



# The Risk Connection

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 2

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Presented by Risk Management & Employee Benefits

- News You Can Use
- Safety Information
- Benefits Information
- Wellness Articles
- Training Schedule

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## Message from the President of AARLA

We are pleased to inform you that on October 1, 2012 American All-Risk Loss Administrators Inc., better known as AARLA, has become the Workers' Compensation Claims Administrator for the County of Fresno. This responsibility was previously handled by York Risk Services Group.

For purposes of introduction, AARLA is no stranger to the Fresno area. AARLA is a local company founded in Fresno in 1999. Its ownership, management and all of its employees are residents

of Fresno County, so we take great pride in now working with the County of Fresno on its workers' compensation program.

Over the years, AARLA has handled thousands of claims in Fresno County. We are certain this local knowledge will give us a distinct advantage when working with the County's injured workers, helping them receive the best quality of care within our local medical community. Armed with this familiarity of

the local area, we are working with the County's injured workers to ensure each claim is handled promptly and with the best degree of professionalism.

While we are hopeful you will never be injured at work, if you are, you can be certain we will be there to help.

Sincerely,

Steve C. Wigh  
President, AARLA

## Carbon Monoxide Alarms

**Does your home have a carbon monoxide (CO) device to detect potentially deadly levels of the gas?**

Effective July 1, 2011, it is now required (SB- 183) to have CO devices in single-family dwellings. All other dwelling units are required to have them January 1, 2013.

**What is all the hype about CO in your home anyway?**

You cannot see or smell CO but at high levels it can kill a person in minutes. At moderate levels you and/or your family can get severe headaches, become dizzy, confused, nauseated or faint. At low levels it causes shortness of breath, mild nausea, and mild headaches. CO poisoning can be

mistaken for flu like symptoms, food poisoning or other illnesses.

**How is CO produced?**

CO gas is produced whenever fuel such as gas, oil, kerosene, wood, or charcoal is burned from heaters, fireplaces, furnaces, and many types of appliances and cooking devices. It can also be produced by vehicles that are idling. Now that we are in the season of potentially generating more CO in our homes, it is that much more important to install these devices.

**Where should you install CO devices and at what height?**

They should be installed outside each sleeping area of your home, as well as the basement if you have one. The density of CO is



similar to that of air at room temperature so it readily mixes with the air. The manufacturer's installation instructions should be followed. CO devices are required to be approved and listed by the State Fire Marshall. Existing CO devices installed prior to July 1, 2011 may continue to be utilized.

For more information on carbon monoxide, check out <http://www.fire.ca.gov>.

# Pedestrian Safety Tips

Walking is a very healthy exercise and, while the health benefits are great, there are also some dangers associated with this activity. Whether you are taking a stroll on your lunch break, heading to the store to pick up a couple of items, or simply walking because you know it is good for you, here are some tips to keep you safe out there.



## Be visible:

- Wear bright/light colored clothing and reflective materials.
- Carry a flashlight when walking at night.
- Cross in a well-lit area at night.

## Remain alert:

- Always walk on the sidewalk; if there is no sidewalk, it is generally safer to walk facing traffic.
- Be alert to engine noise or backup lights on cars when in parking lots and near on-street parking spaces.
- Avoid wearing headphones or talking on a cell phone while walking. You will be less aware of what is going on around you which puts you at risk.

## When crossing:

- Cross streets at marked crosswalks or intersections, if possible.
- Stand clear of buses, hedges, parked cars or other obstacles before crossing so drivers can see you.
- Obey traffic signals such as WALK/DON'T WALK signs.
- Look left, right, and left again before crossing a street.
- Watch for turning vehicles; make sure the driver sees you and will stop for you.
- Look across ALL lanes you must cross and visually clear each lane before proceeding. Just because one motorist stops, do not presume drivers in other lanes can see you and will stop for you.

## Winter Driving Quiz



Winter is almost here. Do you know how to drive in bad weather? Take our winter driving quiz to find out if you are following the proper procedures.

- When driving in the fog, which of the following is not a good idea?
  - Drive with your lights on low beam
  - Stop in the roadway if you can't see traffic 100 feet ahead
  - Listen for traffic if you can't see it
  - Don't pass slow moving vehicles
- Which of these tips is incorrect for driving on icy roads?
  - Use low gears to keep traction, especially on hills
  - Use cruise control or overdrive
  - Don't pass snow plows or sanding trucks
  - All of the above
- What should you do if your rear wheels skid?
  - Take your foot off the accelerator
  - Steer in the direction that you want the front wheels to go
  - Stay calm, don't panic
  - All of the above
- How often should you replace your windshield wipers?
  - Every three years
  - Every 18 months
  - Every two years
  - Whenever they appear worn or are not effective
- Which of the following is not a good idea when driving in the rain?
  - Slow down
  - Stay toward the middle lanes as water tends to pool in the outside lanes
  - Follow large trucks or buses closely as they can see better
  - Turn your headlights on

Answers on page 4

# On-Site Mammography Screening



**December 3**

County Plaza Building 16<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Small Conference Room  
2220 Tulare St., Fresno  
(9am - 4pm)

**December 4**

Millbrook Staff Development  
Heritage Campus  
3115 N. Millbrook Ave., Fresno  
(9am - 4pm)

**December 5**

Crocker Building  
First Floor Training Room  
2135 Fresno Street, Fresno  
(9am - 4pm)

**December 12**

UMC Campus Main Bldg. 311  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor South Conference Rm  
4455 E. Kings Canyon, Fresno  
(9am - 4pm)

**December 13**

County Plaza Building 16<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Small conference Room  
2220 Tulare St. Fresno  
(9am - 4pm)

- **FREE – No Out-of-Pocket expense to employees**
- Available to County of Fresno employees enrolled in Anthem Blue Cross health plans through SJVIA.
- Mammogram screenings will be held on site at selected locations.
- Completely **PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL**. County does not receive individual results.
- Females ages 40 & over or if you have risk factors.
- Recommended if you have family history of breast cancer.
- Testing will take approximately 15 minutes.
- Administered by Pacific Coast Medical Services.

**For appointments call Employee Benefits  
at (559) 600-1810**

For more information, visit [www.co.fresno.ca.us/mammogram](http://www.co.fresno.ca.us/mammogram)

## New Risk Management Staff

We would like to welcome our two new staff members in Risk Management. Debbie Smith has been hired as a Personnel Analyst to handle the General Liability and Medical Malpractice Programs. She replaces Tracy Meador who has been promoted to Personnel Services Manager. Debbie comes to us from State Farm Insurance where she worked for 24 years. Debbie says that she is “overjoyed to be here and in a

job that is challenging and fulfilling”.

We also welcome Amy Verzosa, as a Personnel Analyst, who is replacing Linda Hayworth who has retired. Amy will be coordinating the intake of all of the new workers’ compensation claims and the initial investigations, as well as working with the departments’ workers’

compensation and safety coordinators. Amy comes to us with a law degree and a background in workers’ compensation. She says she is “pleased to be working here and looking forward to assisting the County departments with their workers’ compensation claims.”

Debbie and Amy can be contacted in Risk Management at 600-1850.

## Personnel Services Department

### Risk Management

County Plaza 16th Floor

559-600-1850 Stop 188

### Employee Benefits

County Plaza 14th Floor

559-600-1810 Stop 188

#### *Answers to Winter Driving Quiz*

1) b 2) b 3) d 4) d 5) c

## Safety Class Schedule

### Supervisor Safety

12/6/12 8:00-12:00 PM

2/14/13 8:00-12:00 PM

### Workplace violence

12/4/12 9:00-11:00 AM

2/1/13 9:00-11:00 AM

### Office Ergonomics

12/5/12 9:00-11:00 AM

1/31/13 9:00-11:00 AM

2/13/13 9:00-11:00 AM

### Hazardous Communication

1/3/13 9:00-11:00 AM

### Office Safety

1/17/13 9:00-11:00 AM

### CPR and First Aid

12/7/12 8:30-4:30 PM

1/18/13 8:30-4:30 PM

2/15/13 8:30-4:30 PM

### Back Safety

1/16/13 9:00-11:00 AM

Spaces for these classes may be reserved by emailing the Personnel-training mailbox. All courses are free.

See the Training Schedule on Personnel's Risk Management website for more information.

## Devo's Safety Corner By Devon Benbrook County Safety Officer

### Bloodborne Pathogens

Bloodborne Pathogens are pathogenic microorganisms that are present in human blood and can cause diseases in humans. The diseases of most concern as they relate to occupational exposure are Hepatitis B and C viruses and the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). The County is separated into two distinct groups when it comes down to exposure in the work environment: those job titles that are reasonably anticipated to be exposed (e.g. Correctional Officer), and those that are not anticipated to be exposed above and beyond the general population (e.g. Office Assistant in Personnel Services).

In many instances, what appears to be a legitimate exposure to blood or other potentially infectious materials is not necessarily the case. General information as to how Hepatitis and HIV are spread is available on the Personnel Services, Risk Management page under Safety. The County's process for reporting occupational exposure to bloodborne pathogens changed in 2011 and can be found in Management Directive 2600, Section 2615.

If you are not sure whether you have had a legitimate exposure, it is always best to report it to your supervisor immediately! If post exposure treatment is warranted, the sooner you consult with a doctor the better. If surfaces in your work environment become contaminated with blood or other potentially infectious materials, report them to your supervisor right away so that they can be cleaned properly. Even dry blood can still be infectious.

