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**ONLINE UNIVERSITY
COURSE HIGHLIGHT**

**Preventing Sprains
& Strains: PS60**

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IOWA MUNICIPALITIES WORKERS' COMPENSATION ASSOCIATION

IMWCA

Comments or suggestions, call
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The Informer

A monthly newsletter addressing workplace safety by Iowa Municipalities Workers' Compensation Association .

Setting the pace with online learning

In 2009, IMWCA entered into an agreement with FirstNet Learning to provide online training to our members. Things started slower than anticipated, and we wondered if this was really a good use of member funds.

Fast-forward to 2014, and things have really taken off! From 30 core courses and a handful of members trying online training, members have embraced the IMWCA Online University with over 80 members and about 1,500 employees actively using the Online University. IMWCA continues to add options to the ever-expanding offering; more than 50 online classes are currently available.

Together IMWCA and our provider, FirstNet Learning, introduced an upgraded Web site to offer more options and flexibility to students and administrators. Members familiar with the Web site know we are able to set up an administrator for each member, so one person has the option of managing all the online training for the entity. A new feature recently introduced allows various levels of administration within each organization. For example, a city or a county with many departments normally will have one person as the overall administrator; however streets and roads could have their own grouping separate from parks and recreation, and so on. This allows each department to focus more on educating employees on topics relevant to exposures. Another new

feature allows each member administrator to add or remove employees, so when someone leaves the organization you can update your records. Another new feature enables members to create and/or rename groups. For example, the Public Safety group could be renamed Law Enforcement, etc. The goal is to get members more involved and help meet your unique requirements.

An added bonus of the new system is the opportunity to attend a webinar led by FirstNet Learning. IMWCA will be working to make webinars available to interested members in the first six months of the new fiscal year. We also have plans to review and update all the available continuing education unit offerings to make sure members can take full advantage of this feature.

Online learning is here to stay. While this type of training can never replace actual hands-on training and experience with the specific exposures in your workplace, the IMWCA Online University is a great way to introduce concepts and educate employees to an awareness level about workplace hazards in a fun, interactive way. So, what are you waiting for? If you are already an Online University user, log in and check out the new Web site. If you have not yet taken advantage of our Online University, visit www.imwca.org/LossControl/pages/OnlineUniversity.aspx to learn more and get going!





Save the date for IMWCA's annual safety workshop, the One Day Safety University. This year's event will be held Tuesday, Oct. 14 at Ankeny Fire Station #1, 410 W. 1st Street.

A full agenda and registration will be available later. Check www.imwca.org, this newsletter and our LinkedIn page for updates.



2015 calendar: Send us your photos!

In 2015 IMWCA and Iowa Communities Assurance Pool (ICAP) will once again produce a joint calendar for our members. Any entity with membership in IMWCA will receive a 2015 calendar in the mail in December 2014. Calendars can also be picked up in the ICAP booth at the Iowa League of Cities Annual Conference & Exhibit this September, the IMWCA booth at the Iowa Municipal Finance Officers' Association

conference in October, and the Iowa State Association of Counties Fall School in November.

This year's calendar will include photos from entities with membership in both programs. For a chance to be featured in the calendar, submit your photos online at <http://leagueditor/Pages/FileBox.aspx>. Please include your email address, member entity name and the word "calendar" in your message.

Only high-resolution images will be used in the calendar. The deadline for submitting photos is August 28.

IMWCA provides wellness focus at League's Annual Conference & Exhibit

Don't miss the IMWCA-sponsored workshop, "Wellness: It's Not Just For Health Claims Anymore," at this year's Iowa League of Cities Annual Conference & Exhibit, to be held in Council Bluffs September 24-26.

Recent studies at major universities and numerous employers have documented that employee health and workers' compensation claims have a lot to do with worker well-being. In this session, you will hear real world examples with documented results. Attendees will also learn how to manage employee health risks proactively and discover how healthier employees can create healthier bottom lines and healthier futures.

IMWCA will also sponsor the Annual Run/Walk, held this year in the Tom Hanafan Rivers' Edge Park the morning of Thursday, Sept. 25.

Learn more at www.iowaleague.org.



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- Customizable Model Programs
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Do food expiration dates matter?

Source: WebMD; www.stilltasty.com; Time.com

Ever realize the last ingredient needed for your recipe is expired? You decide to throw it out to be cautious, which leaves your meal less than satisfying.

According to the Natural Resources Defense Council and Harvard Law School's Food Law and Policy Clinic, 90 percent of Americans throw out food prematurely. Actually, 40 percent of the U.S. food supply is discarded every year because of food dating.

The first confusing aspect is the date itself on the package. There is no universal way to label a food's expiration; in fact by federal law it is not even required (other than on infant formula and some baby foods). Because of this most manufacturers will voluntarily put a date on the product, but it can quickly lead to misinterpretation and waste by the consumer. Inconsistent terms like "use by", "sell by", "best by", and "born on" to name a few, add to the chaos.

Most consumers mistakenly think that the expiration date indicates how safe the food is to consume. The date actually indicates when the food will be at its maximum freshness. A food can start to change or lose its flavor after the expiration date, but it is not necessarily inedible nor will it necessarily cause illness. Many (especially

canned or boxed foods) will have the exact same taste even several months after the expiration date.

Below is a list of foods and how long they are good, regardless of the date on the packaging:

- Milk: Usually good one week after "sell by" date.
- Eggs: Good 3-5 weeks after purchase, if purchased before the "sell by" date.
- Beef and Pork: cook or freeze within three to five days (if frozen, can last another 6-8 months)
- Canned Goods: Highly acidic foods (tomato sauce) can keep 18 months. Other canned goods up to five years if kept properly in cool, dry atmosphere.
- Box of Macaroni and Cheese: Enjoyed a full year past the date, most likely with no noticeable changes.

A good indicator is smell. Examine the food before consuming. Definitely do not eat it if it has a foul odor or taste, or an otherwise strange appearance.

Want to check a food to see its shelf life or how long you can leave it in the refrigerator after cooking? www.eatbydate.com allows you to look up different types of food to learn about shelf life, food safety, expiration dates, storage and more.

Safely Speaking

Snow Rodeo this fall

The American Public Works Association (APWA) Iowa Chapter is pleased to host the 2014 Operator Training/Snow Rodeo at the Iowa State Fairgrounds in Des Moines. Held September 30 through October 2, this combination of training and competition will benefit operators of all types. This is the first time that these events will be held together. Learn more or register to participate at www.cvent.com/events/2014-apwa-operator-training-rodeo/event-summary-eabd989d72fc47af80ef2d50300da6cb.aspx.



IMWCA Informer is a monthly newsletter published by the Iowa Municipalities Workers' Compensation Association (IMWCA) in cooperation with the Iowa League of Cities.

This newsletter is designed to educate local officials on workers' compensation issues. Suggestions for articles or topics to appear in IMWCA Informer are always welcome. Contact IMWCA at (515) 244-7282. You may also view this publication online at www.imwca.org.

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