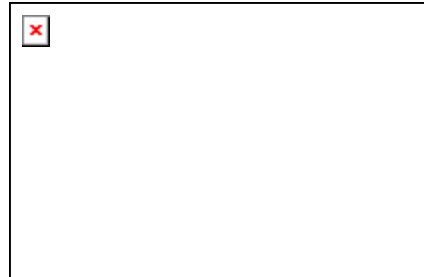


Environmental Health & Safety News



September 1998

EDITORIAL:

ROAD ANGER OR ROAD RAGE? There is a difference between the two. If someone cuts you off, rides your bumper or fails to dim their lights, it is only human nature to be at least a bit angry. It is when you do something of a retaliatory nature that your Road Anger turns into ROAD RAGE. Have you ever experienced Road Rage? Be honest with yourself! Have you purposely tailgated because someone cut you off? Flashed your bright when someone failed to dim theirs? Yelled at someone out the window? Or perhaps provided someone with a one fingered salute? Statistics show that the majority of drivers today can count themselves guilty of some form of Road Rage in the past year. It is far less prevalent in small towns and rural communities because everyone knows everybody else and things are usually "down-home hospitable". Cities and larger metropolitan areas are a horse of a different color. Nobody knows who you are driving down the interstate, late on your way to work when the "little old lady" who is driving the speed limit is in your way and you can't get around. You would probably never consider cussing her out face to face, or being purposely discourteous, much less putting her life and yours, in danger when your not in your vehicle in a hurry. But alot of will do just that under any given circumstance. The old Yankee saying goes "if ya ain't got time to do it right- when ya gonna have time to back and fix it?". Why put your life and the lives of others on the road at risk because you lack the capacity to control your emotions as you hide in the box you call a vehicle? Put yourself above that, control your emotions in your vehicle the same way that society requires you to control them outside of you vehicle. That little tip might just save your life, and the lives of your loved one.

"You can't change tomorrow but you can change yourself"

Dolores Elliott

WHAT DO ACCIDENTS COST?

According to the National Safety Council, the indirect costs of industrial accidents are four times the actual direct costs. In other words, the real costs of workplace injuries are several times greater than the calculable worker's compensation and direct employee medical costs. When this calculation is combined with the potential costs incurred by executives defending against criminal negligence, the true cost of workplace injuries becomes staggering.

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National Fire Prevention Week is October 4-10. This year's theme is, "Fire Drills, The Great Escape"

UNLESS YOU KNOW..... CONSIDER IT SO!

Do you know the hazards associated with all the chemicals in your laboratory? Unless you are absolutely positive a substance is harmless, consider it to be hazardous and take precautionary measures accordingly. Generally, a substance is considered hazardous if it has one or more of the following characteristics: Ignitability, Corrosivity, Reactivity and toxicity. Of these, the hardest to determine is toxicity. The best source for toxicological information is the material safety data sheet (MSDS). Before beginning work with any substance you are unfamiliar with, consult resources such as the container label, MSDS, or call the manufacturer for technical support. **THE PRIMARY PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR SAFETY IS...YOU!!**

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OSHA inspection numbers are up for the 1st quarter of 1998

NEW NEBRASKA LAW....GRADUATED LICENSING

As of January 1, 1999, Nebraska teenagers will be required to comply with a new Graduated Licensing Law. The law states that a 16-year-old will no longer be able to get a traditional driver's license, instead they can get a provisional operator's permit (POP). A POP will allow a teen to drive alone only between the hours of 6 a.m. and Midnight. Driving by a teen between Midnight and 6.a.m, will only be allowed when accompanied by a parent, guardian or adult who has a valid driver's license and is at least 21 years of age.

Applicants for a POP can obtain it one of two ways. The teen can complete 50 hours of vehicle operation with a parent, guardian or adult at least 21 years of age with a valid driver's license or complete a Nebraska Department of Motor Vehicles approved driver safety course. Applicants choosing the former option will also have to take a driving test at the Department of Motor Vehicles.

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60 to 90% of drowning occur in residential pools with the majority of the pool deaths occurring to children under the age of 4

FIRE SAFETY

Fire is frightening, especially for children. Unfortunately, after a fire, children are often found in places where they were trying to hide from the fire instead of escaping. Plan a family fire drill and decide on emergency escape routes. Keep your children familiar with the route so that in the event of an emergency, they will not panic. Check all windows to insure that they can easily be opened from the inside without tools, keys, special knowledge or effort. Children should be shown how to unlock locked windows and safely escape through them. While talking to your children about fire safety, stress the importance of preventing falls out of open windows as well as how to use them in an emergency.

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The U.S. Fire Services respond to a fire every 16 seconds.

LAB ACCIDENT REPORTED...

Carnegie Mellon University reported an explosion in a fume hood in one of their research labs. Apparently a graduate student was cleaning up the lab and consolidated two bottles of "inorganic waste" together. It is suspected that one bottle contained nitric acid and the other was not inorganic but, organic. The graduate student put the cap on the bottle. Within one minute, the student heard a hissing noise and had the sense to run. The student got approximately twenty feet from the hood when the bottle exploded.

The above scenario reinforces the need for proper container labeling on all waste bottles. Each component of the waste must be listed. Generic terms like "inorganic waste" or "general lab waste" do not afford sufficient information. All waste bottles must include the name of the generator, start/stop fill date and contents by percent or volume.

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"Luck runs out but safety is good for life!"

CARPAL TUNNEL SYNDROME

According to the National Safety Council OSHA update, vol.27, Aug 98, the incidence of Carpal Tunnel Syndrome (CTS) reached its peak in 1993, when the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reported 41,000 cases. By 1996, the reported cases dropped to 29,900. That's good news from a worker compensation standpoint. The bad news is that CTS cases required more time off work to recuperate (25 days) than any other injury, even amputations and fractures (20 and 17 days respectively). Don't fall victim to CTS or other repetitive motion disorders. If you experience any of the symptoms of CTS, please call Environmental Health & Safety at 546-6400 for a work station review.

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Nationwide in 1996, someone died in a fire every 105 minutes

SCHOOL TRAFFIC SAFETY TIPS

With the beginning of the school year motorists will notice more youngsters on the streets to and from school. Although children should be taught to watch out for moving vehicles, they are sometimes easily distracted and "forget" to pay attention. As a responsible adult/motorist, we need to be aware of them, even if they are not aware of us. The following are some safety tips that could very well prevent an unfortunate accident:

- Always expect the unexpected. When driving around a school zone or residential area, be prepared for children to dart out of driveways or between cars.
- When you see flashing red lights on a school bus or a stop arm extended, STOP. Don't start driving until the lights are off, the arm retracted and the bus has started to move. Under any circumstance, DO NOT run through the stop arm or past the flashing lights.
- When approaching a crosswalk, slow down and be prepared to stop. Follow the crossing guard's instructions and be aware of children in the area.

If you are a parent and have school-age children, remember to talk to them about safety on the trip to and from school.

- Remind children to be aware of their surroundings. Children can easily be distracted by many things, from a conversation with a friend to a small animal in the area.
- If your child rides a bus, tell them when getting on and off the bus to always keep the driver in view. If they can see the driver, the driver can them. Remind your child that if they drop something while near the bus they should NEVER bend over to

pick it up. (They could be bending over while the driver is moving the bus and not be seen) The child should tell the driver and then follow the driver's instructions.

- Pack your child's school supplies in a book bag or backpack so they will be less likely to drop items while walking.
- Remind children of the importance of looking both ways BEFORE getting off of the bus in addition to crossing the street. Sometimes cars will try to pass a bus on the right side.

Remember to use extra caution and common sense when driving around a school zone or residential area. Remember, children can easily be distracted and YOU could save their life.

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Approximately 81% of all fire deaths occur in the home.

CHILD SAFETY SEAT CHECK

Do you drive with a child in your vehicle? Do you know that over 90% of child safety seats are installed improperly? On September 15 between 4:30 and 5:30 there will be a free child safety seat check in the Child Development Center parking lot. The inspections will be done by certified staff on a "first come, first served" basis. Or, you can call the Environmental Health & Safety Department at 46-6400 for an appointment to accomodate your needs.


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"The difference between what we do and what we are capable of doing would suffice to solve most of the world's problems."

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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. We welcome any and all constructive criticism via E-mail (pnichols@creighton.edu), Fax at (402)546-6403, or Telephone at (402)546-6400.

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