Quiet-

ness is very important to our rest. Try to keep the noise down. If that's impossible, consider using ear-plugs. Play calming music and avoid watching television just before bedtime. Violent scenes can lead to sleeplessness and violent dreams! Design your bedroom to be a peaceful sanctuary in your home. Separate your work from the bedroom area so your body knows the bedroom is a place to rest - not work.

4. Prepare yourself physically and emotionally for bedtime.

There are a number of steps you can take before going to bed to prepare yourself physically. Slowly stretching before hitting the sack can help you relax. Regular exercise during the day will enhance your ability to fall asleep. Taking a warm bath - not a shower - can be helpful too. If you are still tense, a back massage can help you relax. Wear comfortable non-binding clothing. Here's the most important thing you can do once you've hit the sack - let go of the day's worries. Bedtime is a bad time to dwell on problems since worry can keep you tossing and turning for hours!

5. Seek specialized help if needed.

A medical condition could be preventing you from getting your full rest at night. See your doctor if you have continuing difficulty with falling asleep. Usually it's not wise to take sleeping pills since they can become addictive. They also interfere with the body's own inner sleeping rhythm. The suggestions in this article have been listed to help you get a better night's sleep. Now try putting them into practice and enjoy a more rested and energetic lifestyle.

Pleasant dreams!



Continued from Page 3—Reaching Tomorrow's Workers Today

2. Direct contact with unknown chemicals is dangerous. Working in food or retail may well bring them into contact with new chemicals. By the way, if they have never worked in industry it is possible that all chemicals are new to them? Have we taught them to read label instructions and wear proper safety equipment? Have they even heard of a Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) Form?
3. The number one event leading to occupational fatalities for those younger than 18 is highway driv-

ing incidents. These new workers lack driving experience. This is especially true when driving full-size vans or SUV's. Now take a new driver and place him or her in a different type of vehicle. Then put them in a different part of town and let's make it at night. What risk do you think they may be facing? By the way, am I talking about that young pizza delivery person that came to your door last night?

Help them out by talking to these young workers. Remember the life you save may be your own son/daughter or the President of the United States some day.