



January 1999

### ***EDITORIAL: What is Safety???***

Well, to start out with, it's a six-letter word defined in the dictionary as:

1. "freedom from danger",
2. SECURITY: a protective device.

One thing that safety isn't - at least to most people is... "FUN". We live in a society today where risk is more and more commonly accepted. Maybe that's why we don't buckle up just to run to the store, or have just "one more" for the road, or not check the batteries in the smoke or carbon monoxide detectors. I sort of like to look at safety from the prospective of alternatives. A number of years ago, a friend of mine was asked to give a safety presentation in front of a rather large group of people, and was given five minutes to do so. He was introduced as the Safety Manager, and the audience was told that this was their safety lecture for the quarter. He stood up and said, "IT HURTS TO GET HURT! THINK ABOUT IT!" and sat down. That was his lecture. It was probably the best safety lecture that I have ever heard. I think that safety ought to, at least in part, be defined as common sense. I think however, that it was Ben Franklin who said, "common sense is not a common virtue!" I think the best safety device I know of, when it is used, is between our ears. All the other safety devices, government policies and programs, slogans, and incentives just won't work if people don't stop to think. When I point out safety problems to individuals, the most common statement that I hear is, "I never thought about it." After all is said and done, it sort of comes back to... "It hurts to get hurt!" When making a New Year Resolution this year, why not add "Being Safe" to the top of the list?

---

Safety is a word to live by

---

## ***WORLD AIDS REPORT SAYS DISEASE GROWING***

The global AIDS epidemic mushroomed by 10% last, year, with 11 new infections a minute, a report released on November 24, 1998 says.

All told, more than 33 million people worldwide are infected with HIV, the AIDS virus. Half of all new infections occur in people 15 to 24 years old, according to the annual World AIDS Day Report by UNAIDS, the U.N. AIDS program.

New AIDS drugs, too expensive for most sufferers to afford, have eased the burden somewhat in the United States and Western Europe, researchers say. These drugs have reduced the U.S. death rate by 66% between 1995 and 1997.

Prevention efforts in advanced nations have not yet paid off. In the United States, 75,000 people became infected in 1998, about as many as the year before. AIDS remains the leading killer of young black women.

Among other findings:

- Nearly 2 million people are infected in Latin America and the Caribbean, with 200,000 new infections last year.
- About 270,000 people in Eastern Europe and Central Asia are infected, with 80,000 new cases reported last year. The hot spots: Ukraine, the Russian Federation, Belarus and Moldova.

Excerpt from *USA Today*, *Medicine Net Health News* November 24, 1998

---

The best motivation is self-preservation!

---

## ***PHOTOGRAPHIC SILVER RECOVERY***

Anyone engaged in wet-solution photo processing or x-ray development, should be aware of proper disposal of developers and fixers. Silver recovered during the photo processor fixing procedure is listed as a "heavy metal" pollutant.

Photographic fixer removes the unexposed silver compounds from the film during the developing process. The silver goes into a suspension in the fixer. The used fixer can possess generally between 2000-3000 ppm of silver. The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) regulates silver bearing waste. The fixer becomes hazardous waste if the level of

silver exceeds 5 ppm as determined by the Toxic Characteristic Leaching Procedure (TCLP) test (40 CFR 261.24).

Although silver is not toxic to humans, it alters the ecological food chain by contaminating rivers, lakes, and ground water. Fish eggs and small micro-organisms (needed by water treatment plants) may be killed by silver contamination in water.

Achieving the 5ppm limit as determined by the Environmental Protection (EPA) requires efficient recovery units. Fines for non-compliance cited by the EPA may be as great as \$21,000 per incident per day.

(  
L  
e  
n  
o  
r  
e  
)

---

Think safety! The other person may not..

---

### ***SNOW REMOVAL SAFETY***

Snow shoveling or snow blowing - both take effort and both are done under adverse weather conditions. These few tips may help alleviate potential problems:

Make sure you have appropriate clothing, including gloves, warm boots and socks, even ear and nose protection when necessary	Keep some extra clothes on hand, such as socks, boots and warm gloves. Wet gloves, boots, etc., should be replaced with dry gear.
AVOID OVER EXERTION! Take breaks and drink plenty of non-alcoholic fluids.	Do not grab metal - including metal ladders - with bare hands in freezing conditions.

---

### ***POWER SNOW THROWER/BLOWER SAFETY TIPS***

Do not add fuel when the engine is running or when it is hot. Add fuel before starting the engine.	Do not leave the snowblower unattended when it is running. Shut off the engine if you must walk away from the machine.
Beware of the recoil of the motor and blades after the machine has been turned off.	Do not operate the machine in an enclosed area. (Carbon Monoxide Kills!)

Do not put your hand in the snowblower to remove impacted snow or debris. Stop the engine and wait more than five seconds. Then, use a solid object to clear wet snow and debris from the chute.	If you are operating an electric snow thrower, be aware of where the power cord is at all times.
--	--

---

Unsafe habits can cost you an arm and a leg.

---

### ***New Rule...***

The Federal Drug Administration, (FDA) has been progressively restricting the use of over-the-counter drugs containing mercury since 1980. Effective October 19, 1998 the FDA legislated a new rule outlawing all mercury containing drugs for over-the-counter products. Well known products outlawed by the ruling include: mercurochrome, calomel, thimersol, and all over-the-counter first aid antiseptics, diaper rash products and vaginal contraceptives containing mercury. (Federal Register 63 FR 19,799-19,802, April 22, 1998)

(  
L  
e  
n  
o  
r  
e  
)

---

It's not smart to be flippant - About safety equipment..

---

### ***BACKPACK SAFETY....***

Backpacks are so much a part of daily life that they are hardly noticed, but recent studies indicate that they can be a pain in the neck – literally. Studies show that a backpack should not exceed 10% -15% of body weight, but some backpacks checked were more than 20%. This would mean that a 100 lb person would be carrying the equivalent of 2 – 10 lb. bags of potatoes. Imagine walking around your office or classroom all day carrying that amount of weight. This is especially a concern for younger children who are already complaining of back, neck and shoulder problems in elementary and junior high school. The problem has been the

basis for some backpack companies to plan new backpack designs and the use of rolling, luggage type backpacks.

To help anybody alleviate back problems associated with carrying a backpack, try following these tips:

- Wear the backpack on both shoulders, not slung over one. It should fall above the belt line and no higher than the upper shoulder blades. Make sure straps are padded.
- Put your backpack on, bend over and touch your toes. You should be able to stand back up without a lot of strain.
- Counter a heavier load by carrying something in front.
- Evenly distribute the weight in your backpack, try to keep the heaviest items at the top.
- Wear athletic shoes, avoid heels.

(  
M  
i  
n  
d  
y  
)

---

The road to safety starts with you.

---

### ***A B C's OF SEATBELT SAFETY***

**A**ir Bag Safety...Remember to stay back at least 10 inches from the airbag.

**B**uckle Up...Before starting the vehicle, EVERYBODY should be buckled.

**C**hildren in back...Children under the age of 12 should be in the back seat of the vehicle.

(  
M  
i  
n  
d  
y  
)

---

To be able to face tomorrow, try safety today.

---

### ***IS YOUR HOUSE TRYING TO TELL YOU SOMETHING?***

Musty odors, foggy wet windows, and peeling paint can be signs of a more serious problem. Internal pollutants may build up in the home especially during the winter months, when extra care is taken to seal drafts from window and doors. Houses have become insulated and sealed to the point where almost no fresh air enters. Moisture builds up in these "air tight" homes leaving a breeding ground for mold, mildew and bacteria.

After installing or introducing any new building material, cleaning compounds or other chemicals into your home, ventilate the house to reduce pollutants.

(  
L  
e  
n  
o  
r  
e  
)

---

Your life is no match for an unsafe act.

---

### ***Y2K - THE MILLENIUM IS COMING!!***

Is your laboratory equipment Year 2000 compliant?

Do your cold rooms and growth chambers have clocks?

Do your analytical instruments record the date?

Are you carrying out data manipulations that incorporate elapsed time?

For answers to these and other questions check out the University of Minnesota Year 2000 Project web site at  
<http://www.umn.edu/oit/year2000> .

---

Being unwise may cost lives.

---

### ***GM TO OFFER ESCAPE HANDLE FOR CHILDREN TRAPPED IN CAR TRUNKS***

General Motors Corp. has become the first automaker to offer an escape for children trapped in the extreme heat of automobile trunks in summer months. Starting in February or March, GM dealerships will have handles available for installation inside the trunk so children can get out, company officials say.

Last summer, 11 children died inside trunks ranging in age from 2-6 -- five in Utah, two in Greensboros; Pennsylvania, and four in Gallup; New Mexico. In all cases the children died from the heat.

The \$50 price for the trunk kit includes installation, GM officials said. The company is subsidizing part of the cost.


*CNN.com December 16, 1998*

---

No excuse can undo an accident

---

The EH&S Newsletter is published by the Creighton University Environmental Health and Safety Department. It is provided to disseminate safety information to Creighton University Employees and Students inclusive of regulatory updates and policy changes. Questions regarding newsletter content and suggestions for ways to improve the newsletter should be addressed to Paul Nichols, Director, Environmental Health and Safety at [pnichols@creighton.edu](mailto:pnichols@creighton.edu). We welcome any and all constructive criticism via E-mail ([pnichols@creighton.edu](mailto:pnichols@creighton.edu)), Fax at (402)546-6403, or Telephone at (402)546-6400.

 Environmental Health and Safety Staff:  Director-Paul A. Nichols Chemical Coordinator-Lenore Koliha Admin. Secretary-Mindy Foster	Campus Emergency Telephone Numbers:  Public Safety (emergency)-- 280-2911 Public Safety (general)----- 280-2104 Environ.Health & Safety---- 546-6400 Radiation Safety-----280-5570 Chemical Safety----- 546-6404 Chemical Waste----- 546-6404 Physical Plant-----280-2780
--	---