



wellness & safety



Schools Insurance Authority

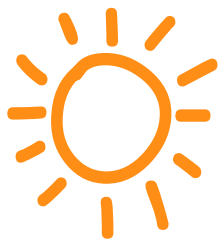
Volume XXIV, No. 3 • May - June 2014

Take tuned-up safety practices along for the ride this summer

When school is out for the summer, staff may take on different job tasks. Teachers may move to other sites for summer programs, maintenance staff may work on jobs too difficult to do when students are on campus, and simply cleaning/moving classrooms can up-end anyone's routine. Therefore, as with any kind of move, change or adjustment, safety should figure into the equation. Here are some things to keep in mind:

- **While working at a different school campus during the summer, become familiar with the emergency plan.** Learn the evacuation routes, response protocol and alarm system.
- **Stretch each day before starting a shift.** This will warm up muscles and reduce the chance for injury.
- **Wear well-fitting, non-slip shoes to protect feet and provide support.** Flip-flops are not safe work shoes.
- **Before lifting anything, stop and use the proper lifting technique.**

Here's how:



- ◆ look at the load and size it up
 - ◆ bend your knees and squat as close to the load as possible
 - ◆ get a good grip; tighten stomach muscles
 - ◆ lift the load using the thigh muscles; keep your back straight
 - ◆ hold the load close to your body while carrying it
- **If working in the heat, remember to take regular breaks in a shaded area.** Drink plenty of water.
 - **Remember to turn off fans and other electrical devices (if allowed) before leaving for the day.**
 - **Take extra caution when waxing floors. Clearly mark waxed areas and direct others to safe routes to avoid freshly waxed floors.** Each year, school employees slip and fall on waxed floors and for some the injuries have been very serious.



Hold on to those permission forms

Although the school year is coming to a close, do not throw away all those permission forms you collected during the school year. All permission and activity forms should be kept for at least one year after the conclusion of the current school year. This important paperwork may be necessary if a claim or other problem is brought forward. Don't get caught without the right documentation.

- **Be sure to lock doors and set intrusion alarms at the end of the day.** If you don't know how to use the intrusion alarm, ask!



- Sleep better starting this summer
- Spotlight on air quality in schools

EPA presentation spotlights air quality in schools

SEA recently hosted a presentation by the U.S. EPA on its indoor air quality (IAQ) program and the *Tools for Schools* kit. The overall message was that all school staff can help maintain quality indoor air through everyday actions.

Guest speakers Shelly Rosenblum and Barbara Spark discussed a commonsense approach to creating an environment that is both good for health and conducive to academic achievement. They shared examples of factors that contribute to poor air quality, citing situations that are often easily remedied. By raising awareness of potential contributing problems, site staff can have a huge positive impact.

The framework for effective school indoor air quality (IAQ) management includes the following components:

- **Organize** for success.
- **Communicate** with everyone, all the time.
- **Assess** environments continuously.
- **Plan** short- and long-term activities.
- **Act** to address structural, institutional and behavioral issues.
- **Evaluate** results for continuous improvement.

The IAQ *Tools for Schools* program has been implemented successfully in tens of thousands of schools nationwide. Its highly flexible and adaptable structure allows any school, regardless of location, size, budget or condition, to use the framework to launch, reinvigorate and sustain an effective IAQ management process. An abundance of information and tools are available on the U.S. EPA website at <http://www.epa.gov/iaq/schools/index.html>.



May is Better Sleep Month

Sleep better with a little help from Mother Nature

Michele Mariscal, Prevention Specialist

Studies from the world of nature reveal that certain plants can deepen sleep and help stop tossing and turning. The following are just three of the floral scents that may help you get a better night's sleep:

Jasmine – To experience a deeper REM cycle in which your body does its most effective healing, place a *Jasminum polyanthum* or *Jasminum sambac* plant next to your bed.

Lavender – This plant slows heart rate and lowers blood pressure. In one study, insomniacs found that they slept better and woke up feeling refreshed after placing lavender oil on their bed sheets and pillow case. A therapeutic-grade essential oil of lavender was used in this study.

Gardenia – This bud plant helps soothe uneasy sleep. Some doctors prescribe it to help patients manage anger and impatience.

Source: *Reader's Digest*

QUOTE TO NOTE

"Sometimes courage is the quiet voice at the end of the day saying, 'I will try again tomorrow.'"
–Mary Anne Radmacher

- National Trails Day is June 7
- 17 easy ways to eat healthier



Head out to the trails and hike for fun and health

Are you ready to get outside? The warmth and smells of the spring and summer always call us outdoors, and what better way to celebrate these seasons than to take a hike.

If hiking is new for you, start with a simple day hike on a safe, well-marked trail that doesn't have too many steep climbs. Don't let images of heavy boots and backpacks deter you. Each time you go hiking, try going a little farther and take a slightly steeper trail. Look for trails in national and state parks near you.

To keep hiking fun, be prepared with the right clothing and gear. Wear items that are comfortable and versatile. Also:

- **Layer on light clothes.** Be prepared for cool or rainy weather.
- **Wear a good pair of shoes and socks.** Sturdy, thick-bottom sneakers are fine to start. Graduate to hiking boots as you progress in trail difficulty.
- **Wear a backpack** or fanny pack for your supplies.
- **Take along plenty of water** and snacks, such as sports bars and trail mix.
- **Always apply sunscreen,** even on cloudy days, and bring some along to reapply throughout the day.
- **For extended hikes,** bring a flashlight, army-style knife, waterproof matches, cell phone, first-aid kit and compass.
- **Read signs along the trail** and watch for animals or signs of changes in the trail.
- **Let someone know where you are hiking** and what time you plan to be back.
- **Protect yourself from bugs** by using a bug repellent.

For additional information on hiking, check out these websites:

www.parks.ca.gov – information on California's state parks

www.nps.gov – information on national parks

www.cdc.gov – search under hiking for a variety of health and safety articles

www.americanhiking.org – website for the American Hiking Association

www.naturerocks.org – great resource for outside activities for young children and the young at heart



National Trails Day is June 7

17 easy ways to eat healthier (and tastier)

1. Load omelets and pizzas with onion, peppers, spinach, mushrooms, and other veggies instead of cheeses and meats.
2. Select nonfat milk, yogurt and cheeses.
3. Use a nonstick skillet and spray vegetable oil and you can cut the oil in recipes by half.
4. Pick water-packed tuna, or to get the benefit of heart-healthy oils, look for tuna packed in olive oil or canola oil.
5. Satisfy your sweet tooth with fruit instead of candy or cookies.
6. Select soft taco size (6- to 8-inch) tortillas instead of the larger burrito size. Corn tortillas have less fat and calories than the flour ones.
7. Choose brown rice and whole-wheat bread instead of white rice and white bread.
8. Bake, broil or grill beef, chicken and fish.
9. Substitute applesauce for half the oil in a recipe when baking.
10. Use two egg whites instead of one whole egg in recipes.
11. Freeze grapes or watermelon wedges for a popsicle-like treat.
12. Season steamed vegetables with lemon, herbs and spices instead of butter and salt.
13. Try raw vegetables with salsa instead of chips with salsa.
14. Ask for the bread basket to be removed from the table when you dine out.
15. Order sauces and salad dressing served on the side or use spray dressings.
16. Use smaller plates and glasses.
17. Avoid adding table salt to your food.

Sources: Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics; America On the Move, www.americaonthemove.org

Have you visited SIA's website?
Check out www.sia-jpa.org for useful information, tools and services.



- SIA wins national school safety award
- Put the phone away while driving

SIA wins WeTip's Excellence in School Safety award

SIA received the Excellence in School Safety award at WeTip's National Conference in April. In presenting the award, WeTip's national director Sue Mandell had high praise for SIA.

"SIA's visionary team believes in service to their schools," said Mandell. "Their continuing goal to provide high quality, cost-effective, relevant programs and services that assist school districts in saving dollars for the classroom led them to WeTip."

For nearly 10 years, SIA has provided the services of WeTip for member schools as a way to reduce loss and property damage at the school sites. Schools are encouraged to take advantage of the tools and resources available for free, including posters, wallet cards and magnets.

The WeTip program is available to all SIA member school districts to encourage the reporting of crime information. The hotline is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. Callers to WeTip are totally anonymous, not just confidential. There is no tracing of calls or any way to identify a caller. Callers can share information without fear of being identified.

For more information, contact your district WeTip liaison or contact Teresa Franco in SIA Prevention Services at tfranco@sia-jpa.org or (916) 364-1281.



SIA's Teresa Franco, left, accepts WeTip's award of excellence for school safety from national director Sue Mandell.



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 and be sure all employees receive a copy.

Put the phone away and keep your eyes and mind on the road

Texting while driving is not worth the risks to yourself or others

That may seem like plain common sense. Sadly, though, thumbing away on a Smartphone has become a standard driving pastime, despite all the warnings and laws.



The dangerous behavior of drivers using mobile devices while behind the wheel is evident everywhere. Combined with other distractions, such as eating and grooming, the likelihood of tragedy is increased.

Are you guilty? If so, here are some reminders:

- Leave calls, e-mails and other distractions until you park the car.
- Make a silent promise to yourself to drive safely from now on.
- When you drive, drive.

Set a good example for others, too.

- Have heart-to-heart talks with the other drivers in your life about paying attention to the world around them when behind the wheel.
- Make sure your kids know the rules of the road and see you following them.

For safe driving tips, go to www.DistractedDrivingSafetyAlliance.org.

Wellness & Safety is published by the Schools Insurance Authority, P.O. Box 276710, Sacramento, CA 95827-6710, (916) 364-1281, 1-877-SIA-KIDS. The SIA is a joint powers authority, composed of 34 members, that collectively provides workers' compensation, liability, property, and health benefit insurance coverage on behalf of its member districts. The SIA school districts are: Arcohe, Atwater, Buckeye, Camino, Center, Central Sierra ROP, El Dorado Co. Off. Ed., El Dorado High, Elk Grove, Elverta, Folsom-Cordova, Galt Elem., Galt High, Gold Oak, Gold Trail, Hayward, Indian Diggings, Latrobe, Merced City, Mother Lode, Natomas, North Bay SIA, Pioneer, Placerville, Pollock Pines, Rescue, River Delta, Robla, Sac. City, Sac. Co. Off. Ed., San Juan, Silver Fork, Twin Rivers, and Woodland. SIA Officers: Executive Director — Martin Brady; President — Tamara Sanchez, Sacramento COE; Vice President — Baldev Johal, El Dorado Union HSD; Secretary — Jean Pinotti, Latrobe SD; Prevention Services Director/Communications — Lisa Tremewan-Konarski; Newsletter: Vitali-Gage Communications, Inc.

www.sia-jpa.org ©2014