
Safety & Working Conditions Study Committee

Safety E-Times

This is the 7th issue of the Dane County Safety and Working Conditions Committee's newsletter Safety E-Times. The Committee has existed since 1973, and consists of union and management members from various county departments **dedicated to providing Dane County employees with a safe working environment** and the ability to bring positive change to their workplace.

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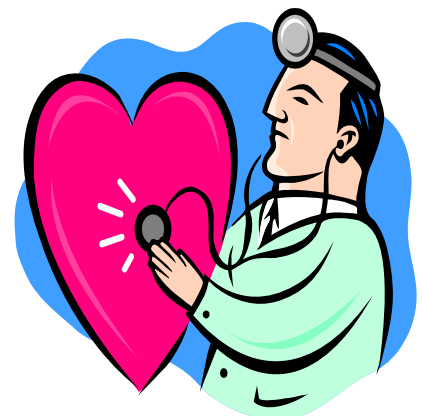
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SHOVEL SAFETY:

Protect your heart while clearing driveways and sidewalks.

Shoveling snow is intense exercise. Too intense for some people - specifically for people who have not been active recently or are regularly active in their lifestyles. It puts such a sudden strain on the heart that it just isn't used to.

If you have risk factors for heart disease, consult your physician before having a go at the snow. Also, bear in mind the following advice:

Eat lightly...a heavy meal before shoveling can put an extra load on your heart.

Don't drink Alcohol can cause you to underestimate the workload.

Shovel early...If possible; shovel when the snow is still fresh and powdery. Wet, heavy snow is brutal. It's actually best to shovel often rather than wait until the storm is over.

Dress warmly...Dress in layers so you can remove outer ones as you heat up to help keep your heart rate in a safe range. Excess heat causes it to beat faster.

Pick Plastic...Choose a shovel with a plastic blade which is lighter, thereby placing less stress on your heart.

Apply spray-on lubricant such as WD 40 to the blade so the snow doesn't stick.



Warm up...Allow your heart rate to increase gradually by doing some light stretching then starting with small shovelfuls of snow for 5 minutes or so.

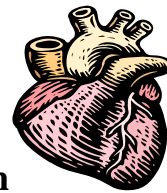
Use Good Form...Push the snow, when possible rather than lift it. If you must lift, do not throw snow over your shoulder or to the side. The twisting motion is hard on the back and adds unnecessary exertion.

Pace yourself... Take frequent breaks and rest until your breathing returns to normal.

Know when to STOP...If you feel a fullness or pressure in your chest, STOP shoveling immediately, call 911 and chew a 325-milligram aspirin while waiting for the ambulance.

HEART ATTACK WARNING SIGNS

The American Heart and Stroke Association



Some heart attacks are sudden and intense, but most of them start slowly, with mild pain or discomfort. Here are signs that can mean a heart attack is happening:

Chest discomfort. Most heart attacks involve discomfort in the center of the chest that lasts more than a few minutes, or that goes away and comes back. It can feel like uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness or pain.

Discomfort in other areas of the upper body. Symptoms can include pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw or stomach.

Shortness of breath. This feeling often comes along with chest discomfort. But it can occur with or without chest discomfort

Other signs. These may include breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea or lightheadedness.

If you or someone you're with has one or more of these signs, call 911...get to the hospital right away.

If you're the one having symptoms, and you can't access the emergency medical services (EMS), have someone drive you to the hospital right away. DON'T drive yourself unless you have absolutely no other option.

STROKE WARNING SIGNS

Stroke is a medical emergency. Every second counts, because time lost is brain lost! Know these stroke-warning signs and teach them to others.

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 known cause.

If you or someone with you has one or more of these signs don't delay. Immediately call 911 or the EMS number so an ambulance – ideally with advanced life support – can be sent for you. Also check the time so you'll know when the first symptoms appeared. It's very important to take immediate action. If given within 3 hrs of the start of symptoms, a clot-busting drug can reduce long-term disability for the most common type of strokes.

For more information call 1- 800-242-8721 or www.americanheart.org

Avoiding Short Term Memory Loss by Greg Frost, www.photographic-memory.org

Various names for memory loss are amnesia and dementia. One of our biggest fears as we age is losing our mental facilities, and how to deal with family members who are experiencing such memory loss. Short-term memory loss can be triggered by stroke, circulation, Alzheimer's as well as poor conductivity in the brain. However take heart that memory loss is temporary and can be improved or avoided.

What is Short Term Memory?

Short-term memory refers to memories, which last for a few minutes, and have gone through some amount of processing by the brain. It is usually of limited capacity, and absorbing new information causes the older information to be "forgotten". Trying to communicate with those who have short-term memory loss is frustrating.

Avoiding Short Term Memory Loss

1. Items can be maintained indefinitely in short-term memory by rehearsal: e.g. by repeating the information over and over again.
2. Repetition may also increase the probability that items in short-term memory will enter permanent storage in long-term memory.
3. Mental and physical exercises, your diet and nutritional supplements can help in avoiding short-term memory loss.
4. Your body needs to have sufficient sleep in order to create links and connections in your memory. Hence, a minimum of 8 hours of sleep a day is recommended.
5. Your vision is an incredible resource for boosting your memory, with approximately 40% of the brain devoted to it. This is more than any other function of the brain!
6. Visit your doctor for regular blood tests, as they are indicators as to possible ailments and allows for your doctor to provide a cure through medications.

7. When your brain is deprived of the blood it needs, your memory health will be adversely affected. Cut down on the number of triglycerides and cholesterol in your blood, as these act as blockers.
8. In order to maintain the health of your mind, your brain needs nutrients such as folic acid and vitamins B6 and B12. These support the neurotransmitters in your brain that allows you to pass on signals and information to where they should be.

These are 8 simple tips to avoiding short-term memory loss. Do keep in mind that although aging affects memory loss, other factors such as health issues, alcohol and drug usage, smoking, and environmental toxins play an important part as well.

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FIVE FIRE HAZARDS AND THE SIMPLE STEPS TO PREVENT THEM

October is National Fire Prevention Month, but it is always a good time to review ways we can make our homes and lives safer. This article was recently published in the WI State Journal, but a few of the tips are worth mentioning again.

Aside from the fact that every household should have working smoke detectors on every floor and in every bedroom, families should have an escape plan and should be practicing it so everybody knows exactly how to get out and where to gather outside if there is a fire.

1. Cooking is by far the #1 cause of home fires particularly frying, broiling and grilling. People lose track of it with all that happens in the home. Stay by your pan, but if you need to turn away, turn the fire off. Always have a lid or a flat cookie sheet with long oven mitts handy so you can smother the fire if needed. Never pour water on a kitchen fire. If in doubt, get out and call for help!
2. Heating during the winter times takes over as #1 for home fires. The main danger is space heaters particularly electrical ones. Placed too close to furniture or draperies, knocked over by a child or animal...they can be deadly. Always have 3 feet of clear space around the unit. Never operate a space heater unless you are in the room. Watch children, papers, and other items that can get burned or worse start a fire. Never go to sleep with the space heater on. Use it to warm a bedroom clear from all bedding and draperies and then shut off prior to going to sleep.
3. Electricity. Old wiring is a significant danger so if your lights flicker or you smell something hot or funny, or you have extension cords all over due to not having enough outlets, it's time to unplug them and get a licensed electrician to come in and make sure your wiring meets code. Extension cords can be frayed, cracked, or pinched and should never be used for permanent wiring. If necessary use only one cord per outlet plug.
4. Friendly fires: Candles, fireplaces, oil lamps, and chimena feel warm and lovely, but they pose dangers as well. Have fireplace chimneys inspected regularly for cracks or flammable creosote buildup. Try battery operated electric candles. If you do use wax candles or oil lamps, make sure they are on a sturdy fireproof holder and never leave the room while they are burning.
5. Smoking is the number #1 cause of fire deaths. A cigarette or cigar butt that falls on carpet, upholstery or a mattress can smolder for hours. If you must smoke, the best place is outdoors, in a spot without combustible materials preferably not in a garage. Use a sturdy ashtray and have a cup of water hand to douse butts. Keep matches or lighters locked up where children can't get at them. Playing with fire is the largest cause of child fire deaths. Don't think hiding the lighter is enough either. Kids know where it is...your purse, the cupboard, and they will move furniture just to get to them.

Did you know that nearly 3/4ths of all occupants killed in rollover car crashes were not using restraints and almost 2/3 of them were completely ejected from the vehicle – NHTSA



On the Road Safe Driving Tips

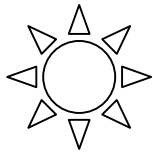
Get adequate rest before trips and never drink and drive...nearly half of all rollover crashes involve alcohol.

Rain, snow, ice, and even wet leaves can create slippery conditions that compromise vehicle handling. Slow down and allow extra time to react to situations.

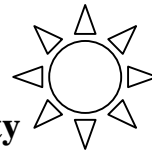
Be extra careful on rural roads that are often narrow and poorly maintained. Stay calm in skids and accident situations, as panic maneuvers often lead to rollovers.

If the wheels drop off the roadway or pavement, gradually reduce speed and steer back onto the roadway when it is safe.

When a 15-passenger van is not full, passengers should sit in seats that are in the front of the rear axle.



Keeping it Green in Dane County



In each newsletter it will be our attempt to continue to offer new and interesting ways for you, your coworkers, and your families to help make a difference in keeping our lives GREEN! Here are a few new ones we've seen lately:

- *Print files to a PDF document first to catch errors instead of waster painter ink and paper.
- * Print on both sides of the paper. This option is called duplex in most printer preferences.
- *Make sure you have a paper-recycling bin near the printers to reuse and recycle.
- * Go electronic whenever possible...e-mail, flash drives and use the Internet to backup and share files.
- * Lower the temperature of your refrigerators to a lower level that is still safe for storing food.
- * Use eco friendly detergents and use cold water in washing clothes and when showering.
- * Hand dry laundry or use wash lines in the summer. Clothes get brighter too!
- *You've heard this before, but shop locally. Saves on fossil fuels to transport goods to stores.
- *Buy only compact fluorescent light bulbs and replace incandescent ones.
- *Pack a waste free picnic. Pack your lunchboxes with cloth napkins, reusable drink containers, real silverware and Tupperware.
- *Recycle electronics. There are a number of companies now recycling computers, cell phones, Ipods and batteries. Some are even recycling them to non-profits for reuse.
- * Unplug all electronics when not in use. Electronics will still use small amounts of electricity so help reduce phantom electricity use such as cell phone chargers, printers and faxes left on. Turn off monitors and computers at night.

Did you know "phantom load" devices still plugged in can cost the average consumer \$200 per year in energy bills? They account for 40% of the energy consumed by electronic devices.

Did you know that 130 million cell phones go into retirement each year?

Did you know recycling one plastic bottle saves enough energy to run a computer for 25 minutes?

“RED CROSS DONOR ELIGIBILITY QUESTIONS & ANSWERS?”



You may give whole blood or platelets if you: are at least 17 years old, weigh at least 110 lbs., and are in good health. Some states have lowered the age to 16 with parental consent.

If you are male, you may give double red cells if you are at least 17 yo, at least 5'1" height, and have a hemoglobin of 13.3 gm/dl.

If you are female, you may give double red cells if you are 17 yo, are at least 5'5" height and have hemoglobin of 13.3. gm/dl.

You may donate whole blood every 56 days, double red cells every 112 days up to 3 times in a 12 mo period. Platelets up to 24 times in a 12 mo. period.

What if you have high or low blood pressure? Blood pressure is checked before every donation. If your blood pressure is within an acceptable range you may donate. If you take medication to control your blood pressure, you may still be eligible to donate.

Can I donate if I have been taking an antibiotic? You may be able to donate blood as long as you have taken your last dose of the prescribed course of antibiotics and have no symptoms. Check with the Red Cross first.

If something is wrong with your blood, will you find out? Yes, You will be notified confidentially by certified mail or in rare situations by telephone.

Can I get AIDS from giving blood? No, All equipment is sterile and used only for you. You can't catch anything by giving blood.

If I participate in sports, can I practice or compete right after giving blood? When you give blood, you temporarily lose some fluid, which your body replaces within 24 hrs. So a few precautions are necessary: do not compete right after the donation and avoid strenuous activity for 5 hrs after donating. Give your body a day to replace the volume you donated.

Can I give blood if I have traveled outside the U.S.? There are specified limitations for certain travel. Some circumstances may make a person temporarily ineligible to donate blood; some cause permanent ineligibility. If you have any questions, or if you have been told you can never donate blood again, you may wish to discuss your history with a trained Red Cross staff member as the guidelines for eligibility may have changed.

More questions, please call 1-800-448-3543 (1-800-GIVE-LIFE) or givebloodgivelife.org



SERVICE STATION FUELING TIPS

It has come to the attention of Dane County Management that vehicles and equipment are being fueled with the engines running. The potential for fire and explosion may exist under these circumstances. The National Fire Protection Act requires that engines be shut off when refueling with gasoline and that no smoking be allowed. The engine shut-off policy does not apply vehicles fueling with diesel fuel. This is a safety issue and everyone's cooperation would be appreciated.

Did you know that an estimated 7,400 fires and explosions occurred at public service stations per year from 1994 through 1998? That means that, on average one in every 13 service stations experienced a fire. These 7,400 fires caused an annual average of two civilian deaths, 70 civilian injuries and \$18 million in property damage.

Did you know that gasoline was the material first ignited in one-third of vehicle fires at these properties, AND 17% of the outside fires (excluding vehicle fires) and 10% of the structure fires were started by cigarettes.

- Always, always turn off your vehicle while refueling. (LAW)
- Don't smoke or use lighters while refueling. Must be 10 ft from pump. (LAW)
- Keep gasoline and other fuels out of children's sight & reach.
- Never allow children to pump gas. (LAW)
- Pay attention to what you're doing.
- If you must use electronic devices, follow manufacturer's instructions.
- To avoid spills, do not top off or overfill your vehicle.
- After pumping leave nozzle in car a few seconds to avoid drips.
- If a fire starts while refueling, don't remove the nozzle and leave the area immediately.
- Don't get in and out of your vehicle while refueling. Static electric charge can develop and cause a spark igniting gas vapor. Discharge the static by touching metal outside the vehicle only far away from the filling point.
- Use only approved containers for transporting and storing gasoline. Make sure it is in a stable position.
- Remember to fill only about 95% full to leave room for expansion.



LED's INFORMATION

Did you know that LED's are the most efficient light source available and last longer than any other conventional lighting product? They also produce no UV rays and do not contain any mercury. Therefore, they are a truly "Green" lighting alternative.

LED lighting will not only reduce your electrical load but will substantially reduce your maintenance costs as well. New approximate LED lighting rations are as follows:

- LEDs use ten times less energy than standard incandescent
- LEDs use three times less energy than compact fluorescents
- LEDs use half the energy of fluorescent tube technology

Considering that most standard incandescent lamps only last approximately 1,000 hours as compared to LED's at 50,000+ hours, savings may affect the payback in less than the normal 1-3

yrs.....

WORKPLACE SAFETY TIPS

The Human Services Children, Youth and Family's Division has created a Safety Committee to help inform and share ideas and situations regarding worker safety when out in the community, but also in the work setting to assist in maintaining their safety. Listed below are just a few of their tips:

- **Be mindful of your clothing – comfortable shoes, clothes that you can move freely in.
- **Check & be mindful of people's histories of violence and risk factors when you are meeting with them in their homes or at the office.
- **Be sure to sign out before you leave, update your outlook calendar regularly and take your cell phone.
- **Lock your valuables in your trunk before leaving to the appointment. Do not leave valuables in your car i.e., purses, CD's electronic notebook, cell phones,
- **Carry only your ID and work items. No money or personal items.
- **Park in well-lit areas, & avoid locations where you are isolated.
- **LOCK your car doors.

- **If you are concerned about entering a risky or volatile situation, brainstorm with your supervisor and colleagues before you go.
- **If you are concerned about entering a risky or volatile situation, call for a police escort
- **When you enter any room, be aware of the layout of furniture and establish your exit strategy.
- **If you find yourself in an unsafe or volatile situation, be aware of “weapons of opportunity”.
- ***TRUST Your instincts*. If something does not seem/feel right, get out.
- **Please always report and document all disturbing events.

Thanks to the CYF Safety Committee for their ongoing efforts working towards a safer working environment!



SIDS PREVENTION TIPS

- ♥ Always place your baby on his or her back to sleep, even for naps
- ♥ Place your baby on a firm mattress, such as in a safety-approved crib
- ♥ Remove soft, fluffy bedding and stuffed toys from your baby’s sleep area
- ♥ Make sure your baby’s head and face remain uncovered during sleep
- ♥ Do not allow smoking around your baby
- ♥ Do not let your baby get too warm during sleep
- ♥ Talk to childcare providers, grandparents, babysitters and all caregivers about:
SIDS risk “Back to Sleep Campaign 1-800-505-CRIB”

SAFETY TRIVIA QUESTION ????????????????????

According to the American Cancer Society: women worry more about cancer of the breast than of the lung, but more than **how many thousands of women** die annually of lung cancer each year vs. the 40,000 that will die of breast cancer? Even women and men, who don’t smoke can get lung cancer so quit smoking, avoid secondhand smoke and have your home checked for radon.

Send your answer to Laura Huttner at huttner@co.dane.wi.us by February 28, 2009

Last issue’s winner was Lynn McAllister with the correct answer to what common fruit should you avoid eating to lessen the attraction of mosquitoes....bananas.

CHECK OUT OUR INTRANET SITE!

The Safety & Working Conditions Study Committee has a intranet website located at:
<http://www.co.dane.wi.us/committees/workingconditions/>

This website is specifically designed with information and links for you to access more safety information. You will also find the committee’s meeting times, agendas, and minutes. The site also allows you to contact the individual committee members with your suggestions and concerns.

There is even an Anonymous Contact Form for Dane County employees to report safety concerns that can be accessed from the website.