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ONLINE UNIVERSITY COURSE HIGHLIGHT

**JA09: Job Safety Analysis
for Supervisors**

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the Informer

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

Iowa firefighter resources

October 6-12 is National Fire Protection week, and IMWCA wants to take this opportunity to acknowledge all the firefighters and first responders who live and work in our communities and protect life and property. IMWCA provides workers' compensation coverage to more than 200 volunteer and combination volunteer/career fire departments across the state. You might say, like the fire service, we have an interest in getting everyone home safe.

Everyone Goes Home is a program by the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation (NFFF) to prevent firefighter line-of-duty deaths and injuries. The U.S. Congress created the NFFF in 1992 to lead a nationwide effort to honor America's fallen firefighters. Since then the foundation has expanded programs to not only honor fallen firefighters, but to protect those who protect us.

In 2004 a Firefighter Life Safety Summit was held to address the need for change within the fire and emergency services. Through this meeting, 16 firefighter Life Safety Initiatives were produced, and the Everyone Goes Home Program was born. The goal of the Everyone Goes Home Program is to reduce the number of preventable firefighter line-of-duty injuries and deaths. The program developed a series of trainings that are targeted at specific, fundamental attitudes and behaviors found in the fire service that will impact a change in the culture of our fire and emergency services operations. To learn more about

the 16 firefighter lifesaving initiatives visit www.everyonegoeshome.com/submit/whitepapers.pdf.

Since the program's inception Iowa has enjoyed the benefit of a core group of firefighters who champion the program with their fellow firefighters. This group of dedicated volunteers takes time away from their personal lives to provide training to other Iowa fire departments, with the goal of Everyone Goes Home, safe, after the call. Recently the group organized as a non-profit under the Code of Iowa as Iowa Firefighters Resource, whose mission is "to ensure that ALL Iowa fire departments operate as safely as possible while on duty. Whether you are career, paid on call, or volunteer, EVERYONE GOES HOME!" Learn more about Iowa Firefighters Resource at www.iowafirefightersresource.org.

Beginning July 1, 2013, IMWCA partnered with Iowa Firefighters Resource to bring two NFFF classes, Courage To Be Safe and Leadership, Accountability, Culture and Knowledge to member departments. IMWCA's goal is to help our member departments take advantage of available training provided by experienced firefighters with the shared goal of everyone goes home safe. IMWCA will help underwrite the cost of the training for member departments who participate in either class. To learn more or schedule a class visit the Iowa Firefighters Resource Web site or contact losscontrol@iowaleague.org.

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U.S. Fire Administration data documents 731 registered fire departments in Iowa. More than 90 percent of those are volunteers. Take a few minutes during the month of October to express your thanks to all the volunteer and career firefighters and the first responders in your community who spend hours of their time to train and be ready to respond when the need arises.

Safely Speaking

Online University improvements

With a recent upgrade to IMWCA's Online University a new feature was added that allows for easier management for members with many employees and multiple departments. FirstNet Learning, who provides the content for IMWCA's Online University, has increased the level of hierarchies in the training management process. This allows a member to continue to have one person with overall administrative rights for all employees, but also provides the ability for other administrators at the department level. For example, a member would continue to have one person with overall responsibility to view and manage all employee training, while the parks and recreation director has the ability to view and manage the employees in their department; the streets and roads director has the ability to view and manage the employees in their department, and so on. To learn more contact infoIMWCA@firstnetlearning.com or losscontrol@iowaleague.org.



Smoke alarms – make sure yours work!

Fire Prevention week is October 6 – October 12, which makes now a good time to inspect smoke alarms and make sure they're working properly. According to the National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA), having a working smoke alarm cuts your chances of dying in half! Something as simple as checking the batteries can make a big difference as well, since almost a quarter of all smoke alarm failures are due to dead batteries. See more guidelines and maintenance tips below from the NFPA:

- Install smoke alarms on every level of your home, including the basement, making sure that there is an alarm outside every separate sleeping area. New homes are required to have a smoke alarm in every sleeping room and all smoke alarms must be interconnected.
- Hard-wired smoke alarms operate on your household electrical current. They can be interconnected so that every alarm sounds regardless of the fire's location. This is an advantage in early warning, because it gives occupants extra time to escape if they are in one part of the home and a fire breaks out in another part. Alarms that are hard-wired should have battery backups in case

Safely Speaking

Congratulations to Coralville, Decorah

The cities of Coralville and Decorah have both qualified for Best Practices designation for 2012-2013.

Coralville has received the designation four times. The city was presented with a check for \$2000 at the August 27, 2013, council meeting. Mayor Fausett accepted the award on behalf of the city and praised city employees for their role in making safety work in Coralville.

Decorah is also a four-time recipient of the Best Practices designation. The city will receive its check on October 7, 2013, at its council meeting.

IMWCA wishes to congratulate these cities for successfully implementing practices to proactively manage its workers' compensation exposures. By meeting the rigorous requirements of the Best Practices program, both cities help not only themselves but all IMWCA members accomplish the shared goal of keeping workers' compensation premiums at stable and affordable levels.



of power outage and should be installed by a qualified electrician.

- If you sleep with bedroom doors closed, have a qualified electrician install interconnected smoke alarms in each room so when one alarm sounds, they all sound.
- If you or someone in your home is deaf or hard of hearing consider installing an alarm that combines flashing lights, vibration and/or sound.
- Mount smoke alarms high on walls or ceilings (remember, smoke rises). Ceiling mounted alarms should be installed at least four inches away from the nearest wall; wall-mounted alarms should be installed four to 12 inches away from the ceiling.
- If you have ceilings that are pitched, install the alarm near the ceiling's highest point.
- Don't install smoke alarms near windows, doors or ducts where drafts might interfere with their operation.
- Never paint smoke alarms. Paint, stickers or other decorations could keep the alarms from working.

Are your affairs in order?

Workers' compensation is based on the employer/employee relationship. While this relationship is limited to the workplace, the ramifications of a serious, work-related injury extend into an employee's personal life. Additionally, due to the amount of risk associated with some government occupations, the rate of serious injury is higher than in other public occupations. Our goal is to help members create a safe work environment in which all employees go home safe at the end of each day. Despite everyone's best efforts, we do receive claims involving fatalities. Many times these unfortunate situations leave family and friends with confusing and difficult decisions to make.

As employers one of the benefits we can give our employees is to urge and encourage them to complete some planning. Both the Iowa Firefighter Association (www.iafireassn.org/information/lodd/) and Iowa C.O.P.S. (www.iowacops.org/about.html) provide information about pre-planning. Here are a few things that can be done at little or no cost.

Review the beneficiary on your insurance policies. These can be easily overlooked when you have a change in your family or marital status.

Do you want to be an **organ donor**? If so, the most important thing you need to do is sign up in Iowa's donor registry. Organdonor.gov also recommends people:

- Designate your decision on your driver's license.
- Tell your family about your donation decision.
- Tell your physician, faith leader and friends.
- Include donation in your advance directives, will and living will.

Consider **funeral and burial wishes**. Cemetery plots can be pre-purchased and funeral arrangements planned in advance. Having these things completed will alleviate a great deal of stress for loved ones during a stressful time.

A **power of attorney** gives someone else the legal right to make decisions on your behalf. Two types of

these are medical power of attorney and financial power of attorney. A medical power of attorney lets someone else make health care decisions if you cannot make them yourself. A financial

power of attorney gives someone else the authority to handle your financial matters if you are unable. Additional information on power of attorney can be found at www.iowalegalaid.org/resource/are-your-legal-affairs-in-order?ref=L2Ctp.

A **living will** or advance medical directive is one of the best ways for you to have a say in your medical care when you can't express yourself. A living will is not a document that distributes your assets after you die, but rather a document that sets out instructions for the type of life-sustaining medical treatment, if any, you want administered in case you are unable to communicate your wishes. Some examples are: Do you want to be put on a respirator? Do you want to be resuscitated if you stop breathing? Do you want to have a feeding tube? Additional information is available at www.iowabar.org/displaycommon.cfm?an=1&subarticlenbr=171.

A **will** is a legal document in which you give certain instructions to be carried out after your death. For answers to questions like: Do I need a will? What happens if I do not have will? And what are the advantages of having a will? Go to www.iowalegalaid.org/resource/do-you-need-a-will?ref=L2Ctp.

The planning needed will vary greatly with each individual and will likely need to involve a professional at some point. We hope this article simply initiates some thought on an important topic that is often overlooked in the hustle and bustle of daily routines.



IMWCA Informer is a bimonthly 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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