

Reduce the opportunity for campus arson with vigilance

School campus fires are devastating. There's the emotional component of losing materials, memories and security. There's also the financial toll of dealing with fire damage to buildings and their contents. Logistical problems result as well, as teachers and staff have to find new spaces to hold classes and conduct school business. The criminal nature of arson fires makes them especially heinous and challenging.

Fortunately, there are numerous steps district staff can take to reduce opportunities for arson at school sites:

- **Remove garbage cans daily during non-school hours.** Garbage can be used as an ignition source for arson fires and as fuel to keep unwelcome visitors warm.
- **Reduce vegetation around campus buildings** because it's a fire risk and provides hiding places.
- **Check lighting with a night walk through the campus.** Replace all burned-out bulbs. Install lighting in dark and secluded areas. Consider installing motion sensors.
- **Inspect all windows and doors to ensure that they close and lock securely.** Keep them locked when school is out.
- **In outside hallways and quads,** post all notices and paper signs in protective display cases.
- **Check fire, smoke and intrusion alarms monthly** to be sure they're working properly and that the alarm signals are audible.



- **Report all suspicious fires, no matter how small, to the local fire department.** Call the non-emergency number and request an investigation for possible arson.

- **Be aware of warning signs that there's been someone on school grounds who shouldn't be there.** Look for cigarette butts, matches, graffiti, discarded bottles and garbage. Vandalism and fire go hand in hand.

- **Invite your school neighbors to be partners in your fire-prevention plan.** Get to know them. Ask them to keep an eye on school property after hours and provide numbers to call if they see something suspicious.
- **Promote the WeTip program to school staff, families and neighbors.**
- **Turn on outside sprinklers during night hours.**
- **Remove ladders and equipment that provide access to roof areas.**
- **Secure or enclose all vents and screens to crawl space areas under buildings and portables.**

SIA has materials to help promote campus fire safety, including checklists and fire safety information for classrooms. SIA's "30 Ways to Prevent School Arson" video is online, and also available on DVD. Visit our website at www.sia-jpa.org to learn more.



Take time before the winter weather sets in to survey your premises and fix what needs fixing

By Julie Smith, SIA Director of Property and Liability

After many years of drought, California saw record-breaking rain and snowfall last year. The increased weather activity resulted in SIA experiencing an all-time high in storm-related property losses.

Hundreds of thousands of dollars are being spent repairing water damage throughout the SIA districts. Some gyms required new floors because of broken pipes and backed-up storm drains; roof leaks caused extensive damage to numerous offices and classrooms. The wind also damaged shade structures and



storage facilities. During the drought years it wasn't a priority to check roofs for leaks or storm drains for blockage. However, with the fall and winter rains ahead, it would be beneficial to do visual checks of all storm drains, roofing, shade structures and storage facilities to ensure they are in the best possible condition.

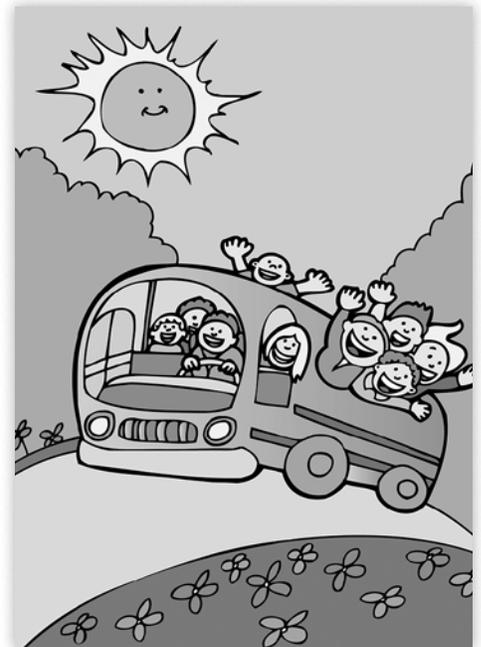
Remember, SIA's member districts are part of a self-insured pool and all funds paid out in property damage and losses come directly from district general funds. A little preventative maintenance now could save districts thousands of dollars in premiums and deductibles later. That's money that could be used to benefit students.

Field trips are fun, but require planning ahead

Each school year teachers plan field trips that enhance their students' educational experiences. These excursions are always fun, but advance planning is necessary. Before heading up and moving out, do the following:

- **Make sure to use** the most up to date district forms for field trips.
- **Keep all completed field trip forms** for at least a year after the school year ends.
- **Check with risk management or the district business office** to ensure all district field trip requirements and approvals are met.
- **Consult with the district transportation department**, even if it's not providing the buses. Transportation staff will still need to know the plan.
- **Some field trip venues might require certificates of insurance.** To request a certificate, contact the district for the necessary form.

Remember that field trips are privileges. It's essential that all necessary steps are completed before students can participate.



HeartMath techniques can help improve sleep, bolster productivity

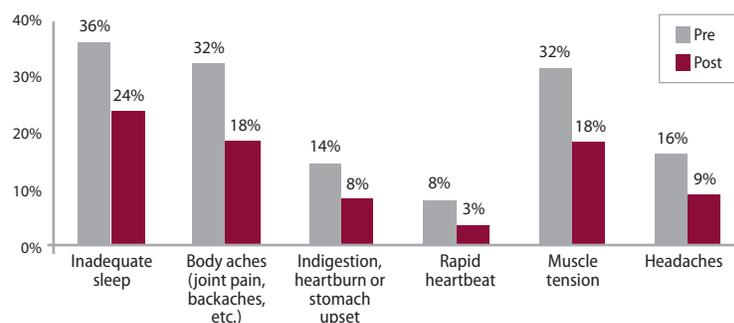
By Michelle Mariscal, SIA Prevention Specialist

Is lack of sleep affecting your employees' productivity and safety? We often don't make the connection between stress and the physical symptoms of whatever might be impacting sleep quality. A good night's sleep is important for different systems of our body, most importantly the brain. When we get less than seven hours of sleep a night, physical and mental performance drops.

Harvard Medical School sums it up this way: "In the short term, a lack of adequate sleep can affect judgment, mood, the ability to learn and retain information, and may increase the risk of serious accidents and injury."

The good news is we can optimize our sleep with simple practices that can positively impact other things. The first step is to become aware of emotional states that might be driving disruptions during the day. The Institute of HeartMath has been studying the role of emotions on physiology over the past 20 years and promotes several techniques that can help individuals practice awareness and shift physiology. Many symptoms such as body aches, indigestion, heartburn, stomach upset, rapid heartbeat, muscles tension and headaches often have unmanaged

stress as a common root cause. These symptoms, in turn, may affect sleep. Those who have practiced HeartMath tools three times a day for six weeks, however, have demonstrated marked improvement in negative physical symptoms, as noted by the chart below (subject pool of 6,000 people).

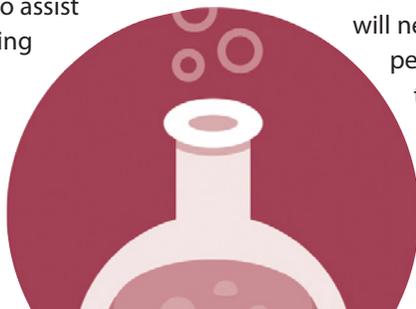


SIA is pleased to offer the Institute of HeartMath's Resilience Advantage program, designed to address stress issues and provide a path to improved physical changes. Those interested in learning more about offering this training to employees (complimentary for SIA school districts in the workers' compensation pool), contact Michele Mariscal at mmariscal@sia-jpa.org or call (916) 364-1281.

Annual online training on the topic of bloodborne pathogens is available

The program is mandatory for school district workers with occupational exposures

School district employees with occupational exposures to blood or other potentially infectious body fluids are required to receive training on bloodborne pathogens each year. To assist our member districts with the training requirements, SIA now has a free online training program. The new bloodborne pathogens module is an addition to the Hour Zero Online service, which also has mandated reporter training. SIA



provides this service to members at no additional charge.

If your district is currently using Hour Zero Online for your mandated reporter training, you can easily begin to use the bloodborne pathogens training. If it's new to using Hour Zero Online, a staff member will need to serve as a system administrator. This person will facilitate the process of enrolling the district in the program, with training and guidance provided.

To get started, please contact Jennifer McCain at jmccain@sia-jpa.org.



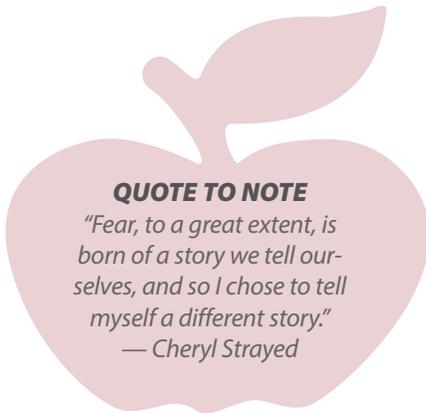


WeTip

For information and materials
contact
Teresa Franco at tfranco@sia-jpa.org



*The material in this newsletter should be part of your Injury and Illness Prevention Plan (IIPP).
Keep a copy of this newsletter in your IIPP binder.*



QUOTE TO NOTE

*"Fear, to a great extent, is born of a story we tell ourselves, and so I chose to tell myself a different story."
— Cheryl Strayed*

Slow down to improve efficiency, enhance job satisfaction

Organizations are continually challenged on how to best respond to changes in workload demands and decreases in staff. So the question becomes, "What can we do to respond to that kind of pressure?" The obvious answer is to do more with less. However, that can lead to declines in job satisfaction, falling productivity and increased stress. The less obvious, more counterintuitive answer is to "slow down and do less." But how?

- **Turn it off.** Be brave enough to turn off your smart phone, laptop and other electronics on occasion. Create silence and space for reflection and planning.
- **Create boundaries.** Decide what matters most to your on-the-job success. Schedule time for priority tasks. If you put something on your schedule, you're more likely to do it and turn down the peripheral tasks that conflict with your true priorities. To help, determine three essential tasks you want to complete each day. Use that list as your lifeline and you'll avoid becoming sidetracked, distracted and devoured by nonessential items.
- **Model productive behavior.** Once you learn to do less when it comes to extraneous and distracting tasks, become a role model for your staffers. Show them the benefits of doing one thing at a time and with care, attention and satisfaction. Your entire team will reap the benefits.

Source: Communication Briefings



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