

IPRF ISSUES

Risk & Safety Tips from the ILLINOIS PUBLIC RISK FUND Vol. 6 No. 3 • Quarterly Issue • July 2007



Whistle Stop Tour A Firefighter Safety Program

The purpose of the Whistle Stop Tour was to raise awareness of the 16 Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives. The Initiatives, developed by the Fire Service Leadership in 2004, are the “blue print” for reducing line-of-duty injuries and deaths.

Congress created the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation to lead a nationwide effort to honor America’s Fallen Firefighters. Since 1992, the non-profit Foundation has developed and expanded programs that fulfill that mandate. Their mission is to honor and remember America’s fallen fire heroes and to provide resources to assist their survivors in rebuilding their lives. The National Fallen Firefighters Foundation strongly supports enhanced training, better equipment, and other measures to increase firefighter health and safety. These efforts can make a significant difference in reducing the number of firefighter line-of-duty deaths each year.

With more than 80,000 firefighters being injured annually and approximately 100 losing their lives annually, The National Fallen Firefighters Foundation is promoting public awareness on fire prevention. The Whistle Stop Tour motor coach bus tour made 20 stops throughout the nation to promote public awareness and to honor fallen firefighters. Orland Park Fire Protection District Chief, Donald Bettenhausen, was pleased that Orland Park, with its close proximity to Chicago, was the chosen site for Illinois. The cross country tour began in San Francisco and concluded in Framingham, MA sending the message “Everyone Goes Home.”

The tour events, attended by thousands of firefighters and the general public, included fire department honor guards, pipe and drum bands, and speeches by the fire service and local dignitar-

ies. The highlight of each stop was the presentation made by the loved ones left behind as a result of firefighter line-of-duty deaths.

In conjunction with the tour, the “*Courage to Be Safe... So Everyone Goes Home*” training class was held at each stop. This provocative and moving classroom presentation is designed to change the culture of accepting the loss of firefighters as a normal occurrence. More than three hundred firefighters completed this training program during the course of the tour.

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5 MINUTE SAFETY TALKS

Hand Tool Safety

The correct use of tools is the distinguishing mark of a craftsman. The amateur makes simple jobs hazardous by not using the correct tools. They may use a screw driver for a chisel, etc.

Being in a hurry is the most common excuse for the misuse of tools at home and on the job. You may grab a file to pry open a box, or a hammer for any job imaginable. Use the right tool for the job.

It is sound practice to inspect tools before using them. Chisels and punches should be checked for mushroomed or chipped heads, or bent and broken points. Drills, augers and bits might be incorrectly tempered, or can be dull or otherwise worn.

File handles may be missing or broken. File tangs may be bent, broken, or chipped. The jaws of wrenches often spread from heavy use, and hammer heads become deformed and handles become cracked.

There was an incident where part of a hammer broke off, and an eye injury occurred. Inspection of the hammer and use of safety glasses would have prevented the injury. A second incident happened when a man was adjusting a press with pliers. They slipped. The use of a wrench would have prevented a broken hand.

Power tool defects shouldn't be overlooked either. Be on the lookout for such things as broken insulation, loose connections, brushes, sparking, and defects in the plugs and switches. Power tools must be third-wire grounded or double-insulated.

If any of the previously mentioned defects are noticed, remove the tool from service and call it to the attention of your supervisor.

It is important that the cutting edges of knives, chisels, drills, and similar tools be kept sharp. It makes them safe to use. Hand tool mishaps due to dull cutting edges account for the loss of eyes, fractures, punctures, cuts and bruises.

Proper care and storage of tools can also combat these injuries. Return tools to their proper storage place. Don't leave them lying on the floor. Transport tools in a tool box or cart, or carry them in a tool belt. A bucket or bag with a rope can be used for lifting or lowering tools.

We haven't been able to cover every specific tool but many of the safety principles mentioned cover a wide variety of tools. Use tools safely, and always use safe tools.



LEADER NOTES

OBJECTIVE:

To reinforce the proper use of hand tools and the importance of inspecting hand tools prior to use.

POTENTIAL INJURIES:

Loss of eyes, fractures, punctures, cuts and bruises.

THE TALK – POINTS TO COVER

- The correct use of tools is the distinguishing mark of a craftsman.
- Being in a hurry is the most common excuse for the misuse of tools at home or on the job.
- It's a sound practice to inspect tools before using them.
 - Chisels and punches should be checked for mushroomed or chipped heads, and bent or broken points.
 - Drills, augers and bits may lose temper, or be dull or otherwise worn.
 - File handles may be missing or broken. File tangs may be bent, broken, or chipped.
 - The jaws of wrenches often spread from heavy use.
 - Hammer heads become deformed, or the handles become cracked.
 - Cutting edges of knives, chisels, drills, and similar tools should be kept sharp.

Safe Work Habits

Most of us would probably agree with the nineteenth century author who wrote, "Habit is the deepest law of human nature." Humans are often influenced by habit. Habit and job safety are closely related. If you form safe work habits, it's a big plus for safety.

A national publication recently listed eight of the most common human elements involved in job safety. Hazard recognition was one element mentioned. By being on the lookout for hazards, you enhance your own safety. Look for obvious hazards, as well as the ones which might suddenly appear due to the action of another employee.

Indifference can cause additional problems. An individual might know the correct procedure for their job and just ignore it. Others might not know and not want to find out the correct procedures.

Daring behavior can lead to job accidents.

Working without guards, horseplay, and taking shortcuts are examples of daredevil tactics.

Setting a poor example can lead to trouble. A new worker might observe the incorrect procedure and follow it. An accident could then result.

Impulsiveness is another weak link in the safety chain. Haste is a trait that often leads to accidents. Take time to be safe.

Training, or lack of it, is also a safety factor. Supervisors are responsible for training an employee to do a job safely. Employees have to be responsible enough to ask questions if they don't understand the procedure.

The last element mentioned was work habits. We do our jobs from day to day and basically form good work habits. Bad habits, however, may also form early on the job.

A person who has incorporated these unsafe habits into a job may continue them for a long time before an accident happens. Another person might not be as fortunate. Gambling with the law of averages is a bad bet.

The purpose of all safety efforts is to prevent accidents and injuries to human beings. We all have the inclination to choose the easy way or the fastest way of doing something without regard to safety.

By doing things the correct way, we gradually form safe work habits that automatically carry through into our daily work, and this is one of the best safety devices available.



LEADER NOTES

OBJECTIVE:

To have employees realize that safe work habits can be developed and encourage their use.

THE TALK – POINTS TO COVER

- Humans are often influenced by habit.
- Habit and job safety are closely related.
- Hazard recognition is one element which can enhance your own safety.
- Indifference can cause additional problems.
- Daring behavior can lead to a job accident.
- Setting a poor example can lead to trouble.
- Impulsiveness can be a weak link in the safety chain.
- Training, or lack of it, is also a safety factor.
- Good work habits are generally formed day to day as we do our jobs.
- Some habits, good or bad, may also form early on the job.
- A person may incorporate these unsafe habits into a job and continue them for a long time before an accident happens.
- Gambling with the law of averages is a bad bet.
- The purpose of all safety efforts is to prevent accidents and injuries to human beings.
- By doing things the correct way, we gradually form safe work habits that carry through into our daily work. This is one of the best safety devices available.

16 Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives



- 1 Define and advocate the need for a cultural change within the fire service relating to safety; incorporating leadership, management, supervision, accountability and personal responsibility.
- 2 Enhance the personal and organizational accountability for health and safety throughout the fire service.
- 3 Focus greater attention on the integration of risk management with incident management at all levels, including strategic, tactical, and planning responsibilities.

- 4 All firefighters must be empowered to stop unsafe practices.
- 5 Develop and implement national standards for training, qualifications, and certification (including regular recertification) that are equally applicable to all firefighters based on the duties they are expected to perform.
- 6 Develop and implement national medical and physical fitness standards that are equally applicable to all firefighters, based on the duties they are expected to perform.
- 7 Create a national research agenda and data collection system that relates to the initiatives.
- 8 Utilize available technology wherever it can produce higher levels of health and safety.
- 9 Thoroughly investigate all firefighter fatalities, injuries, and near misses.
- 10 Grant programs should support the implementation of safe practices and/or mandate safe practices as an eligibility requirement.
- 11 National standards for emergency response policies and procedures should be developed and championed.

- 12 National protocols for response to violent incidents should be developed and championed.
- 13 Firefighters and their families must have access to counseling and psychological support.
- 14 Public education must receive more resources and be championed as a critical fire and life safety program.
- 15 Advocacy must be strengthened for the enforcement of codes and the installation of home fire sprinklers.
- 16 Safety must be a primary consideration in the design of apparatus and equipment.



Employers Guide to **HEAT ILLNESS**

As temperatures rise, so does the risk of heat illness. Heat illness can be deadly. This risk is generally the highest for people who work outdoors. Heat illness, a medical condition that results from the body's inability to cope with heat and cool itself.

Heat illness is preventable

The best defense against heat-related illnesses and fatalities is prevention.

1. Provide heat illness prevention training to all employees, including supervisors.
2. Provide enough fresh water so that each employee can drink at least 1 quart per hour and encourage them to do so.
3. Provide access to shade for at least 5 minutes of rest when an employee believes he or she needs a preventative recovery period. They should not wait until they feel sick to do so.
4. Develop and implement written procedures for complying with the heat illness prevention standard.

Training

Before employees work outdoors, employers should provide them with heat illness prevention training.

- Environmental and personal risk factors
- Employer's heat illness prevention plan and procedures
- They need to drink water frequently throughout the day.
- Importance of acclimatization (allowing the body to adjust gradually to the work in high heat)
- Types of heat illness and the signs and symptoms
- Necessity of immediately reporting to an employer any signs or symptoms
- Employer's procedures for responding to symptoms
- Employer's procedures for contacting emergency medical services. This includes alternative modes of transportation
- Employer's procedures for emergency communications. This includes the emergency response procedures such as location, local medical services, and communication alternatives.

Adjusting to the heat

One training component for employees on heat illness prevention is the importance of acclimatization, or adjusting to physical activity in hot weather. The body needs time to adapt to increased heat and humidity, especially when one is engaged in heavy physical exertion. Typically, people need four to fourteen days to adjust fully to significant increases in the heat. Data reveals that most workplace deaths related to heat illness that occurred last year involved new employees who were on the job only one to four days and were unaccustomed to working in hot or humid weather.

While the heat illness prevention standard calls for employers to train employees on the importance of acclimatization, it is up to employers to determine what acclimatization procedures they will use. The best strategy is to allow employees, and especially new ones, to adjust to hot weather by gradually increasing to a full work shift and pace. On very hot days, other good strategies include timing the shift so that more work can be done during the cooler parts of the day, increasing the number of water and rest breaks, and using a "buddy system" so that workers and supervisors can monitor each other. Also, employees should be reminded of the cooling benefits of wearing loose fitting, light-colored clothing and a wide-brimmed hat, when it's feasible.

Shade

Recent safety and health data shows that all the surviving victims of heat illness had access to some shade during work periods, lunch, or at breaks. Under new standards, an employee working outdoors who wants to cool off must be provided with shade for 5 minutes at a time. Shade for heat illness recovery periods must be accessible to employees at all times. In industries other than agriculture, employers may utilize measures other than shade to provide cooling if they can demonstrate that these alternative measures are at least as effective as shade.

According to the new standard, shade means blockage of direct sunlight. Shade is sufficient when objects do not cast a shadow in the shaded area and there is sufficient space for the employee to be comfortable. Shade is not adequate when the temperature in the shaded area prevents cooling.

You must avoid sources of shade such as metal sheds or parked cars that are hot from sitting in the sun. Also, tractors and other machinery do not qualify as sources of shade and have the potential to create an even greater hazard. If you have employees who work outdoors, consider some easy-to-assemble portable sources of shade, such as umbrellas, canopies, or other temporary structures. Buildings, canopies, and trees all can qualify for shade as long as they block the sunlight and are either ventilated or open to air movement.

Water

The third component of the new standard requires an employer to provide employees, working outdoors, one quart of potable, fresh and cool water per person, per hour. In last year's case studies, data revealed drinking water was present at all worksites, even though 78% of those who succumbed to the heat suffered from dehydration. Therefore, it is critical to keep drinking water accessible and remind your workers to drink it frequently.

Written Procedures

An employer's heat illness prevention procedures should be in writing and made available to employees. These written procedures must include:

- How an employer will comply with the heat illness standard requirements.
- How to respond to symptoms of possible heat illness, including how emergency medical services will be provided.
- How to contact emergency medical services, and if necessary, how employees will be transported to a point where they can be reached by an emergency medical service provider.
- How they will ensure that, in the event of an emergency, clear and precise directions to the work site can and will be provided as needed to emergency responders.
- Employers are encouraged to integrate their heat illness prevention procedures into their Injury and Illness Prevention Programs (IIPPs).
- All the elements of the Heat Illness Prevention standard must be implemented to prevent serious illness to your workers. By protecting your employees from heat illness, you promote a healthier and more productive workplace.

Supervisor Training 2007

IPRF is offering a series of seminars to assist its members in controlling losses due to accidents. This three part program is designed to provide each participant with the tools to build and support an effective safety and health program.

Supervisors responsible for the safety and health of their employees should attend. They will benefit through a combination of lectures, workshops, and case studies. Each participant will "hit the ground running" with "real world" solutions to assist in effective accident prevention and in the reduction of workers compensation costs.

Seminar registration fees are covered by the IPRF. To register, contact Bonnie MacIntosh, the Training Registrar at 1-847-726-4095.

2007 SCHEDULE

Fairview Heights, IL	Level I – August 22 Level II – November 14	Level III – August 23 Level III – (TBD)
Mundelein, IL (Additional Level I to be added in Fall 2007)	Level III – September 13	
Naperville, IL	Level III – September 19	
Peoria, IL	Level II – September 20	Level III – (TBD)
Springfield, IL	Level I – August 21 Level II – November 15	Level III – (TBD)
Tinley Park, IL	Level I – September 11 Level II – November 7	Level III – September 12 Level III – (TBD)

AVERAGE & MAXIMUM WEEKLY Disability Benefits

The maximum TTD benefit can be no more than 133-1/3% of the statewide average weekly wage on the date of the injury or last exposure.



	STATE AVERAGE WEEKLY	MAXIMUM TTD BENEFIT
July 15, 2005 to January 14, 2006	\$808.73	\$1,078.31
January 15, 2006 to July 14, 2006	\$822.20	\$1,096.2
July 15, 2006 to January 14, 2007	\$840.65	\$1,120.87
January 15, 2007 to July 14, 2007	\$861.38	\$1,148.51

MEET YOUR

Medical Only Claims Analyst

Nancy Radzienta has been with IPRF as a Medical Only Claims Adjuster for one year. Nancy comes to IPRF with 14 years insurance experience in claims adjusting. Although Nancy had a 12-year break in her insurance career, she says not a lot has changed from when she started 27 years ago. During that 12-year break, Nancy was self employed, marketing quilting patterns and designs at outdoor festivals. Now that Nancy's three children are young adults, she has more time for her hobbies of running, reading and attending college. Her travel plans for this year include a trip to California in July.



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If you would like IPRF Issues newsletter mailed to additional department heads, please contact:

Paul H. Boecker, IPRF President
624 Columbine Avenue, Lisle, IL 60532
Phone (630) 271-0600 • Fax 630-271-0643
email pboecker@iprf.com

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Lost Time Claims - By Area Code of Member

NAME	MEMBERS	EXT. #	FAX
<i>Supervisor:</i>			
Laura Reyes		12232	440-914-2542
<i>Analyst:</i>			
Sharon Barnes	815 (Lb-Z members) 630 (F-Z members) 309 (A-Z members)	12233	440-914-2554
Susan Feigl	618 (A-L members) 217 (J-Z members)	12133	440-914-2562
Daniel Duffy	618 (M-Z members) 217 (A-I members) Sangamon County	12225	440-914-2786
Glenn Macey	815 (A-La members) 630 (A-E members) Livingston County	12234	440-914-2549
<i>Medical Only:</i>			
Mari Curless	Feigl/Duffy	12132	440-914-2509
Shari Heitman	Macey/Barnes	12238	440-914-2896
<i>Claim Service Rep.</i>			
Cheryl Foisy	Macey/Barnes Feigl/Duffy	12134	
<i>Supervisor:</i>			
Kim Vaughan		12226	440-914-2511
<i>Analyst:</i>			
Christine Dapper	847 (A-F members) 708 (N-R members) Duda Files	13635	440-914-2512
Sue LeBlanc	708 (A-M members) 708 (S-Z members) 847 (G-Z members)	12229	440-914-2541
Barbara Keller	SUBROGATION	12231	440-914-2523
Elaine Serafino	Cancelled members	12228	440-914-2532
<i>Medical Only:</i>			
Nancy Radzienta	Dapper/LeBlanc	12138	440-914-2510
<i>Claim Service Rep.</i>			
May SooHoo	Dapper/LeBlanc Serafino/Keller	13639	

Other Important Numbers

Claims Manager: Andrea Hjorth 12235 440-914-2753
Asst. Claims Manager: Paul Boecker 12728 440-914-6863

Mailing Address: 1411 Opus Place, Suite 200, Downers Grove, IL 60515-1191

IPRF Claims Analyst E-Mail Addresses

Barnes, Sharon Sharon.Barnes@cambridge-na.com
Boecker, Paul Paul.Boecker@cambridge-na.com
Curless, Mari Mari.Curless@cambridge-na.com
Dapper, Christine Christine.Dapper@cambridge-na.com
Duffy, Daniel Daniel.Duffy@cambridge-na.com
Feigl, Susan Susan.Feigl@cambridge-na.com
Foisy, Cheryl Cheryl.Foisy@cambridge-na.com
Hjorth, Andrea Andrea.Hjorth@cambridge-na.com
Keller, Barbara Barbara.Keller@cambridge-na.com
LeBlanc, Sue Sue.Leblanc@cambridge-na.com
Macey, Glenn Glenn.Macey@cambridge-na.com
Radzienta, Nancy Nancy.Radzienta@cambridge-na.com
Reyes, Laura Laura.Reyes@cambridge-na.com
Serafino, Elaine Elaine.Serafino@cambridge-na.com
SooHoo, May May.SooHoo@cambridge-na.com
Vaughan, Kim Kimberly.Vaughan@cambridge-na.com

For Additional Information about Illinois Public Risk Fund, letters of news or comments, please contact:

Paul H. Boecker, IPRF President
624 Columbine Avenue
Lisle, Illinois 60532
Phone 1-630-271-0600 • Fax 1-630-271-0643
email pboecker@iprf.com



IPRF Issues

Pat Andrews, *Editor*
Georgia Hicks, *Editorial Assistant*
Peggy O'Brien, *Graphic Designer*

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