

SAFETY NEWSLETTER

City of Boynton Beach, Florida
Volume 8, Issue 1

Risk Management Department
Spring 2009

RISK MANAGEMENT MUSINGS

I have an ongoing pet peeve. Maybe you've seen this. Maybe you've done this. Why do people walk up the roadways in the City Garage when there is a perfectly good set of stairs?

Do you normally walk in a roadway when there is a sidewalk? Do you walk up the middle of I-95? We have all seen cars speeding through the garage. Who wants to be the person to get hit by a car or truck?

I really want to know why people don't use the stairs. So let's have a contest. E-mail me, at magazinec@bbfl.us, explaining why you don't use the stairs. I will be the sole judge on the winning submission and there will be no appeal. There will be a prize and the winner will be announced on the same day as the deadline for the City Puzzle. By the way, don't use the medical argument. If you are disabled, you can arrange to park in a handicapped space.

CHUCK MAGAZINE, RISK MANAGER

What Is Workplace Violence?

Workplace violence can be any act of physical violence, threats of physical violence, harassment, intimidation, or other threatening, disruptive behavior that occurs at the workplace.

It can occur throughout the workplace by a number of different actions. It may even be the result of non-work-related situations such as domestic violence or "road rage." Workplace violence can be inflicted by an abusive employee, a manager, supervisor, co-worker, family member, or even a stranger. Whatever the cause or whoever the perpetrator, workplace violence is not to be accepted or tolerated.

It is up to each employee to help make the workplace safe for all of us. The expectation is that each employee will treat all co-workers with dignity and respect. Management cares about your safety and provides as safe a working environment as possible by having preventive measures in place and dealing immediately with threatening or potentially violent situations which occur with our Workplace Violence Administrative Policy (12.01.22).

There are appropriate and effective ways to deal with such persons to avoid or minimize the damage they seek to cause, and we all need to educate ourselves with this policy.

Supervisors and managers have the obligation to deal with inappropriate behavior by their employees by providing employees with information and training on workplace violence, and putting effective security measures in place.

Employees:

- Be familiar with the Workplace Violence policy.
- Be responsible for questioning and/or reporting strangers to supervisors.
- Be aware of any threats, physical or verbal, and/or any disruptive behavior of any individual and report to your supervisor.
- Do not confront individuals who are a threat.
- Take all threats seriously.

Managers & Supervisors:

- Inform employees of workplace violence policies and procedures.
- Ensure that employees know specific procedures for dealing with workplace threats and emergencies, and how to contact police, fire, and other safety officials.
- Respond to potential threats and escalating situations by utilizing proper resource from the following: Law Enforcement, medical services, human resources and the EAP,
- Take all threats seriously.

One of the critical components of prevention is training. Training is required for all employees including managers and supervisors.

All employees should know how to recognize and report incidents of violent, intimidating, threatening, and disruptive behavior.

Determining the seriousness of a potentially violent or stressful situation and how to best intervene is the basis of a threat assessment. Since it is impossible to know with certainty whether a threat is going to be carried out, you should always treat threats in a serious matter and act as though they may carry the threat out.

Special Measures for Employees Who Work in the Field.

In general, employees working alone and away from the workplace should prepare daily work plans and keep a contact person informed of their locations throughout their work day. When necessary and feasible, management can implement a "buddy system" policy or provide for back-up, such as police assistance, so that workers do not enter a potentially dangerous situation alone.

If you ever have concerns about a situation which may turn violent, alert your supervisor immediately. It is better to err on the side of safety than to risk having a situation escalate.

(Continued on Page 2)

Leadership....

Is the art of accomplishing more than the science of management says is possible. COLIN POWELL

Health Beat



Sports Safety: How to Prevent Injury from Playing Sports or Working Out

In order to prevent injuries you have to start your workout right. You have to do everything right. You can't just jump right into workout. This is a mistake and you'll regret it. You have to warm up and stretch and wear the right gear and drink plenty of fluids.

First you have to wear the right clothing that are stretchy so that you have some room to breathe. Wearing tight clothing will restrict you and you can't breathe and have proper circulation.

Next up is wearing the proper shoes. Your shoes have to have enough support so that you don't strain your foot or legs while working out. You really need all that support.

You will need to stretch very well before you workout. You have to do at least 10 minutes of stretching before you start warming up. Stretching will give you flexibility as well as shaking out all of the tension. If you don't stretch you'll most likely end up with injury.

Next is to warm up. Do a 10 minutes warm up session. Warming up will loosen your joints and muscle and get things moving. You will need this in order to advance with your workout. Without proper warming up you'll get injuries.

Next up is to workout at the appropriate level. You should never exceed the weight or endurance that you're not ready for. Don't over lift weight or else you will injure yourself. Don't workout for an hour your first day of working out either. Just do a gradual increase and you'll do fine.

(Excerpted: January 19, 2009 by Kay Pierre)

Idiot Sighting: When my husband and I arrived at an automobile dealership to pick up our car, we were told that the keys had been accidentally locked in it. We went to the service department and found a mechanic working feverishly to unlock the driver's side door. As I watched from the passenger's side, I instinctively tried the door handle and discovered it was open.

Workplace Violence – continued from page 1

Some warning indicators of potential workplace violence:

- Intimidating, harassing, bullying, belligerent, or other inappropriate and aggressive behavior.
- Numerous conflicts with co-workers or supervisors
- Bringing a weapon to work (unless necessary for the job), making inappropriate references to guns, or making idle threats about using a weapon to harm someone.
- Statements indicating desperation (over family, financial, and other personal problems) to the point of contemplating suicide.
- direct or veiled threats of harm.
- Substance abuse.
- Extreme changes in normal behaviors.

One you have noticed a co-worker showing any signs of the above, you should take the following steps:

- If it is a co-worker, you should notify the employee's supervisor of your observations.
- If it is your supervisor, notify that person's manager.

It is very important to respond appropriately, not to overreact but also not to ignore a situation. Sometimes that may be difficult to determine. Managers should discuss the situation with expert resource staff to get help in determining how best to handle the situation.

No matter how effective our policy and plans are in detecting and preventing incidents, there are no guarantees against workplace violence. Even the most responsible employers face this issue.

(Compiled from OSHA and APM policy)

Symptoms to Watch For!

Stroke is the leading cause of serious disability and the third leading cause of death in the U.S.

97% of Americans do not know the simple warning signs of a stroke. They are as follows:

Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg, especially on one side of the body;

Sudden Confusion, trouble speaking or understanding;

Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes;

Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination;

Sudden, severe headache with no know cause.

If stroke victims receive proper help within three hours of the stroke, their ability to recover is greatly increased.

And, if you are not sure, **CALL 911**. Don't waste those three hours.

(Excerpted, EMI, Safety Newsletter)

OSHA NEWS

The top 5 most frequently cited OSHA standards last fiscal year (October 2007 through September 2008) based on the number of citations issued:

1. Scaffolding, General Requirements, Construction (29 CFR 1926.451) In a Bureau of Labor and Statistics (BLS) study, 72% of workers injured in scaffold accidents attributed the accident either to the planking or support giving way, or to the employee slipping or being struck by a falling object. All of these can be controlled by compliance with OSHA standards.

2. Fall Protection, Construction (29 CFR 1926.501) Falls from ladders and roofs account for the majority of falls. Identifying fall hazards and deciding how best to protect workers is the first step in reducing or eliminating fall hazards. Occupational fatalities caused by falls remain a serious public health problem.

3. Hazard Communication Standard, General Industry (29 CFR 1910.1200) In order to ensure chemical safety in the workplace, information must be available about the identities and hazards of chemicals. All employers with hazardous chemicals in their workplaces must have labels and MSDSs for their exposed workers, and train them to handle the chemicals appropriately.

4. Control Of Hazardous Energy (lockout/tagout), General Industry (29 CFR 1910.147) Lockout/Tagout (LOTO) refers to specific practices and procedures created to safeguard employees from the unexpected energization or startup of machinery and equipment, or the release of hazardous energy during service or maintenance activities. Approximately 3 million workers service equipment and face the greatest risk of injury if lockout/tagout is not properly implemented.

5. Respiratory Protection, General Industry (29 CFR 1910.134) An estimated 5 million workers are required to wear respirators in 1.3 million workplaces throughout the United States. Respirators protect workers against insufficient oxygen environments, harmful dusts, fogs, smokes, mists, gases, vapors, and sprays. Compliance with the OSHA Respiratory Protection Standard could avert hundreds of deaths and thousands of illnesses like cancer, lung impairment, and other diseases annually.

(Excerpted: Safetyonline.com)

More than **52,000** cyclists have died in traffic crashes in the United States since 1932 – the first year in which estimates were recorded. In 2007, **698** cyclists were killed and an additional **43,000** were injured in traffic crashes.

Source: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

Everyone Should Be a Safety Director

Companies that are committed to safety from the top down make it a lot easier for employees at all levels to commit to it. But that doesn't mean that safety has to be placed on the back burner just because management isn't fire up about it.

Whether or not they are in a position of authority over others, workers at all levels of an organization can still be safety leaders.

Anyone Can Make a Difference

All workers, regardless of their positions, can make a difference by intervening when they see someone working unsafely.

However, if someone's unsafe behavior is affecting the safety of others and the worker responds negatively when approached about it, the other worker has a right and an obligation to raise the issue with a manager. People should take a good look at whether their own actions match the messages they are trying to deliver, both on and off the job. For example, if a supervisor gets on a worker's case for taking an unsafe shortcut, yet breaks his own rules, those actions will speak much more loudly than words.

Teach by Example

Another example is that if you are teaching your daughter to drive and tell her not to speed or to run yellow lights, yet you do so when she is in the car, she is very likely to do what she's seen you doing. Leadership raises people's awareness and provides insights and discoveries, along with understanding.

Fifth person to call Risk Management at 6043 on 04/01/09 at 10AM wins a prize. It's easier to try to resist situations that make us uncomfortable, in hopes that the problem will go away. However, if anything, a problem will become worse if it is ignored. If you don't take the risk and commit to make a positive change, you can't hope to change people's attitudes.

Share this important message with your workers.
(Excerpted Safety Talks!)

TEACHER: Donald, what is the chemical formula for water?
DONALD: H I J K L M N O
TEACHER: What are you talking about?
DOANLD: Yesterday you said it's H to O.

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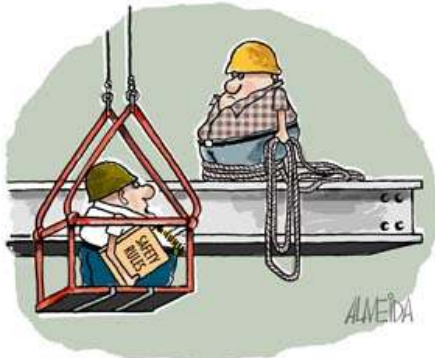
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"I don't care if bungee jumping is faster than the aerial lift. Around here it's against safety rules!"

Stella Awards

(The "Stella Awards" rank up there with the Darwin Awards. Stella Liebeck is the 81 year old lady who spilled coffee on herself and sued McDonalds. This case inspired annual awards for the most "frivolous lawsuits in the U.S.")

Hazel Norton of Rolling Fork, Miss., read there was a class action suit against the drug Propulsid, which her doctor had prescribed to her for a digestive disorder. Despite admitting that "I didn't get hurt by Propulsid," Norton thought "I might get a couple of thousand dollars" by joining the lawsuit. When her doctor was named in the suit, he quit his Mississippi practice -- where he was serving the poor. He left with his wife, a pediatrician and internist. That left only two doctors practicing at the local hospital. So while Norton wasn't harmed by the drug, all her neighbors now get to suffer from drastically reduced access to medical care because of her greed.

MORE-ON SAFETY(Say it quickly)

A Conyers, Georgia man who bought a used Mercedes convertible then reported it stolen found out that the car was equipped with one extra accessory he didn't know about: a LoJack anti-theft tracking device. When police activated the device, they were able to quickly track the car down: it was parked in the man's basement...along with three other cars that had recently been reported stolen.

I went to a bookstore and asked the saleswoman, "Where's the self-help section?" She said if she told me, it would defeat the purpose ...George Carlin

WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM OUR FRIENDS: Police in Oakland, California spent two hours attempting to subdue a gunman who had barricaded himself inside his home. After firing ten tear gas canisters, officers discovered that the man was standing beside them, shouting "Please come out and give yourself up."

2008 Darwin Award Winner

Confirmed true by Darwin

(Named in honor of Charles Darwin, the father of evolution to commemorate those who improve our gene pool by removing themselves from it.)

(24 August 2008, Indonesia) Charles had everything going for him when he flew to Jakarta to visit his family. He had just completed his International Baccalaureate at King William's College on the Isle of Man, and his dreams were ambitious. In the school yearbook, he said he planned to retire by the age of 30. The principal of the college later described him as "a very bright boy with a very bright future."

Unfortunately for Charles, his elite education omitted an important lesson from the curriculum: Electricity, danger of.

He had one foot in the backyard swimming pool (really!) when he noticed a cement box near the edge of the pool. It was full of electrical wires supplying power to the jacuzzi. Curious, Charles started to fiddle with a fistful of wires. He was immediately rooted to the spot by 240 volts of electrical current surging through his body.

Early retirement, indeed!

A post-mortem examination determined that Charles' death was "due to electrocution as a consequence of external grounding of current through the body while partially immersed in water." The 18-year-old's body was repatriated to the Isle of Man.

Reader Comment: "Charles was a real live wire!"

Hand Tool Tips

Hammers, screwdrivers, pliers and other hand tools do have the power to do serious injury if not used properly:

Remember these rules:

- Don't use broken or damaged tools;
- Make sure grip and footing are secure;
- Only use the right tool for the job;
- Use a tool belt or hoist to get tools up a ladder;
- Secure tools from falling when working at heights;
- Always cut items in a direction away from you;
- Keep tools clean and in good working condition;
- Never toss a tool to another person or location.

Following simple safety guidelines and taking just a few seconds to do it the right way may save you the time and trouble of a trip to the E.R.

An estimated 8% of all injuries are associated with hand tools. And, as always:

WEAR PPE

(Excerpted, EMI Safety Newsletter)



**Answer these 10 questions based on the City of Boynton Beach Administrative Policy
APM 12.01.22 Workplace Violence**

1. The City of Boynton Beach maintains a _____ toward workplace violence.
2. _____ includes harassment, threats, physical attack of property damage.
3. _____ is the expression of intent to cause physical or mental harm or emotional distress.
4. _____ is intentional, unwanted or hostile physical contact with another person.
5. _____ is damage to property, including property owned by the City, employees, or others.
6. _____ is when an individual creates an environment of fear of threats or physical attack.
7. Violence, potential for violence or threat of violence is _____ and _____ City policy.
8. Possession, use, or threat of use, of any _____ is not permitted at work or on City property.
9. List five characteristics, based on statistical evidence, of people who have perpetrated acts of violence:



10. List five red flags of caution:

Not in Our City

Congratulations to Vickie Robertson (Parks) and Debbie Majors (Grants) for answering last issues puzzle correct and winning a gift card for Publix. All employees that turn in a correct puzzle to Risk Management will be included in a drawing to win a \$25 gift card. Drawing to be held Monday, March 30 at 10:00.

Is There Anything Wrong With My Child Using Online Chat?

That's a good question. And it all depends on how responsible your child really is - and what kind of relationship you have with them.

Chat rooms are the most common place kids find themselves getting into trouble.

And it's important to remember that online predators often hang out in children's chat room and pass themselves off as a child in the hopes of getting some personal information from one or more of the children they find there.

Should you decide to let your child participate in chat or instant message sessions, you should insist that they use a monitored chat room moderated and rated G.

Spend some time in these chat rooms before letting your child go there, to ensure that they are what they seem to be - safe.

AOL & MSN both offer moderated chat rooms as well as do some other sites and ISP's.

The important point to remember however is that just because the chat room is monitored does not mean that it's 100% child safe.

If your child objects to your presence because of the lack of privacy, they may be trying to hide something from you.

We read more and more about the dangers found in chat rooms and on sites like MySpace.com, so it's not a problem that is going to go away any time soon. Your best bet as a concerned parent is to do your homework before letting your child go online, and routinely following up on what they are doing online.

(Excerpted, www.teenchatdecoder.com)

Congratulations to the following who scored 100% on both sections of Defensive Driving Training:

Robert Ailstock	Utilities	Christopher Mitchell	Dev
Eusebio Arencibia	F & G	Farah Persaud	Risk Mgt
Silvio Attansio	Utilities	Tarolyn Pratt	Dev
Barry Brandenburg	ITS	Debbie Reamsnyder	Dev
John Burns	Utilities	John Richards	Utilities
Robert Greene	Utilities	Andrae Robinson	Utilities
Ken Hall	Dev	William Speary	Utilities
Jim Hart	Utilities	Karen Abramson	Library
Jack Holdam	Utilities	Michael Dauta	Whse
Franklin Ireland	Rec	Judith Pyle	CC
Phyllis Koch	ITS	Robert Kruse	Fire
Duron Millines	Utilities	Perry Staiano	Utilities

LET A CHILD TEACH YOU THE SAFE WAY TO LIFT!

by Dr. Isabel Perry, "The Safety Doctor"

Small children are the best lifters in the world. When you were a child, you were too!

Lifting was accomplished in the most natural way - using the body the way it was designed to move. How did we do it? Watch any small child and you will see them:

- ◆ Bend at the knees - they squat.
- ◆ Keep the head up - they squat.
- ◆ Keep the back straight - they don't have the agility to bend over and lift.
- ◆ Lift with their legs - they don't have a choice with their weak arms.
- ◆ Hold the load close to their body - if it's too far away from their body, they can't get their arms around it.
- ◆ Avoid twisting - they fall.
- ◆ Stable footing - they fall.
- ◆ Too heavy - they let you know - they cry or call out for help.

As we grew older we watched adults perform unsafe or improper lifting tasks - often because it was faster. Eventually we forgot how to do it properly. We started doing things for convenience and speed - not for safety. These bad habits can put tremendous strain on our backs, arms, shoulders, wrists and legs. The result over time may be permanent problems.

Bad habits are difficult to change, but it can be done with a bit of conscious thought and practice.

- ◆ Bend at the knees.
- ◆ Keep chin level or head up.
- ◆ Back straight.
- ◆ Hold the load close to the body.
- ◆ Avoid twisting.
- ◆ Make sure footing is stable.
- ◆ If the object is heavy - get help.

When you need to lift anything - small loads or big loads practice the same things you did as a child!

A flying saucer was low on fuel, so it landed by a gas station on a lonely country road. On its side were the letters "UFO." The gas station attendant was stunned, but his curiosity got the best of him. "Does that stand for Unidentified Flying Object?" he asked. "No," one of the other-worldly travelers responds, "It stands for 'Unleaded Fuel Only.'"