COUNTY OF Riverside
HUMAN RESOURCES
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SAFETY ZONE

Safety Division
Volume 4, Issue 5
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A Message
From The County Safety Division

My first month with the County has been interesting and challenging. I have spent most of my time getting to know the Safety Office staff and familiarizing myself with the responsibilities of the County Safety Division and the organizational structure of the County itself. Having come from a comparably sized county (Sacramento) I have been struck by the similarity of the issues that confront the safety staffs in both counties.

I have had the opportunity to meet with Safety Office personnel on an individual basis, getting a sense of their backgrounds, areas of expertise and personal insights into the operation of the Safety Office and the various County programs that they each service. Based upon my nearly 20 years of experience in the occupational safety and health field, I can say with great confidence that the County of Riverside is fortunate to have such a knowledgeable and dedicated safety staff.

I have also begun the process of meeting key personnel within other County departments and programs. It's my belief that communication is vital to establishing a productive working relationship. It is my often stated intent to establish a positive approach to the departments and programs that we service. Towards that end, I am striving to ensure that our efforts are conducive to identifying and addressing potential safety and health issues in a cooperative fashion. I believe that we're all on the same side as we try to protect the County's most valuable asset: it's employees.

Finally, I want to recognize the outstanding job that my predecessor, Tom Sproal, did in establishing an outstanding safety program. Although I did not know Tom personally (he and I did have some business together when I was with Cal/OSHA), I can clearly see the tremendous effort that he put in to protecting the employees of the County of Riverside. As a safety professional, there is no greater legacy.

Mark Carleson,
Riverside County Safety Manager

Here are some general guidelines to assist you in feeling confident and secure about your personal safety, the safety of your family and your belongings. We urge you to become familiar with them and reduce your chances of victimization.

Security Measures

On and Off Work

By Dan Kerker

Safety Coordinator Waste Management

THE BASICS:

Trust your intuition. If you feel you are in danger act immediately, it is better to be embarrassed than to be victimized.

Be aware of your surroundings. Be watchful of suspicious characters and vehicles.

If you are attacked, yell for help. "Call the police" or even yell "Fire". Attract attention; most criminals do not like to be observed.

Do not always follow the same routine. Vary your route or times. Predictability can be a blueprint for trouble.

Try to keep one arm free when walking. Do not overload yourself with bags, it makes you an easy target and delays unlocking doors.

Be especially careful when using ATM's.

Do not let anyone get close enough to see your PIN number or any cash you withdraw.

Stay in well lit areas. Plan your route in advance if possible.

Walk confidently. Don't send out unconscious signals of vulnerability.

Walk close to the curb. Avoid doorways, alleys and bushes.

Avoid walking or jogging alone. Take a friend or companion. There is strength in numbers.

Know the area where you work and live.

Find out what stores and restaurants are open late and where police stations and fire departments are located.

Consider carrying a whistle or other noisemaker. Sound it loudly if you feel threatened.

IN YOUR CAR:

Always lock doors. This is both after entering and when leaving your vehicle, if only for a short time. Keep windows up.

Keep your car in good running condition. Keep the gas tank at least ¼ full at all times.

Carrying packages or other valuables. Store in the trunk if possible. If they cannot be stored in the trunk, make sure they are out of site.

Parking. Park in well lit and heavily traveled areas.

If being followed: drive to nearest police

station or 24 hour convenience store and sound your horn.

If car breaks down, tie white cloth to the antenna as high as possible.

Have keys in hand well before approaching vehicle

ELEVATOR SAFETY:

Before entering, look at the persons already in the car. If you are uneasy, wait for the next elevator.

After entering, if someone suspicious enters and you are uneasy then get off right away.

Stand near control buttons. If threatened or attacked, sound the alarm and push several floor buttons if possible.

ON PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION:

Sit near the driver.

Stay awake and alert. If you look as though you might doze off you become an easy target.

Have exact change ready.

Beware of overheard conversations. Do not tell anyone on the bus or subway where you are going.

If you sense you are being followed, once you have left the mode of transportation walk toward a populated area. Do not walk directly home.

For more information visit: www.lsp.org and http://nsi.org

EXITS– IT'S YOUR RESPONSIBILITY

by Art Pereira, Safety Coordinator

Exits are the most important part of a building's makeup—without them we would not be able to get in or out of a building—we would not have access to theatres, places of worship, shopping centers, educational facilities, hospitals, amusements parks, and of course our homes.

Once we gain access to a building, we now must have the ability of getting out as a normal process of leaving a building or during an emergency situation.

While entering any building, the majority of the time we will gain access to the interior portion of the structure through the main designated entrance in a calm manner—focused and in route to your destination within the building. As you walk through the structure you will go through doors, corridors and hallways, elevators and/or stairs. This simple task may take you five to fifteen minutes, depending on the size of the building and the amount of persons sharing this building with you. When you are done, you will take the same route out of the structure—statistics will show that 98% of all persons do this either by choice because they know no other way out or they had no choice in the matter because of the building configuration, along with security measures enforced by the building tenant.

During this time—Do you ever take time to notice the building environment you are now in?—which has now engulfed you with each step you took in reaching your destination. The further you travel into a building, the more you have to remember on how to get out during normal circumstances.

Getting out of a structure during normal circumstances is no problem. The problem arises when you have to evacuate during an emergency situation, which is requiring you to evacuate the building in a prompt and expeditious manner, without going into panic, along with the other occupants of the building—which could range from several dozen to hundreds or thousands.

If you used an elevator to get in, most likely you won't be able to use them to get out; the hallways, corridors and stairways are now flooded with people trying to get out.

Earlier I mentioned that the majority of people will leave the same way they entered—unfortunately this also applies in an emergency situation. People will travel across a room to go out the way they came in when an exit door was within 20 to 30 feet from them.

Exits are strategically placed in buildings so they do not exceed 150 to 200 feet travel distance to any exit (Note: Although current building and fire codes recently changed for newly constructed buildings, 150-200 feet travel distance applies to 99% of current buildings), which means if you are somewhere in the center of a building the most you will travel to an exit will be approximately 75 to 100 feet.

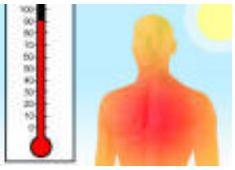
Corridors and hallways, along with any means of getting to an exterior exit door is considered to be part of the building's exit system and the minimum width required must be kept clear and unobstructed at all times.

You must be able to see at least one exit sign from any portion of a building—exit signs will identify the exit or may be a directional exit sign—with an arrow, giving direction to the nearest exit. Some exits signs will be internally illuminated and some will not—this will vary from building to building and the occupancy classification of the building (i.e.; public assembly, office, high-rise, etc.).

When "visiting" or working in any building, it is the responsibility of the occupants of the building to make themselves aware of the building's exit system—alternate exits and stairwells. If you are working in the same building, assist visitors by giving them directions in exiting or a "Follow Me" is always helpful.—For more information, visit: www.nfpa.org

HEAT-RELATED ILLNESS PREVENTION WHILE WORKING OUTDOORS

BY Steve Hickam, Safety Specialist II/Waste Management



As daytime temperatures are starting to rise into the 90+ degree range once again, it's time to think about heat related illness prevention. Employees who work outside in 90+ degree temperatures have increased exposure to heat-related illnesses, including sunburn, heat rash, heat cramps, heat exhaustion and heat stroke. The milder forms of heat-related illness (sunburn and heat rash) are generally easily treatable, usually resolve quickly and normally don't present significant health risks. However, the more severe heat-related illnesses (heat cramps, heat exhaustion and heat stroke, in order of severity) can present significant health risks if not properly treated and counteracted, including permanent disability and even death. Heat stroke and heat exhaustion can overload the body's temperature control system, which causes sweating to cool the body, and can cause the body to be unable to regulate its temperature. Let's review these more severe heat-related illnesses.

Heat Cramps

Causes: The body's salt and hydration levels are depleted through heavy sweating. The salt depletion in the muscles often causes painful cramps. Heat cramps are sometimes a symptom of heat exhaustion.

Symptoms: Muscle pains and spasms, usually in abdomen, arms or legs, following strenuous activity producing heavy sweating.

What To Do For the Victim:

Have victim stop all activity and rest in a cool place. Give victim cool water or sports drink. Victim should avoid strenuous activity for a few hours after cramps subside as further exertion may lead to heat exhaustion or heat stroke.
Important Note: Immediately call 9-1-1 for victims with heart problems or on a low sodium diet or if the heat cramps do not subside in one hour after onset.

Heat Exhaustion

Causes: Usually develops after several days of exposure to high temperatures with inadequate or unbalanced replacement of body fluids. Higher risk groups are the elderly, those with high blood pressure and those working or exercising in a hot environment.

Symptoms: Heavy sweating, pale, cool and clammy skin, muscle cramps, tiredness, weakness, fainting, dizziness, headache, nausea or vomiting, rapid weak pulse and rapid shallow breathing. If untreated, heat exhaustion may progress to heat stroke.

What To Do For the Victim:

Have victim stop all activity and rest quietly in a cool shaded place. Loosen or remove any heavy clothing on victim. Give victim small amounts of cool water, sports drink or beverage containing no alcohol or caffeine to drink if they are alert and not feeling sick to their stomach.

Place victim in cool moving airflow from air conditioner, electric fan or hand fanning. Apply cool water to victim's skin by spraying, misting or sponge bath. Do not leave victim alone. Place victim who is dizzy or light-headed on their back and raise their legs 6-8 inches. Lay victim who is sick to their stomach and prone to vomiting on their side to maintain an open airway.

Important Note: Immediately call 9-1-1 for heat exhaustion victims with heart problems or high blood pressure or if victim's symptoms worsen or last longer than one hour.

Heat Stroke

Causes: Occurs when body can't regulate its temperature; body temperature rises rapidly, the sweating mechanism fails and the body can't cool down. Body temperature may reach or exceed 106° F within 10-15 minutes.

Important Note: Heat stroke can cause permanent injury or death; it is a life threatening condition requiring professional emergency medical attention.

Symptoms: Body temperature above 103° F orally, hot red skin (appears sunburned), dry pale skin (no sweating), rapid or weak pulse, nausea, dizziness, throbbing headache, confusion, disorientation, unresponsiveness, unconsciousness and seizures.

What To Do For Victim:

Immediately call 9-1-1, then assist the victim as follows: Move victim to cool, shady place and remove any heavy clothing. Fan victim vigorously, wrap them in a wet sheet, apply cool water to their skin by spraying, misting or sponge bath or place them in cool shower or bath. If ice is available, make ice pack and place in victim's armpits and/or groin area. Do not leave victim alone.

Place victim who is dizzy or light-headed on their back and raise their legs 6-8 inches. Lay victim who is sick to their stomach and prone to vomiting on their side to maintain an open airway. If victim experiences seizures, don't restrain them nor place any objects in their mouths. Remove nearby objects that may harm them if struck. Do not give any fluids by mouth.

General Tips for Preventing Heat-Related Illness:

Drinks lots of fluids (water or sports drinks are best), but not those containing alcohol or caffeine. Wear lightweight, light-colored and loose fitting clothing providing maximum skin coverage. Protect yourself from the sun; wear a wide-brimmed hat, sun glasses and a sunscreen having an SPF 15 or higher rating. Work in pairs in hot environments so one employee can monitor the other. Work at a slow steady pace and take more frequent rest breaks (preferable in cooler shaded areas, if available). If possible, avoid working in the direct sunlight. Work in shaded areas, if available. If possible, avoid strenuous activity during the hottest part of the day (late morning to early evening hours).

For more information, visit: www.cdc.org

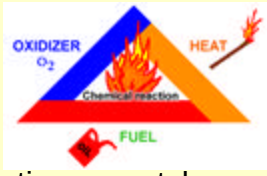
Flammable Liquid Safety

By Ken Brooks, Safety Coordinator

Flammable liquids, although very common to almost every workplace are very dangerous. Flammable liquids can explode or burn very fast. The fire can give off a lot of heat and often thick, black and toxic smoke. Special care and attention are a must when using, storing or disposing of flammable liquids.

Solvents, thinners, cleaners, oil based paints and gasoline are all considered flammable liquids and can burn readily because they have such a low flashpoint. Technically, it is not the liquid that burns but the vapors in the air that burns if they come in contact with an ignition source. Classification of flammable liquids is determined by their flashpoint. Flashpoint is the lowest temperature at which vapors from the liquid can be ignited. Gasoline, for example, has a flashpoint of – 34 degrees F, which means that gasoline vapors can ignite in any climate.

It takes three components to make a fire. These are oxygen, a source of ignition and fuel.



- Oxygen is always present in the air.
- The source of ignition can be a spark, static electricity, friction, a match or a hot surface.
- Fuel can be vapors given off by a flammable liquid such as gasoline.

When these elements come together, they create a chemical reaction and a fire can result.

The best way to prevent a fire with a flammable liquid is to keep these components separate. Here are some suggestions on accident prevention concerning flammable liquids:

- Keep flammable liquids in approved, closed safety containers when not in use. Safety containers have a self closing cover, a venting device and a flame arrester. The container should be leak proof and resistant to corrosion. Storage areas for flammable liquids should be cool and well ventilated.

- Promptly clean up spills of flammable liquids. Dispose of waste in approved containers or drums.
- Carefully read the Material Safety Data [MSDS} sheets for the flammable liquid you are working with. The MSDS will indicate the proper personal protective equipment to be worn. If you do not understand the MSDS, ask your supervisor to go over it with you.
- Use the least hazardous material for the job you are doing.
- Always work in well ventilated areas when using flammable liquids.

Keep flammable liquids away from all possible sources of ignition including hot equipment, furnaces, hot water heaters, steam pipes or sources of static electricity or sparks.

- Containers of flammable liquids must be totally purged or flushed to remove vapors. Then and only then can the container be considered empty.
- Flammable liquids must only be used for the purposes they were intended. For example, gasoline should never be used as a cleaner or solvent due to its flammability.
- Never smoke around flammable liquids.

Do not dispose of flammable liquids by dumping them down a drain, it is a serious violation of environmental laws and could subject the County to stiff financial penalties. All flammable liquid waste products must be collected and properly disposed of according to state regulation. Most flammable liquid wastes are transported by a registered waste hauler and recycled. The wastes are usually burned as a fuel to provide energy for some sort of industrial process. The County gets credit for recycling and the flammable liquid wastes are not contaminating the environment.

Flammable liquids are dangerous and should never be taken for granted. Learn all you can about flammable liquids you come in contact with and know how to handle them safely.

Ref: Safety Talks Newsletter—May 2004

Impossible? Have you tried?
Let's start today and see what happens!

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SAFETY DIVISION

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Email: Safety Office Publications
Web site:
http://intranet.co.riverside.ca.us/

May and June Training Schedule

CSO: Co. Safety Office WPV: Workplace Violence
RMI: Repetitive Motion Injuries

Date	Time	Event	Location
May 3	8-12	Driver's Training	CSO
May 5	8-12	RMI	CSO
May 6	8-12	Supv. WPV	CSO
May 12	8-5:30	First-Aid/CPR	CSO
May 13	8-9:30	Airborne Pathogen's	CSO
May 13	9:30-11	Bloodborne Pathogen's	CSO
May 20	8-12	Driver's Training	CSO
May 20	1-5	RMI	CSO
May 25	8-12	Forklift	CSO
May 26	8-5:30	First-Aid/CPR	CSO
Indio Training at DPSS Bldg., 44-199 Monroe Ave			
May 4	8-12	Supv. Orientation	Indio
May 11	9-12	Driver's Training	Indio
May 11	1-4	RMI	Indio
May 18	9-10:30	Airborne Pathogen's	Indio
May 18	10:30-12	Bloodborne Pathogen's	Indio

COUNTY SAFETY OFFICER

Mark Carleson, Safety Manager	*955-3520*

Safety Personnel

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Pat English, RCSD Safety Coordinator	*955-2493*
Steve Hickam, Safety Specialist II	*955-5892*
Steve Hutchings, MH Safety Coordinator	*358-5272*
Dan Kerker, Waste Management Safety Coordinator	*486-3231*
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, CHA Safety Specialist II	*358–5547*

Safety Office Support Personnel *955-3520*

Tawni Grubbs, OA III
Lydia Temmen, OA III
Jan Zimmermann, OA II

Date	Time	Event	Location
June 3	8-12	Supv. WPV	CSO
June 3	1- 5	EWPV	CSO
June 7	8-9:30	Airborne Pathogen's	CSO
June 7	9:30-11	Bloodborne Pathogen's	CSO
June 9	8-5:30	First-Aid/CPR	CSO
June 10	8-12	Supv. Orientation	CSO
June 16	8-5:30	First-Aid/CPR	CSO
June 17	8-12	Driver's Training	CSO
June 17	1-5	RMI	CSO
June 24	8-12	EWPV	CSO
June 23	8-5:30	First-Aid/CPR	CSO
June 29	8-12	Forklift	CSO
June 28	8-12	RMI	CSO
June 28	1-5	Driver's Training	CSO
Indio Training Conducted at DPSS Bldg., 44-199 Monroe Ave			
June 8	9 to 12	Driver's Training	Indio
June 8	1 to 4	RMI	Indio
June 22	8 to 12	Supv. WPV	Indio