

SAFETY ZONE

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TOM'S CORNER: A MESSAGE FROM THE COUNTY SAFETY OFFICER

Biological terrorism is on everybody's mind and the County Safety Office is using its available resources to keep you informed of the latest information in an effort to ease your mind.

However, "New" or "updated" alerts come out almost daily and it is difficult to keep informed of the latest alerts.

Here are some "hotlinks" to help you stay informed of the latest information. If possible, share them with others:

- <http://www.hopkins-biodefense.org/>

- <http://www.consumerreports.org/static/0110bio0.html>
- <http://anthrax.com/nfws.htm>
- http://wire.ap.org/APpackages/anthrax_flash/index.html

These are provided as "information only" and are not to be construed as County Policy.

The **Special Safety Bulletin** will be distributed to assist you as the need arises.

As always, contact your supervisor for assistance or contact the County Safety Office for additional assistance.

POINTS OF INTEREST

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FLASH says: "Mmmm, I just love turkey, ham and tamales; We really need to watch our diets during the holidays!"

Accident Investigation - By Brian Teig, Safety Specialist II

Accident review is a crucial part of Riverside County's safety program. Accidents are investigated to determine the cause and circumstances surrounding the incident and to decide what action to take to avoid further occurrence.

Every accident, incident and near miss that causes or has potential to cause injury or property damage should be investigated. A supervisor's investigation should be made as soon as possible after the incident occurs and in a timely, proficient manner.

Who Investigates Accidents?

Supervisors are responsible for investigating accidents and incidents within their areas of supervision. Supervisors are closest to their employees, know the jobs and understand the working conditions better than anyone else. Their

knowledge, experience and judgment are indispensable in the initial stage of an investigation. For accidents that result in serious injury, death or damages the County Safety Office must be involved. Safety Office must be notified immediately for all incidents involving multiple injury, serious disabling injury/illness requiring hospitalization, death and for major property or environmental damage. In rare cases, an accident investigation committee can be assembled to further investigate and handle serious or high exposure incidents.

When and How to Investigate an Incident.

— An accident investigation should begin as soon as possible after an accident. Key steps to take when investigating an accident are (1) secure the accident scene, only if safe to do so, (2) ques-

tion or obtain statements of those involved and any witnesses to gather all factual information, (3) take pictures of the accident scene and materials involved and (4) complete a report which includes all pertinent information. Supervisors must use the appropriate investigation report, either the Immediate Supervisor's Report of Employee Injury (Safety Form 674) for employee injury and illness, or County Vehicle Accident/ Incident Report (Safety Form 942-6) for accidents and incidents involving property damage. It is critical that these reports are filled out completely and accurately, as this information maybe used to protect our county reputation and assets.—**For more information, contact the County Safety Office.**

A Word of Recognition

"Congratulations" are in order for County Safety Officer Tom Sproal for recently being elected as Secretary Treasurer for the County Safety Officers Organization of California (CSOOC).

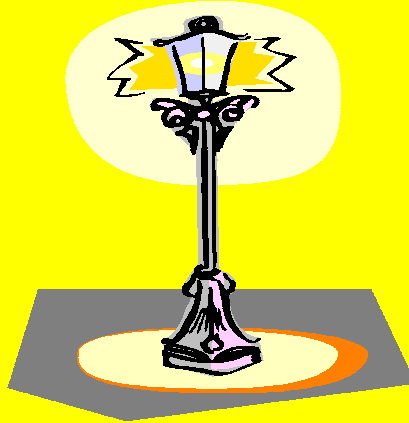
This organization represents all California County Governments, along with 18+ associated membership associations.

The organization stays abreast of proposed and current safety legislation, along with working close with industry and government agencies in promoting safety throughout the State of California.

FALL AND WINTER PREPERATION



Trim those trees and bushes back to get rid of those over-shadowing areas around buildings and parking lots. Contact Building Services or the person responsible for maintenance.



Check exterior lights— on and about your building and in the parking lot— to make sure lighting is adequate when you leave work. Make sure timers are set.



Gas tank always 1/2 full; coolant ok; heater works; windshield wipers ok; spare tire ok; fan belts ok; flashers work; tires ok; oil ok; headlights ok.

HOLIDAY DECORATION SAFETY TIPS—BY MIKE BOWERS, RCRMC SAFETY COORDINATOR

Each year, hospital emergency rooms treat about 8,700 people for injuries, such as falls, cuts and shocks, related to holiday lights, decorations and Christmas trees. In addition, Christmas trees are involved in about 400 fires annually, resulting in 20 deaths, 70 injuries and an average of more \$15 million in property loss and damage. The Consumer Product Safety Commission recommends the following:

TREES: A fresh tree will stay green longer so keep the following in mind: A fresh tree is green • Fresh needles are hard to pull from the branches • When bent between your fingers, fresh needles do not break • The trunk butt of a fresh tree is sticky with resin • When the trunk of a tree is bounced on the ground, a shower of falling needles show that a tree is too dry.

Place tree away from fireplaces, radiators and other heat source, Heated rooms dry trees out rapidly, creating fire hazards.

Cut off about two inches of the trunk to expose fresh wood for better water absorption. Trim away branches as necessary to set tree trunk in the base of a sturdy, water-holding stand with wide spread feet. Keep the stand

filled with water while the tree is indoors.

Place the tree out of the way of traffic and do not block doorways.

TRIMMINGS: Use only non-combustible or flame-resistant materials • Wear gloves while decorating with spun glass “angel hair” to avoid irritation to eyes and skin. Choose tinsel or artificial icicles or plastic or non-leaded metals. Leaded materials are hazardous if ingested by children. In homes with small children, take special care to: Avoid decorations that are sharp or breakable • Keep trimmings with small removable parts out of the reach of children. Pieces could be swallowed or inhaled • Avoid trimmings that resemble candy or food. A child could eat them!

LIGHTS: Indoors or outside, use only lights that have been tested for safety. Identify these by the label from an independent testing laboratory • Check each set of lights, new or old, for broken or cracked sockets, frayed or bare wires, or loose connection. Discard damaged sets or repair them before using • Fasten outdoor lights securely to trees, house, walls or other firm supports to protect from wind damage • Use no more than three standard-size sets of lights per single extension cord • Turn off

lights on trees and other decorations when you go to bed or leave the house. Lights could short and start a fire.

PAPER: When making paper decorations, look for materials labeled non-combustible or flame-resistant • Never place trimmings near open flames or electrical connections • Remove all wrapping papers from tree and fireplace areas immediately after presents are opened • Do not burn papers in the fireplace. A flash may result as wrappings ignite suddenly and burn intensely.

GENERAL HOLIDAY SAFETY: Keep matches, lighters, and candles out of the reach of children • Avoid smoking near flammable decorations • Avoid wearing loose flowing clothes—particularly long, open sleeves—near open flames—such as those of a fire place, stove, or candlelit table • Never burn candles near live trees and decorations • Don’t buy cut Christmas trees so early—they are generally cut the first week of November so they can reach stores and be ready for sale by Thanksgiving Day. These trees are dying and they are just going to get drier, and drier, each day after they were cut.

Foul Weather Driving By Lou Giantonio, Safety Coordinator

Foul Weather Driving

In 1999, about 5000 people were killed and 500,000 were injured in the U.S. in auto crashes due to inclement weather. What should you do in bad weather? **'STAY HOME AND AVOID DRIVING!'** If you must drive, be extremely careful and drive appropriately for the conditions. Speed Limits are set for ideal weather and visibility, so **"SLOW DOWN"**, because it can take twice the normal distance to stop on even slightly wet roads.

- Turn on headlights to see and be seen
- Leave plenty of space between you and the vehicle ahead
- Let someone know the route you are taking and when you'll arrive
- Having 4 wheel drive does not mean stops and turns are quicker

DRIVING IN THE RAIN: When water mixes with motor oil on pavement, roads are slicker when it first starts to rain. If it rains long or hard enough, the mixture will wash away, but then the water itself becomes a hazard.



- Reduce your speed, slowing down can prevent hydroplaning
- Turn on low-beam headlights and your wipers
- Drive in the middle lanes, as water tends to pool in outside lanes
- Don't go through standing water—

especially if the depth is unknown

- Avoid swerving and hard or abrupt braking
- Check mirrors more frequently—set them to minimize blind spots
- Keep both hands on the steering wheel
- Ensure your tires have plenty of tread and proper inflation—if you need tires, consider "all weather" tires that are specially designed for bad conditions

DRIVING INTO FOG: It is one of the most visually limiting conditions. If you get caught in heavy fog, stop well off the road until visibility gets better. If there is no safe place to stop, then:

- Turn on Emergency Flashers
- Slow down—Fog makes it difficult to judge speed—Don't believe your eyes—glance at your speedometer to be sure you have slowed down
- Turn on wipers—defroster and low-beam or fog light, if installed
- Brake gently—fog moisture makes roads slick
- Crack your window and turn off the radio—watch for slower moving cars and listen for engine sounds or car horns
- If the fog becomes too dense—try to pull completely off the road and position your vehicle in a protected area from other traffic
- Take all fog-related warning signs seriously

DRIVING IN SNOW AND ICE: If possible, wait until plows have cleared the way. Clear snow and ice from your vehicle and windows before moving. To help maintain traction as you get under way:

- (Automatic Transmission) Put your car in "D2" and accelerate gently—shift to "D" once you're moving
- (Standard Transmission) Use the highest gear, 2nd or 3rd, with which you can move the car without stall-

ing—accelerate gently

STOPPING on snow and ice may require up to ten times the distance as in normal conditions. Keep plenty of distance between you and the vehicle ahead. Most important, don't "lock up" your brakes. Anti-lock brakes (ABS) are designed to



help prevent wheels from locking. They're great if you have them. Follow these tips:

- Slow down considerably before entering a curve or making a turn
- Remove your foot from the gas—let the engine slow you down—then break gently
- Don't be overly confident with a 4-Wheel Drive vehicle—it won't stop any faster
- With ABS brakes—press the pedal firmly and hold it
- Avoid sudden maneuvers—keep moving without wheel spin no matter how slow you must go
- When going down hill—use a lower gear and let the engine slow you down
- Use tire chains where allowed by law
- If you begin to slide—ease off the gas to slow down—steer slowly in the direction you want to go—be ready to correct for a slide in the other direction

Winter storms can strand motorists for hours before help can arrive. Being prepared could save your life. Consider carrying a personal survival kit in your trunk.

COUNTY SAFETY OFFICE

3901 Lime Street
Suite #100
Riverside
Monday thru Friday
7:30 AM to 5:30 PM

Phone: 909-955-3520
Fax: 909-955-9200
Email: See Listing

Web site: <http://intranet.co.riverside.ca.us/safety>



"FLASH Safety Tip"

"Holidays bring out the best in us; Alcohol may bring out the worst; Be responsible"

County Safety Office Staff are available to assist you at all times. Our office is in the (909) area code, on MICRO and all have Email.

COUNTY SAFETY OFFICER

Tom Sproal, County Safety Officer 955-5859

Safety Personnel

Mike Bowers, RCRMC Safety Coordinator 486-4689

Ken Brooks, Safety Coordinator 955-9205

Pat English, RCSD Safety Coordinator 955-2493 or 955-5853

Lou Giantonio, Safety Coordinator 955-3522

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Lydia Temmen, OA III

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"mini" SAFETY Topics OF THE MONTH

By Joe Salinas, Safety Coordinator

VEHICLE SAFETY VARIES

The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) reports a significant difference in fatality rates among different model cars, passenger vans, pickup trucks and utility vehicles during 1995 to 1998.

Pickup trucks have the highest driver death rates, with four-wheel-drive trucks topping the list. This is due largely to the high center of gravity, sport utility vehicles and pick trucks have high fatality rates in single-vehicle, rollover crashes.

Complete information on driver death rates by vehicle body style, weight and crash type of 1994-97 models driven during 1995-1998 is available on the IIHS web site at:

www.highwaysafety.org

CHILD SAFETY-SEAT PROGRAM

Take advantage of the *Child Safety-Seat Inspection Program* that Daimler Chrysler is offering. Daimler Chrysler dealers will inspect child seats in any vehicle, regardless of manufacturer, under a new program called "Fit for a Kid".

"Fit for a Kid" is a response to studies that cite vehicle crashes as the leading killer of children and to evidence that many parents don't properly install child safety seats. National Transportation Safety Board has asked all automakers to create a system of permanent child-seat fitting stations.

Last year, in a pilot test program at 51 dealerships in four cities, DaimlerChrysler inspected more than 800 vehicles and found seats improperly installed in eight out of 10 vehicles. Inspections take only from 20 to 30 minutes. To schedule an inspection, call 1-877-FIT-4-A-KID or visit www.fitforakid.org

HAVE YOU HEARD OF A SMART AIR BAG?

If you haven't, you will soon. The new 2001 Ford Windsor mini van, offers a so-called smart air bag. A front passenger weight sensor tells the air bag if the seat is occupied by an adult, a child or not occupied at all. The sensory regulates deployment speed and prevents the bag from deploying when the seat is empty or when a small child is aboard.

The sensor keeps the bag from deploying if the child weighs less than 45 pounds or if an object, such as a briefcase, grocery bag, or bowling ball, is placed in the front seat, affecting deployment.

Kids of course, do not belong in the front seat—they belong in the back seat, properly fastened.

Visit: www.ford.com