

SAFETY ZONE

Volume 1, Issue 4

APRIL 2001

POINTS OF INTEREST

Tom's Corner	Page 1
Office Hazards	Page 2
CVS	Page 3
Earthquake Insurance	Page 3
Monthly Safety Topic	Page 4

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

By Tom Sproal

Meetings are critical tools for reminding your people to keep focused on safety.

But you know it is not your main job, so you don't want to spend all your energy coming up with plans for safety meetings.

Here is some good news. You can run extremely effective safety meetings in fewer than five minutes.

EMPLOYEE SUGGESTIONS

People are interested in hearing their own suggestions discussed in open forums.

Ask your workers for ways of improving safety, then use the better ones as starting points for a short discussion.

STATISTICS

People like seeing how they stack up against others. Consider a chart using statistics on your departments accident rate, and compare it with the county or department norm.

SAFETY INSPECTION NOTES

People want your opinion, too. You, of course, do regular safety inspections of your own work area. Use your own notes from these inspections as a source of meeting topics. Is there something you notice that people always ignore?

ACCIDENT/INCIDENT REPORTS

People are interested in something that affects them

immediately. Reports of accidents and near-misses in your own facility will no doubt hit home.

You may need to ask the County Safety Office or Risk Management/Workers Compensation Office to collect the same for you. Then pick one accident report per meeting, and discuss it. Ask workers how the accidents and injuries could have been prevented or minimized. You can also use near-misses.

DOCUMENTATION

Remember what ever method you utilize, be sure to document who attended, what was covered and who presented the material.



FLASH says: "SAFETY HAS NO QUITTING TIME"

S a f e t y a r t i c l e s

By "FLASH"

Safety Office Mascot

Do you know of a safety topic that would be of general interest to County employees? Would you like to contribute an article for a future publication of the **SAFETY ZONE**? Yes? Really? Cool!

I am looking for articles on safety that "you" feel other County employees would find interesting, educational and would benefit from.

Here are some helpful guidelines for your articles:

- Make it "reader friendly" and easy reading.

- Address the problem with a suggested solution.
- 300 to 350 words.

Submit the articles to:

Art Pereira via GroupWise or hard copy to STOP #2170

Authors of published articles will receive a gift certificate for a free lunch from me, "FLASH", personally.

"Is this cool or what?!"

In This Months Issue

- Safety Officers Message
- Contacting Safety Office Personnel via phone, FAX or Email
- What is CVS?
- Protecting Your Feet
- Earthquake Preparedness
- Office Hazard Quiz
- And other Safety Tips to assist you



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OFFICE HAZARDS: “Be Aware of Your Working Environment”

By Art Pereida, Safety Coordinator

The office environment can be a disaster waiting to happen, if we let it become that way.

How safe is your office? How often do you see a potential hazard and don't report it because you feel someone else will or you just don't

“We have a tendency of becoming complacent on the job, and statistics will show this is when accidents are most likely to occur”

want to be bothered? Does your office do Monthly Safety Self-Inspections? After attending safety training, do you put into practice the preventive measures discussed in class?

We have a tendency of becoming complacent on the job, and statistics will show this is

when an accident is most likely to occur. Being consistently aware of your working environment at all times, no matter what type work you do, will reduce accidents.

With that in mind, how observant are you of hazards? Look at the office above. How many work hazards can you find?

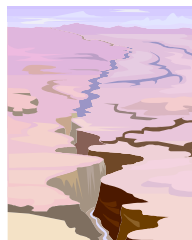
The answer is hidden somewhere in this newsletter.

DAVIS PROCLAIMS APRIL AS EARTHQUAKE PREPAREDNESS MONTH

By Art Pereida, Safety Coordinator

In an effort to increase awareness of the importance of being prepared for a quake, Governor Gray Davis has proclaimed April to be “California Earthquake Preparedness Month.” The proclamation was inspired by the “Ready to Ride it Out?” campaign, designed to educate the public on the proper procedures to follow before, during and after an earthquake. The campaign suggests

being ready to “ride it out” self sufficiently—without electricity, gas, water and other amenities residents tend to take for granted—for at least three days.



Throughout the month of April, the Governor's Office of Emergency Services, local jurisdictions, community or-

ganizations and businesses will provide earthquake safety information to residents. Dallas Jones, with the governor's OES, says the recent large and destructive earthquake in Seattle, India and El Salvador are powerful reminders that it only takes a few seconds to turn both lives and property upside-down.

As a reminder, California has sustained \$150 billion earthquake damage in the past ten years.

Computer Vision Syndrome

By Brian Teig, M H Safety Specialist II

Computer Vision Syndrome (CVS) is a phrase used to describe eye and vision-related problems associated with computer use. Over 100 million American workers use computers daily and too many of us suffer from CVC due to long hours spent in front of computer screens and video display terminals. To help you determine whether prolonged computer use is affecting your vision, check below if you suffer from any of these symptoms.

- Tired eyes
- Eyestrain
- Periodic blurred near vision
- Headaches
- Dry eyes
- Slowness in changing the focus of your eyes
- Red eyes



Computer Vision Syndrome

- Burning eyes
- Contact lens discomfort
- Changes in color perception
- Glare sensitivity
- Excessive tearing
- Neck, shoulder and back pain

You could be suffering from Computer Vision Syndrome if you are experiencing any one of these discomforts.

Practice the following to reduce CVS:

- Have a thorough eye exam, annually if you wear prescription eye-ware.
- Adjust the height of your monitor, desk or chair so the top of the computer screen is at eye level. The screen itself should be about one arms length away.
- Place your computer monitor at right angles to any window and overhead lighting.

- Adjust brightness/contrast on PC .
- Keep your monitor clean.
- Have a separate area with sufficient overhead light to read and write.
- Keep your desk organized and clean to reduce overhead lighting glare.
- Use an anti-glare computer screen.
- Use a document holder.
- Add dimmer switches to overhead lights, use coverings or turn them off completely.
- Take a short 30-second break every 30 minutes (30/30 Rule) to give your eyes a rest.

Computer Vision Syndrome affects your mental and physical well-being and certainly impacts productivity. Unlike many other work-related conditions that affect your health, CVS can be virtually eliminated by taking a few simple, inexpensive precautions. ***"Happy computing!"***

Emergency Evacuation drills

By Art Pereida, Safety Coordinator

April is **Earthquake Preparedness Month** and all County facilities are required, by Board of Supervisors Proclamation, to conduct an evacuation drill.

Most of us have heard of recent earthquakes, floods, fires, terrorist bombings, and violence in the workplace. With this in mind: "Are you familiar with your Facility Emergency Action Plan?"

Evacuation may be initiated by the building fire alarm, use of a public address system, other "approved" audible

alarms or "face to face", as directed by Supervision/Management.

When you evacuate, take only those personal items such as your keys, purse, glasses or medications. You will not be permitted back in the building until the fire department gives an "all clear". Exit calmly, advising clients or visitors to do the same, as you encounter them. Assist the disabled, when necessary.

In an emergency, it may become necessary to exit via an alternate route. It's important you know your secondary

routes and exits. Once outside, proceed directly to your designated assembly area, be accounted for and remain there until instructed to do otherwise.

During an evacuation, designated employees will search the building to ensure no one is left behind. In a high rise, some will assist the disabled and stay with them in safe areas, until assisted by fire department personnel.

Afterwards, critique the drill and make any changes that need to be made.

See County Safety Manual DOC 7002

AGENCY WARNS : REVIEW EARTHQUAKE INSURANCE

By Art Pereida, Safety Coordinator

With the recent Washington temblor in mind, the California Earthquake Authority is urging homeowners in the state to review the residential insurance policies to ensure that they have earthquake coverage.

Since most California residential



insurance policies do not cover earthquake damage, separate coverage is necessary. Only 17% of California homeowners now hold earthquake insurance policies.

The CEA says many California homeowners mistakenly think they have earthquake insurance, said David Knowles, the CEA's chief executive.

The CEA underwrites two out of three resi-

dential earthquake policies in the state, keeping rates to an average of \$2.79 per \$1,000 of coverage. Rates vary according to local seismic risk and the home's age and type of construction.

For more information visit CEA's Web site at www.earthquakeauthority.com or call (877)797-4330.

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"FLASH Safety Tip"

"27 office hazards are 27 too many"

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.

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Earthquake preparedness

By Art Pereida, Safety Coordinator

The first 72 hours after an earthquake are critical. Electricity, gas and telephones may not be working. In addition, public safety services such as police and fire departments will be busy handling multiple serious crises. You should be prepared to be self-sufficient— able to live without running water, electricity and/or gas, and telephones— for at least three days following a quake. To do so, keep on hand the following:

- **Food:** 3 days and up to a week.
- **Water:** 1 gallon per day, per person.
- **1st Aid Kit:** Bandages and disinfectants are a **must**.
- **Flashlights** w/ extra batteries.
- **Portable radio** w/ extra batteries.

- Extra blankets, clothes and money.
- Alternate cooking sources.
- Tools to help you do minor repairs.



"♪ I feel the earth move under my feet ♪"

You should not think **"IF"** we have a major earthquake. If you do, you are not dealing with the reality of **"WHEN"** this earthquake occurs.

Many of you have County positions that will require you to respond or stay at work. It is extremely important your family is prepared at home. You may not be with them during this time. As a public servant you may be required to serve the community during this time. Check with your department and see what your role is when "the big one hits".

How will you comfort scared children, seniors and other adults, when you're scared yourself?

For valuable information, visit the Office of Emergency Services website: <http://www.oes.ca.gov/>