

# SAFETY ZONE

Volume 3, Issue 2

February 2003

## Tom's Corner A Message From The County Safety Officer

Everywhere you look you see signs. You might be far from the nearest town or highway and somebody still wants to tell you where you can drive, where you can't park, what you should wear and where you should buy dinner.

The number of signs and the information they are intended to convey is overwhelming. Even in your workplace, words, pictures and symbols likely are plastered on the walls and equipment. You could be tempted to ignore them all rather than sort out what is important and what is not. That would not be a good idea, because some of them might contain information on how to protect you and others from injury and illness.

"Sign fatigue" is how some people describe the state of mind where you have seen so many signs you don't pay attention to them anymore. Inaccurate signs contribute to this condition, such as a lockout tag remaining on a machine after it has been returned to service or a warning sign mistakenly left behind when a road work crew has packed up

and gone home for the day. When you find out a sign is wrong, you might be inclined to ignore a similar sign when you see it later. Don't give in to sign fatigue. No matter how many signs are vying for your attention and no matter if inaccurate signs have fooled you in the past, it is important that you continue to watch for safety signs at work, on the road and wherever you are. Drivers who ignore highway construction signs continue to plow into heavy machinery and run over workers. Workers who fail to take workplace signs seriously continue to be injured and killed by on-the-job hazards.

Safety signs are often conveyed by way of colors, shapes and symbols designed to stand out from the crowd. In many cases these elements are standardized so you can recognize them easily, such as highway signs throughout the United States and Canada.

Good safety signage is the result of cooperation. If you see a safety sign problem, report it. A damaged, worn or unlighted sign should be repaired or replaced. Inaccurate signs should be removed or corrected. If a sign has become obscured (such as a stop sign overtaken by tree branches) make sure someone clears it. Remove clutter and unnecessary postings on walls and equipment so important safety information stands out. If you see the need for a safety sign where none exists, make sure it is placed.

# Monthly Self Inspections of County Facilities

By David Rich, Safety Coordinator

We are now into the second month of 2003 and it is important to remind all Departments, Agencies and Special Districts that **Monthly Self Inspections** of your facilities, equipment, and operations are required, not only administratively, but most importantly—for your safety.

These Monthly Self Inspections must be conducted by a competent staff member, who understands the facility, equipment, and operation being inspected. The inspection must be documented and maintained at the work facility. Should Cal-OSHA conduct an inspection of your site/facility, you must be able to present written documentation of your Monthly Self Inspections.

The best method to use to document your monthly inspection is some type of checklist. A written checklist will ensure consistency in your month to month inspections. Checklists should be kept on site for a minimum of three years. Keeping your checklists for this period of time, would indicate to any inspector, a consistent inspection program.

Help in developing a check list for your facility, department, equipment or operation may be located in the County Safety Manual, Document 1001. This document provides a sample checklist which you may copy and incorporate into your site specific checklist.

It should be noted that although the checklist in Document 1001 covers a wide area of items, which should be inspected monthly, it is not all encompassing.

Some Departments, Agencies, or Special Districts have specific hazards which are unique to their areas and these unique hazards must also be incorporated into the Monthly Self Inspection documentation.

Reviewing your Monthly Self Inspections during your Monthly Safety Meetings is a good practice. One of many ways you can help reduce accidents, injuries and property damage in your work areas is by identifying and notifying other employees at your work facility/site of potential hazards and what needs to be done to abate them.



## “One man’s WTC heroics underscore the need for life-saving drills”

The powerful story about a security chief’s efforts to save the lives of 3000 co-workers in the World Trade Center Tower Two on September 11, 2001 serves as perhaps the best example of how safety drills can save lives.

The actions of Rick Rescorla, who perished in the collapse of Tower Two, were recounted by his friend, world-famous war correspondent Joseph Galloway, at the National Safety Council’s 90th annual Congress and Expo in San Diego.

Rescorla, who emigrated to the United States from England in 1962 to join the US Army, was the last man to leave the World Trade Center during a 1993 truck-bombing terrorist attack. After seeing his co-workers to safety, Rescorla was covered in soot and coughing and choking when he emerged.

Galloway explained to a huge audience at the NSC Congress that as chief of security for Morgan Stanley, Rescorla feared another terrorist attack on the WTC was inevitable and urged his bosses to move their headquarters.

He was told a long-term lease prevented any such move.

“That being so,” said Galloway, “he sought authorization to conduct four to six surprise evacuation drills each year. People laughed at him and called them Rick’s fire drills.”

After the first passenger jet struck WTC Tower One on September 11, people in the second tower were told by the Port Authority personnel that they were safe, not to panic and to remain at their desks.

Rick Rescorla had other ideas.

“He grabbed his bullhorn and worked his way from floor to floor, ordering the evacuation of all Morgan Stanley employees,” said Galloway.

Rescorla had drilled the workers on how to find a safe stairwell and how to descend in pairs by the buddy system.

Just as the former platoon leader had soothed his soldiers’ nerves in Vietnam by singing to them in times of intense stress, Rescorla sang God Bless America to Morgan Stanley workers to calm them.

Then he called his wife, whom he would never see again, to tell her how much he loved her and that she had made his life.

“Rick Rescorla got everyone but five employees of Morgan Stanley out of that building safe and alive. He was last seen going back up those stairs looking for stragglers.”

The building fell in on Rick and no trace of his body has ever been recovered.

Rescorla took part in the bloody Ia Drang Valley battles of 1965, described in the book *We Were Soldiers Once ... And Young*, coauthored by Galloway and Lt.-Gen. Hal Moore. It subsequently became a movie starring Mel Gibson.

A petition is being circulated to have President George W. Bush award the Presidential Medal of Freedom to Rescorla “for heroism and gallantry beyond the call of duty on September 11, 2001.”

To read more about Rick Rescorla, visit the following site:

<http://www.coachwyatt.com/rickrescorla.htm>

To sign the petition, visit the following site:

<http://www.petitiononline.com/pmfrick/petition.html>



In the book, the author, Lt. Gen. Harold G. Moore, mentioned a young Englishman - that's right, an Englishman serving in the United States Army - named Rick Rescorla. He is mentioned or quoted on 37 pages of the book, and he is the combat infantryman who appears on the book's cover photo shown above.

# Courtesy in Driving

**By Steve Hutchings, Safety Coordinator**

The 1990's introduced us to the phrase "road rage" with events covered by the media, with little of no emphasis on the "courteous driver".

The nation's highways are more congested for various reasons. Congestion can be attributed to, but not limited to:

- Highway construction
- One-passenger-commuter-cars on the road, instead of carpooling or using rapid transit.

Congestion can also be compounded by a driver's attitude such as:

- People leaving late for their destinations and not compensating for delays.

These are only a few examples that may create stressful driving situations for many of us on local roads and highways.

As vehicle drivers we may become easily upset with the actions or non-actions of other drivers. This may include actions such as not signaling; the tailgating driver that looks like you are towing them with a hitch in your rear view mirror; on-coming drivers with their high-beams in your face at night or reflecting off your rear view mirror; and how about that slow-snail-pace driver that is going to make you late to your destination. It's so easy to find fault in other drivers but have you ever wondered why another driver honked their horn at you or made some type of "universal hand gesture" toward you while you were driving? Then, you get upset because you consider yourself "the perfect driver." We need to look at our driving habits honestly and be critical of ourselves, to see if we are indeed not being courteous due to our unconscious driving habits.

## Unconscious Bad Driving Habits

- **On the cell phone while driving.**
- **Not allowing extra driving time during bad weather or high traffic conditions.**
- **Not complying with "Yield To Right Of Way" when applicable.**
- **Not driving defensively and being courteous.**

## Good Driving Habits

- **Hands-free cell phone—or better yet—Pull over, stop and use the phone.**
- **Depending on the weather or traffic conditions, add a minimum of 15 to 30 minutes driving time.**
- **Knowing driving regulations and when to apply them is a "good thing" - practice them.**
- **If everybody drove defensively and courteous—we would not have as many problems.**

Wouldn't it be nice if courtesy was a driving license requirement? I would guess the number of drivers would probably drop at least 33 percent, if this was made a DMV driving test requirement. But unfortunately, we must deal with reality and there are those drivers that make us feel uncomfortable, based on their driving practices and the attitude they exhibit behind the wheel.

Once you identify an unsafe driver, create distance and avoid any type of confrontation. Don't let others dictate how you should drive, but set an example and continue driving courteously.

# THE IMPORTANCE OF HANDWASHING

By Becky Perkins, Occupational Health Nurse Consultant/Safety Division

The most important thing that you can do to keep from getting sick is to wash your hands. By frequently washing your hands you wash away germs that you have picked up from other people, or from contaminated surfaces, or from animals and animal waste.

## What happens if you do not wash your hands frequently?

You pick up germs from other sources and then you infect yourself when you touch your eyes, your nose or your mouth. By simply washing your hands with soap and water, you can prevent one of the most common ways people catch colds, especially after your hands have become contaminated with a cold virus.

You can also spread germs directly to others or onto surfaces that other people touch. And before you know it, everybody around you is getting sick.

The important thing to remember is that, in addition to colds, some pretty serious diseases--like Hepatitis A, meningitis, and infectious diarrhea--can easily be prevented if people make a habit of washing their hands.

## When should you wash your hands?

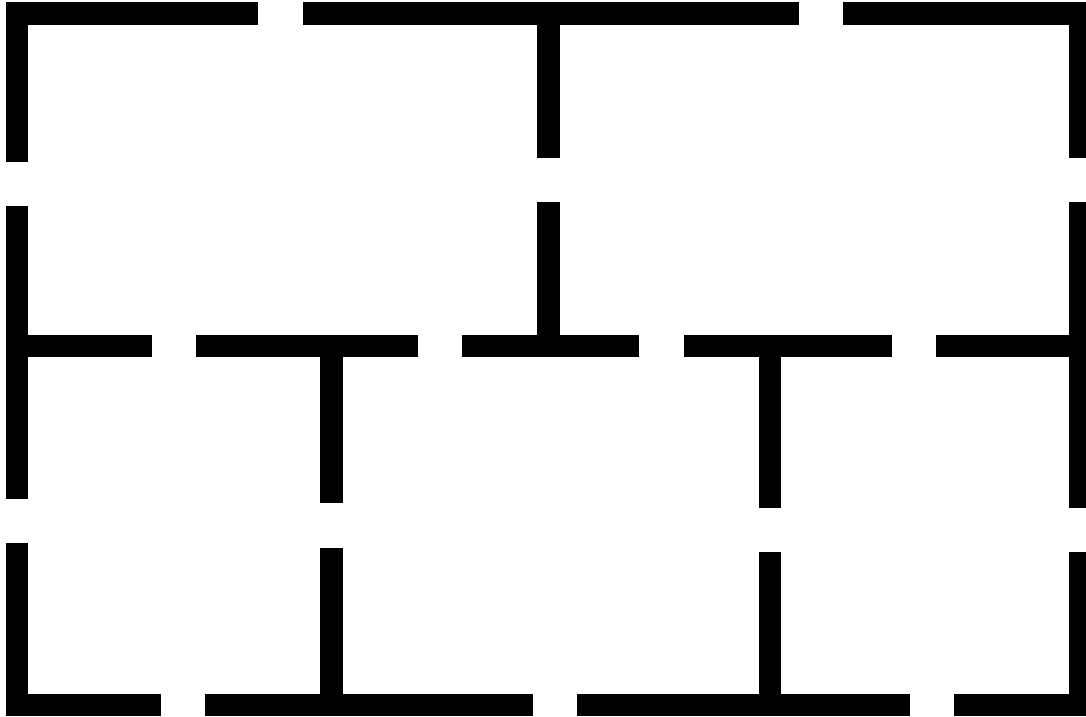
You should wash your hands often. Probably more often than you do now because you can't see germs with the naked eye or smell them, so you do not really know where they are hiding.

It is especially important to wash your hands:

- Before, during, and after you prepare food.
- Before you eat, and after you use the bathroom.
- After handling animals or animal waste.
- When your hands are dirty, and
- More frequently when someone in your home is sick.



# Something To Stimulate The Mind While On Break



## Start anywhere, draw one line passing THRU every opening

In essence you have a six-room diagram. The entire outside of the puzzle is considered one room. Can you start inside any room and draw one continuous line that goes through every opening exactly once without going through any walls. You may, of course, end anywhere of your choice, not necessarily where you started.

If it would help your thinking, think of this as a house with every door open. Can you start in any room (or outside) and walk through every door, closing each door after you pass through it (without backtracking), and close every door?

We all know that this puzzle is impossible. (But read the rest of this page anyway. I have a challenge for you down below.)

For this kind of puzzle to work, you either have to:

- Start in a room with an even number of doors, and end in that very same room, or
- Start in a room with an odd number of doors, then end in a different room that also has an odd number of doors. But, no matter which way you start, every other room has to have an even number of doors, because when you walk into the room, you close one door, and when you walk out of the room, you close a second door. If you started with an odd number of doors in that "not-a-terminus" room, then eventually, you would have only one open door in that room, and you would trap yourself in that room the last time you entered it, or you would never be able to enter it at all because you'd be trapped inside another odd room.

**BUT WAIT A MINUTE** ... there is a solution to this puzzle after all. Can you solve this puzzle? Draw one continuous line that passes through every opening without crossing any of the lines. It can be done. I've done it. But you have got to be creative. That's double-underlined creative. Those of you on AOL can CHEAT and look for a hint by searching keyword KD for the terms "cheat room puzzle". I posted several hints there (Puzzle creator).

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SAFETY  
DIVISION

3901 Lime Street  
Suite #100  
Riverside  
Office Hours: Monday—Thursday  
7:30 A.M. to 5:30 P.M.  
Friday: 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.  
Safety Hotline: (909) 955-5868

Phone: 909-955-3520

Fax: 909-955-9200

Email: Safety Office Publications

Web site:

<http://intranet.co.riverside.ca.us/>

## Something To Stimulate The Mind While On Break

Due to the overwhelming popularity of our “brain teasers”, the contest portion –1st/2nd/3rd and prizes—will no longer be a part of our publication.

Puzzles will continue for your enjoyment and the answer will be provided the following month. If you just can't wait a month, contact **SAFETY OFFICE PUBLICATIONS** via GroupWise and request the answer.

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

Annette Dora, Safety Specialist I 955-3522

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

Tony Gonzales, Safety Coordinator 955-5881

Steve Hickam, Safety Specialist II 955-5892

Steve Hutchings, MH Safety Coordinator 955-3521 or 358-5272

Dan Kerker, Safety Coordinator 955-5880

Art Pereida, Safety Coordinator 955-5883

Becky Perkins, Occupation Health Nurse Consultant 955-5854

Dave Rich, Safety Coordinator 955-9527

Joe Salinas, Transportation Safety Coordinator 955-6788

Brian Teig, DHS Safety Specialist II 955-5880 or 358-5547

Safety Office Support Personnel 955-3520

Tawni Grubbs, OA III

Lydia Temmen, OA III

Jan Zimmermann, OA II

