

COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE
August 2015

Safety Newsletter



The Lone Worker

Do you work alone or know anyone who does?

Believe it or not, lone work presents a fundamental challenge to watchfulness and worker safety. A lone worker can be anyone who works alone in a fixed facility or away from his or her typical work base. The term "Lone worker" can be applied to those who work in factories, warehouses, in inspection fields, public patrolling and so on. Lone workers perform their jobs on the road, at client sites, in home offices, and other locations distant from the workplace. Some, like security guards and night maintenance employees, may work in and around a facility but still work alone.

Along with the worker's responsibility of their own safety, supervisors also have a significant part to play in the matter. The supervision of lone employees is challenging when the supervisor and the employee aren't in the same place. However, supervisors can accomplish much by communicating via e-mail, text, phone, and or radio. As a supervisor, the last thing you'd want is to give an answer of "I don't know" if questioned about an employee's whereabouts. Supervisors should always be mindful of their subordinate's safety and the associated hazards while lone work is in progress.

So what are the hazards associated with working in the capacity of "lone work"? The truth is, there isn't a blanket answer that would cover and relate to all. With that said, there are several methods to discovering the appropriate answer relevant to the lone worker's field of work.

The National Safety Council advocates the following as recommended procedures for safe functions of lone work:

- Identify hazards of the work
- Assess the risks involved
- Put measures in place to avoid or control risks
- Supervisors, If possible, make periodic visits to observe lone workers
- Ensure regular contact between lone workers and supervisors via phone or radio
- Verify that lone workers have returned to fixed base or home after completing a task
- Establish a clear action plan in the event of an emergency
- Set limits for what is permissible during lone work

Hazards that lone workers may encounter include:

- ◆ Accidents or emergencies arising out of the work, including inadequate provision of first aid
- ◆ Sudden illnesses
- ◆ Physical violence from members of the public and/or intruders
- ◆ The lack of support to assist with an emergency
- ◆ etc.

Learning and maintaining a safe work environment for ourselves and our colleagues is vital. Whether in the field or in the office, one principal generally applies. The more we're aware, the further we're prepared.



Back to School = Traffic Changes

Safety Topic

As summer comes to a close, back-to-school season is in full effect. This means that the smooth ride to work may not be as smooth. Remember to safely share the roads with school buses, pedestrians and bicyclists, and provide children with the necessary knowledge to stay safe at school.

Whether children are walking, riding their bikes or taking the school bus to school, it is extremely important that they and the motorists in vehicles around them take proper safety precautions. This is extremely important in the month of August and early September because motorists are transitioning from the summer time driving habits..



A FEW THINGS TO REMEMBER:

Slow down The simplest thing any driver can do when there are new driving hazards is slow down.

Allow More Time As a new school year begins allow yourself more time to get where you are going until you can figure out the effects of increased traffic.

Stay Alert! Make a mental note of any new bus stops or students walking to and from school. This way you won't be surprised and will be prepared if you need to stop.

Use a What If Strategy What if that child darts out in front of me? What if that car stops short? Remember young children are not able to accurately determine the speed of an oncoming vehicle and may take risks crossing the street. Use the "what if" strategy to keep you alert.

Talk with Teen Drivers Remind your teen drivers about the importance of being extra careful in and around school zones. It's also important to remind them of the hazards associated with sharing the road with more experienced drivers during rush hours.



In the Public Eye
Many of us employed by the County of Riverside drive County vehicles to conduct official County business. Whether you drive a County vehicle daily or periodically, always remember that the public is watching.



The Safety Division will be passing on monthly ergonomic tips in our new section "REVISITING ERGONOMICS... We hope this will be helpful to you and your workstation!

General Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSD) Tips

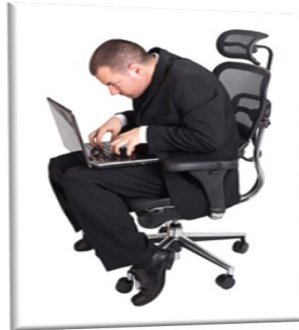


Apply your Ergonomic Injury Prevention Class training



If you experience work related MSD symptoms, report them to Supervision

Try to correct negative workstation arrangement factors

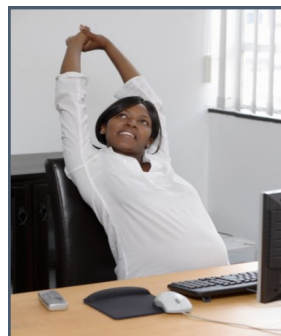


Analyze what you are doing new or differently that may be causing your symptoms and make adjustments



Practice good posture and work practices to reduce risk factors

Take micro breaks (1-2 minutes) from current task every 30 to 60 minutes; perform alternate task: making copies, filing documents, phone calls, stretching, etc



REPORTING THE UNSAFE

Hazard control is the heart of an effective Injury and Illness Prevention Program (IIPP). Periodic inspections and procedures for correction and control provide a method of identifying existing or potential hazards within the workplace, and eliminating or controlling them. Simply put, the hazard control system is a process that involves all employees' active participation in recognizing hazards and initiating the appropriate corrective action - each of us has a responsibility to participate in this process.

GENERAL PROCEDURES

When employees see or receive information relating to unsafe acts or conditions, the following procedures should be used as a guide:

1. The first person who observes the problem should correct minor conditions when possible (i.e., spills and/or objects on the floor that could result in falls, trips, slips hazards, etc.).
2. Employees should notify their immediate supervisor of the problem and whether the condition has been corrected or if additional measures are needed.
3. The supervisor should then take remedial action, or contact their Department Safety Representative (DSR) or the County Safety Division for assistance.
4. If the hazard **is not** or **cannot** be immediately corrected, the employee should complete **Hazard Reporting Form 401** (*Form 401* is located on the Safety Division intranet site). Identify the hazard and what actions have been taken, or what needs to be done to correct the situation, if known. *Form 401* should be forwarded to the

employee's immediate supervisor and the County Safety Division. The employee should keep a copy of the form for their own records.

Note: Completed forms can be sent to the Safety Division via Mail-Stop #2170 or email them to the Safety Coordinator assigned to your department if unknown, contact the Safety Division at 951-955-3520.

5. The employee's supervisor should review the hazard report and follow up to ensure that all responsible parties have taken action. The supervisor should note the response on Form 401 and post in a conspicuous location for all employees to review, including remedial action taken, as may be warranted, within five (5) workdays of receipt.

Note: (1) The 5 day response does not necessarily mean the issue will be resolved, but rather a course of action will be identified. (2) If budgetary or time constraints prevent prompt action to correct any unsafe conditions, short-term measures must be initiated to prevent accidents until the conditions can be corrected. Take appropriate precautions such as warning employees, posting signs, roping off areas, or temporarily shutting down equipment or an operation until the safety hazard is corrected.

Utilizing this process accomplishes a two important things: (1) it provides an organized "close loop" method for staff to report and track the progress of resolving safety concerns; (2) Hazard Reporting Form 401 provides the necessary documentation required by Cal/OSHA to validate the timely resolution of safety concerns.

If you have any questions regarding hazard reporting, please contact the HR Safety Division at 951-955-3520.