

SAFETY ZONE

Safety Division

Volume 6, Issue 1

January 2006



A MESSAGE FROM THE COUNTY SAFETY DIVISION

The County Safety Division would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge those of you that have taken time to comment on the Safety Newsletter. In addition to your comments, your requests for certain topics to be covered are very helpful. They give us direction on developing articles and help us meet our readers specific needs.

Safety Newsletter articles are developed by Safety Division staff. Safety Topics are assigned based on staff expertise, a national or local safety topic, or a document from the Safety Manual.

Sometimes topics are difficult to select and it's important that we don't repeat topics too often. When our readers request that a topic be covered, it is a great help. We encourage you, our readers, to continue making these requests and we will do our best to continue to meet your needs.— *"Thank you"*

IN THIS MONTH'S ISSUE

Surviving Cold Weather—Page 3

There are some good tips in combating cold environments and preventing cold weather injuries, along with some first aid techniques.

You Deserve Three Breaks a Day—Page 5

You need to read this article to appreciate the title.

Do You Need a New Years Resolution?

See Page 6—We think you'll like these.

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Need To contact the County Safety Division?

Send your email to:

mailto:Safety_Office_Publications

When we receive your email, via GroupWise, we will respond accordingly

For the 2006 Training schedule and to enroll in classes, visit:

<http://safety.rc-hr.com/training.html>

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TRAINING CLASS	JANUARY TRAINING DATES and LOCATION	FEBRUARY TRAINING DATES and LOCATION
DRIVERS TRAINING	CSO—Jan. 5 and 12—9 to Noon Indio—January 10—9 to Noon	CSO—February 7—9 to Noon Not scheduled this month in Indio
ERGONOMICS/RMI TRAINING	CSO—January 10—9 to Noon Not scheduled this month in Indio	CSO—February 2—9 to Noon Indio—February 9—9 to Noon
EMPLOYEE WORKPLACE VIOLENCE TRAINING	CSO—January 26—9 to Noon Indio—January 17—9 to Noon	CSO—February 16—9 to Noon Not scheduled this month in Indio
AIRBORNE & BLOODBORNE PATHOGEN TRAINING	CSO—January 19—9 to Noon Not scheduled this month in Indio	CSO—February 15—9 to Noon Not scheduled this month in Indio
SUPERVISORS WORKPLACE VIOLENCE TRAINING	CSO—January 31—8 to Noon Not scheduled this month in Indio	Not scheduled for Riverside Indio—February 23—8:30 to Noon
SUPERVISORS SAFETY ORIENTATION TRAINING	Not scheduled this month in Indio or Riverside	CSO—February 28—8 to Noon Indio—February 16—8:30 to Noon
CPR and FIRST AID	CSO—January 11—8 to 5 PM	CSO—February 8—8 to 5:00 PM
CPR and FIRST AID	CSO—January 25—8 to 5 PM	CSO—February 22—8 to 5:00 PM

MONTHLY SAFETY TOPIC

January Safety Topic **Surviving The Cold Weather**

Regulatory and/or Source of Information:
National Safety Council

Article contributor and/or author:

For additional information on this topic, Annette can be reached at (951) 955-3522 or via GroupWise at:
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**Annette Dora
Safety Coordinator**

Prolonged exposure to low temperatures, wind and/or moisture – whether it be on the ski slope, working outside, or stranded in a car - can result in cold-related illnesses such as frostbite and hypothermia. Here are some suggestions on how to keep warm and avoid frostbite and hypothermia.

Dress Properly

Wear several layers of loose-fitting clothing to insulate your body by trapping warm, dry air inside. Loosely woven cotton and wool clothes best trap air and resist dampness.



The head and neck lose heat faster than any other part of the body. Your cheeks, ears and nose are the most prone to frostbite. Wear a hat, scarf and turtleneck sweater to protect these areas.

Frostbite: What to look for

The extent of frostbite is difficult to judge until hours after thawing. There are two classifications of frostbite:

1. Superficial frostbite is characterized by white, waxy or grayish-yellow patches on the affected areas. The skin feels cold and numb. The skin surface feels stiff and underlying tissue feels soft when depressed.

Deep frostbite is characterized by waxy and pale skin. The affected parts feel cold, hard and solid and cannot be depressed. Large blisters may appear after re-warming.

What to do:

- Get the victim out of the cold and to a warm place immediately.
- Remove any constrictive clothing items that could impair circulation.
- If you notice signs of frostbite, seek medical attention immediately.
- Place dry, sterile gauze between toes and fingers to absorb moisture and to keep them from sticking together.
- Slightly elevate the affected part to reduce pain and swelling.
- If you are more than one hour from a medical facility and you have warm water, place the frostbitten part in the water (102 to 106 degrees Fahrenheit). If you do not have a thermometer, test the water first to see if it is warm, not hot. Re-warming usually takes 20 to 40 minutes or until tissues soften. Transport the victim to a hospital as soon as possible.



What not to do:

- Do not use water hotter than 106 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Do not use water colder than 100° Fahrenheit since it will not thaw frostbite quickly enough.
- Do not rub or massage the frostbite area.
- Do not rub with ice or snow.
- Do not give alcohol. Giving the person warm drinks or food is not a good idea. They don't re-warm the person and they pose a choking hazard, since the person may be having difficulty swallowing.



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Hypothermia

Hypothermia occurs when the body loses more heat than it produces. Hypothermia can kill. Symptoms include change in mental status, uncontrollable shivering, cool abdomen and a low core body temperature. Severe hypothermia may cause rigid muscles, dark and puffy skin, irregular heartbeat and respiration, and unconsciousness.

Treat hypothermia by protecting the victim from further heat loss and seeking immediate medical attention. Get the victim out of the cold. Add insulation such as blankets, pillows, towels or newspapers beneath and around the victim. Be sure to cover the victim's head. Replace wet clothing with dry clothing. Handle the victim gently because rough handling can cause cardiac arrest. Keep the victim in a horizontal (flat) position.

Finally, the best way to avoid frostbite and hypothermia is to stay out of the cold. DO this by staying dry and avoid the wind. If at all possible, be patient and wait out the dangerous cold weather.

You can get more information from: www.nsc.org and www.google.com under frostbite and hypothermia.

STAGES OF HYPOTHERMIA

BODY TEMP	SEVERITY	SYMPTOMS
98° - 95°F	Mild	Shivering begins; a sense of chillness sets in. Skin becomes numb, muscular performance begins to degrade, poor movement coordination, hands are immobile or fumbling.
95° - 93°F	Mild	Shivering is more violent; skin is pale and cold to the touch, mild confusion or apathy sets in, have difficulty in speaking, deeper feeling of cold and numbness, lack of coordination is obvious. At this stage, you are on the verge of hypothermia.
93° - 90°F	Mild	Mental sluggishness; unable to use hands, retrograde amnesia setting in, gross muscular incoordination, slow thought, slurred speech.
90° - 86°F	Moderate	Shivering ceases; mental confusion continues, coupled with incoherence and irrationality, severe lack of coordination accompanied by stiffness, have inability to walk or stand.
86° - 82°F	Severe	Severe muscular rigidity; sleepiness setting, extreme lethargy, slower respiration and heartbeat, dilation of eye pupils, skin is ice cold to the touch.
82° - 78°F	Severe	Unconsciousness; typically followed by death resulting from heart or respiratory failure.

You Deserve Three Breaks a Day!

By Brian Teig, CHA Safety Coordinator



In most every job there is a right way and a wrong way to do the work. Safe work practices are written to get employees to do work the right way, the safe way. When employees do not follow proper work practices (or are not properly trained) they can develop flawed work habits. Even when employees are properly trained, it can sometimes be a challenge to get them to follow safe work practices.

Take, for example, work breaks. Generally speaking, employees are allowed three work breaks during a normal 8-hour work day; a morning, lunch and afternoon break. Surprisingly, many employees have developed an unsafe habit of regularly working through breaks or taking their breaks at their workstation. These unsafe work practices arise for a variety of reasons. Some employees feel as though their workload is such that they can never get caught up with their work and feel that they have to work through their breaks in order to keep up. Other employees work through their breaks in hopes of getting more done in the belief that doing so increases their chances for career advancement. Still others are not efficient enough to keep up or simply waste valuable work time doing personal things.



Regardless of the reason, it's important to understand that all work tires the body and mind. Physical and mental fatigue is a form of unhealthy stress. When the body becomes tired, we experience discomfort, aches and even pain. Instead of heeding the body's natural warning system, we often ignore it. If you're a person who consistently misses work breaks, you are placing yourself at a greater risk of injury and for health problems later on in life, especially if you are sitting at that darn computer all day!

The accumulation of physical stress without a healthy release can result in overeating, depression, physical injury and other stress-related health problems like insomnia. To relieve normal work stress many people turn to food and drink. Instead of getting up and going for a quick walk or stretch, we eat that snack at our desk or go buy a soda from the vending machine. The habit of having a coffee, soda and a snack (at the workstation) will result in weight gain because the body burns fewer calories and simply stores the excess as fat. Instead of indulging in that unhealthy "stress fix", go for a walk and drink some water or some other healthier beverage and choose a piece of fruit over a candy bar. Our bodies work, feel and look better when we choose the healthy alternatives.

People undertake many activities during their breaks. Some run errands and take care of personal business. Others go for walks or to the break room to read a book or just to relax. Whatever you do, get away from your workstation. If you have to put up a sign, **I'M ON BREAK DO NOT DISTURB**, you're losing the battle for health. The phone still rings, email still comes through, people will still bother you and the stress remains. Get up and away from your work area and go do something relaxing!



Regular work breaks, away from the workstation or office, release stress and help the body rejuvenate itself. In fact, studies have shown that workers are more productive and less prone to have accidents when rested than tired. Even though you think you're accomplishing more, you're more likely to make mistakes and increase the risk of injury or illness.

So stop missing those important breaks. You deserve three breaks a day!

NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS

Just for today, I will live through this day only, and not set far-reaching goals to try to overcome all my problems at once. I know I can do something for 24 hours that would overwhelm me if I thought I had to keep it up for a lifetime.

Just for today, I will be happy. Abraham Lincoln said, "Most folks are about as happy as they make up their minds to be". He was right. I will not dwell on thoughts that depress me. I will chase them out of my mind and replace them with happy thoughts.

Just for today, I will adjust myself to what is. I will face reality. I will correct those things that I can correct and accept those I cannot.

Just for today, I will improve my mind. I will not be a mental loafer. I will force myself to read something that requires effort, thought, and concentration.

Just for today, I will do something positive to improve my health. If I'm a smoker, I'll make an honest effort to quit. If I'm overweight, I'll eat nothing I know to be fattening. And I will force myself to exercise ~ even if it's only walking around the block or using the stairs instead of the elevator.



Just for today, I will make a conscious effort to be agreeable. I will look as good as I can, dress becomingly, speak softly, act courteously, and not interrupt when someone else is talking. Just for today, I'll try not to improve anybody except myself. We know so much more about nutrition and how much exercise and sensible living can extend life and make it more enjoyable; so just for today, I'll take good care of my body so I can celebrate many more happy new years.

Just for today, I will have a program. I may not follow it exactly, but I will have it, thereby saving myself from two pests: hurry and indecision.

Just for today, I will gather the courage to do what is right and take the responsibility for my own actions.