

August 17, 2011

MEMORANDUM NO: 069HR-011

TO: Agency Administrators

FROM: Bobbie Chappell

VIA: Rip Colvin, Executive Director

RE: Safety Outlook Newsletter July/August 2011

In the July/August 2011 *Safety Outlook* newsletter from Risk Management learn how you can test your safety knowledge on what to do when an accident almost occurs (Near Miss), and find out how you can help employees and their families stay safe during back to school time. Also, they will show you how "struck by" claims are becoming the leading cause of injuries in the workplace; and finally be sure to check out highlights from this year's Safety Academy.

You can read these stories, and much more, in the July/August 2011 issue of the Safety Outlook.

Please feel free to distribute this newsletter to other interested parties.

Thank you.

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THE SAFETY OUTLOOK

providing you a new look at safety



Florida Department of Financial Services, Division of Risk Management

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SFLPP IMPLEMENTS QUARTERLY SAFETY THEMES

The State of Florida Loss Prevention Program (SFLPP) is proud to announce a new design to our safety and loss prevention training. The new design, which is based on recommendations from the June 22nd Interagency Advisory Council (IAC) Planning Retreat, will focus on quarterly themes for all core training and communication functions. The quarterly safety themes will be incorporated into all safety training, IAC presentations, the Safety Outlook, and the Safety Notes. The first safety theme for July through September is Summer Heat and Back to School Safety. Quarterly themes for the remainder of the year will be developed with the input of the IAC Executive Committee. We hope that you enjoy our new design, which we anticipate will allow all agencies and universities to develop a more collaborative and coordinated approach to promotion of safety and loss prevention.

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1st Quarter Theme:

Summer Heat and Back to School Safety



BACK TO SCHOOL SAFETY

With summer ending and the start of a new school year just around the corner, it is important to encourage employees at your agency or university to be extra alert during this time of the year. Each year around back to school time, hundreds of children are injured or killed by motor vehicles while on foot or when riding bicycles, according to the National Highway Safety Transportation Administration. Children may not always pay attention to traffic as they head to and from school each day, so it is up to motorists to drive defensively when school is in session. Encourage employees at your agency or university to keep these simple tips in mind to ensure everyone has a safe first day of school and a successful school year.

Here are some simple reminders for drivers:

- Slow down and be especially alert in the residential neighborhoods and school zones.
- Take extra time to look for kids at intersections, on medians and on curbs.

- Enter and exit driveways and alleys slowly and carefully.
- Watch for children on and near the road in the morning and after school hours.
- Reduce any distractions inside your car so you can concentrate on the road and your surroundings.
- Put down your phone and do not talk or text while driving.

Reminder for your kids:

- Cross the street with an adult until you are at least 10 years old.
- Cross the street at corners, using traffic signals and crosswalks.
- Never run out into the streets or cross in between parked cars.
- Make sure to always walk in front of the bus where the driver can see you.



CDC REPORT FINDINGS SHOW CAR CRASHES COST BILLIONS IN MEDICAL AND LOST TIME COSTS

Keeping State of Florida employees safe while on the roadways is no easy task, but Florida is not alone in this problem. Many other states are struggling to reduce and prevent car crashes too. In fact, motor vehicle crash-related deaths in the United States resulted in an estimated \$41 billion in medical and lost time costs in a year, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Half of this cost (\$20.4 billion) was in 10 states, the report says, which is based on 2005 comprehensive data for the CDC. The comprehensive data analysis found that the 10 states with the highest medical and lost time costs were California (\$4.16 billion), Texas (\$3.50 billion), Florida (\$3.16 billion), Georgia (\$1.55 billion), Pennsylvania (\$1.52 billion), North Carolina (\$1.50 billion), New York (\$1.33 billion), Illinois (\$1.32 billion), Ohio (\$1.23 billion) and Tennessee (\$1.15 billion).

Although car crashes are a major problem in the United States and in Florida, many of these incidents can be prevented. To prevent crash-related deaths and reduce medical and lost time costs, CDC's Injury Center recommends that states consider the following strategies:

- Primary seat belt laws that covers all seating positions.
- Strong child passenger safety policies, which require children to be placed in age appropriate and size appropriate child safety and booster seats.
- Comprehensive graduated drivers licensing (GDL) system to help young drivers gain experience under lower-risk conditions.
- Universal motorcycle helmet laws that requires all riders to wear helmets.

In addition to the above strategies, encourage your employees while on the job and off the job to avoid distractions while driving, including using cell phones, eating or drinking, or using a navigation system. Encouraging employees to become defensive as well as offensive drivers and to follow proper driving safety rules and regulations is also beneficial to reducing crashes and saving lives. Keeping State of Florida employees and their families safe on the roadways can be a challenge, but it is not impossible. Staying safe on the road can save lives and money.

SAFETY SPOTLIGHT

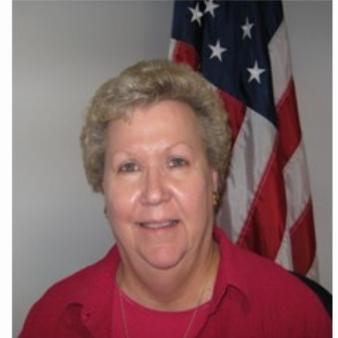
Cindy Adams

Department of Veterans Affairs

The Division of Risk Management, State of Florida Loss Prevention Program (SFLPP) is proud to highlight Ms. Cindy Adams of the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs (FDVA) as our Safety Spotlight feature for the July/August Safety Outlook newsletter. Ms. Adams is the Alternate Safety Coordinator for FDVA. In her role as Alternate Safety Coordinator, she is responsible for the overall management and oversight of the safety program for FDVA's six skilled nursing home facilities and its assisted living facility. Ms. Adams' duties include working with vendors on obtaining proper safety equipment, ensuring the overall safety of both residents and employees, and working closely with the FDVA Operations Review to maintain an effective emergency action and fire prevention program.

One of the biggest challenges Ms. Adams faces in her safety role is getting greater control over workers' compensation injuries and cost. Some of the workers' compensation injuries that FDVA has experienced include back injuries from lifting residents as well as slips, trips and falls. Ms. Adams says that being responsible for six skilled nursing homes that each have 120 beds and one

assisted living facility with 130 beds that operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week provides unique safety concerns. Although her job is a challenge, Ms. Adams finds her work rewarding because she is able to work with veterans, and she is able to let them know how much she appreciates them for the service and sacrifice they give to our state and country.



Ms. Adams is a registered nurse and holds several certifications, including certified case manager and other designations. The FDVA is an active member of the Florida Health Care Association. When she is away from work, Ms. Adams and her husband are motorcycle enthusiasts and sponsor a motorcycle group known as the 904 Freedom Riders. She also enjoys shopping and spending time with her two Jack Russell terriers. Ms. Adams' dedication and service to the safety of our military veterans and state employees is appreciated and we salute her for her outstanding work.

STRUCK BYS AMONG TOP THREE WORKERS' COMPENSATION CLAIMS

The most common cause of injuries in the workplace is usually the result of a slip, a trip or a fall; however, struck by claims are not far behind. Struck by claims in FY 2006-2007 resulted in 2,079 claims costing over \$3 million, and for the past five years, struck by claims have been among the top three workers' compensation claims in terms of frequency.

A struck by injury can happen when a person comes into contact or is struck by another person, object or animal. Some examples of struck by injuries are struck by a fellow employee or patient, struck by a motor vehicle, and struck by a falling or flying object. Struck by claims tend to be high in claim count because there are a variety of ways in which a person in the workforce can come in contact with another person, object or animal. The two most common struck by injuries for Florida state employees are workers being struck by a fellow worker or patient, and workers being struck by animals or insects. The state employees experiencing many of these struck bys

are police and correctional officers, forest rangers, health care professionals, and residential care workers.

To prevent or reduce struck by claims at your agency or university be sure to provide proper training and education to employees on the struck by hazards they may face in their position, identify and control the hazards in the workplace by selecting proper personal protection equipment, and encourage employees to report near misses where a struck by incident almost happened but did not.

Struck bys, just like slips, trips and falls, are a major cause of workplace injuries. It is so important to keep employees aware of the struck by hazards they face while on the job.



ARE YOU DISMISSING NEAR MISSES?

Although we try our hardest to reduce and prevent workplace injuries, we all know that accidents can and will happen. As a safety professional, your job is take steps to inform employees on what to do when an accident occurs, and then take corrective actions to ensure that the accident does not happen again. It is extremely important to educate and train employees on what to do when an accident occurs, but it is equally, if not more important, to train employees what to do when an accident almost occurred.

When a near miss, near hit, or close call occurs, it is easy to breathe a sigh of relief. But, that should not be the time to relax your safety and loss prevention efforts. According to the National Safety Council, 75 percent of all workplace accidents are preceded by one or more near misses. If your agency does not already, stress to employees the importance of reporting near misses throughout the organization. Doing so will allow for corrective measures, reduction of hazards, and the prevention of actual injuries.

To prevent near misses, keep alert for hazards while working, and report any visible hazards immediately. Also, it is important that employees do not use any equipment that is not working properly, and do not wear worn or damaged personal protective equipment.

Never dismiss a near miss. Report it and get it corrected. Checking a near miss can prevent a serious and costly accident.

Report Near Misses



DON'T MISS THIS QUIZ!

Test your knowledge about near misses!

1. A near miss is not considered a reportable workplace safety incident.
True False
2. Which is the safest attitude to have about a near miss?
 - a. Consider it a lucky break and forget about it.
 - b. Don't report it unless someone saw it.
 - c. Take it as a warning and report it to your supervisor.
3. Causes of near misses and accidents are different.
True False
4. Very few workplace accidents are preceded by near misses.
True False
5. Near misses:
 - a. Prevent accidents.
 - b. Warn of potential accidents.
 - c. Cause accidents.

ANSWERS

1. **False.** Near misses should be treated the same as actual accidents and be reported right away.
2. **c.** Take near misses as warnings and report them so that safety problems can be corrected and accidents avoided.
3. **False.** The same kinds of safety problems that cause accidents cause near misses.
4. **False.** The National Safety Council estimates that 75 percent of workplace accidents are preceded by one or more near misses.
5. **b.** Near misses warn of potential accidents. That's why they must be taken seriously and investigated.

FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY'S SAFETY PROGRAM REDUCES WORKERS' COMPENSATION CLAIM COSTS WITH TEAMWORK AND SERVICE

Reducing workers' compensation claim costs is not an easy task for any agency or university. Despite the difficulties, Florida Atlantic University (FAU) was able to accomplish a substantial reduction in claims costs and secure a 1st place safety award at the 2011 Annual Safety Awards ceremony.

FAU is responsible for ensuring a safe and healthy environment for students, faculty, staff and visitors at their main campus located in Boca Raton and six other satellite campuses. FAU, like many other agencies and universities, is facing major budget limitations and having to do more with less. However, FAU is succeeding in putting employee safety and health first.

How did they do it?

"The combination of top level support, dedicated and talented safety professionals, comprehensive service oriented programs, and employees who want to be safe guarantees a successful safety program," said Tom Bradley, Safety Coordinator for FAU.



Mr. Bradley added that safety professionals, along with members of the University Safety Committee, have developed comprehensive policies, procedures and programs designed to ensure a safe and healthy environment for the university community. In addition, FAU conducts a wide variety of workplace safety inspections and safety trainings to assist in preventing accidents and injuries.

When asked what he would share with other agencies looking to improve their safety program, Bradley said, "I have a motivational poster in my office that says 'Success is the sum of small efforts repeated day in and day out'. I truly believe that, and I wouldn't be able to work in the safety field if I didn't. Making improvements will not always come easily, but continuous effort and perseverance will eventually bring success."

FAU won 1st place in the Large Agency category. FAU, which has over 5,000 employees, achieved a 29 percent reduction in costs from FY 2008-2009 to FY 2009-2010.



IAC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS TACKLE TOUGH STATEWIDE SAFETY AND LOSS PREVENTION ISSUES AT 2nd ANNUAL PLANNING RETREAT

Members of the IAC Executive Committee met on June 22, 2011 from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the Betty Easley Center to roll up their sleeves and participate in the 2nd Annual IAC Planning Retreat.

During the Retreat, members formed three groups and each group was given two topics to discuss. The topics for this year's Retreat were very challenging as members analyzed and discussed new legislation, the current safety awards process and developing safety awareness activities, such as creating quarterly safety themes to promote collaboration and cooperation statewide. Developing statewide training goals and selecting IAC agenda presentations were also



discussed. After each group discussed their topics, they reported their recommendations and feedback to the entire group.

In the end, the Retreat was rewarding and extremely beneficial as topics discussed will have a significant impact on agencies and universities. The hard work of each of the participants individually and collectively provided guidance and direction for FY 2011-2012 priorities for statewide risk management and loss prevention initiatives.



2011 SAFETY ACADEMY HIGHLIGHTS

The 2011 Safety Academy was held on July 27 - 28 at the Betty Easley Conference Center. The conference included over 90 participants and provided educational sessions on safety, liability, and workers' compensation. Participants were also able to attend face to face and

webinar training sessions from nationally recognized National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) presenters.

Below are photo highlights from the two-day conference.



Division Staff handle registration for the 2011 Safety Academy.



Conference Coordinator Juana Powell is recognized by Eric Whitehead for her hard work.



Academy attendee take a moment to chat before the opening ceremony.



Dr. Casey Chosewood of NIOSH speaks about promoting healthy workplaces.



Attendees receive their conference materials and other goodies.



Rebecca Weaver of DISC Village shares the signs and symptoms of drug addiction in the workplace.

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The following forms can be found at this Website. Remember, it is a secure site and a username and password will be needed:

http://www.MyFloridaCFO.com/Risk/sc_toolbox.asp

- **Workers' Compensation Claim Change Form** (available electronically & in Adobe Acrobat)
- **State Liability Claim Change Form** (available electronically & in Adobe Acrobat)
- **Safety Coordinator Appointment Form** (available in Adobe Acrobat only)
- **Media Loan Request Application Form** (available in Adobe Acrobat only)

*Articles or Suggestions for Improvement of
this Newsletter are always welcome.*

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