

SAFETY THEME

LOCAL GOVERNMENT RISK MANAGEMENT SERVICES, INC., – A Service Organization of the ASSOCIATION COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF GEORGIA and the GEORGIA MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION

The Safety Theme program is designed to help you get an important safety message across to all employees in a simple-to-use format that can be completed each month.

Monthly Poster Theme

Make copies and post them wherever you will get the most impact.

Training Calendar

Contracts for Local Governments

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|-----------------------------|--------|
| Tifton, Tift County | May 7 |
| Statesboro, Bulloch County | May 9 |
| Macon, Bibb County | May 15 |
| Cornelia, Habersham County | May 21 |
| Cartersville, Bartow County | May 23 |

Personnel Liability Training

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| Cartersville, Bartow County | March 21 |
| Cornelia, Habersham County | April 2 |

Safety Coordinator Module 1

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| Cornelia, Habersham County | March 26 AM |
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Safety Coordinator Module 2

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| Cornelia, Habersham County | March 26 PM |
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Safety Coordinator Module 3

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| Cornelia, Habersham County | March 27 AM |
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Safety Theme Article

The article expands on the poster message for the month. Make copies and hand them out to each meeting participant.

In This Issue:

Participant Sign-In Sheets: Use the sign-in sheet to document your safety training.

Suggested Agenda for the Monthly Safety Meeting:

- >>> Assemble the participants.
- >>> Hand out copies of the article and pass around the sign-in sheet.
- >>> Read the Safety Theme aloud.
- >>> Discuss aspects of the theme relevant to the department, with examples. Ask for ideas and encourage participation.



LGRMS
RISK CONTROL
ACCG | GMA

March 2019

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Clean Gear Can Help Prevent CANCER



Clean Gear Can Help Prevent Firefighter Cancer

Recognizing a need to provide assistance to Georgia's firefighters when they contract cancer, while also protecting the financial interests of Georgia cities and counties, GMA and ACCG worked with firefighters, elected officials and insurance industry experts to identify a compromise solution. The result of these efforts, and with support from Representative Micah Gravley and Senator John Albers, has been the 2017 passage of House Bill 146, known as the Firefighter Cancer Insurance bill.

House Bill 146 requires all legally organized fire departments to provide a lump sum payment to any firefighter diagnosed with certain types of cancer and up to three years of disability payments to firefighters who, because of injury or illness, cannot work as a firefighter. This new benefit requirement becomes effective on January 1, 2018.

Our goal though should be to do the things necessary to help prevent cancer in the first place. Our understanding of the toxic nature of environments and the process of cross-contamination for firefighters is growing.

One positive change that every department and every firefighter can adopt now is the concept of clean gear. This requires a change of culture as well as policy. Here are a few standards that need adherence to.

- Treat every fire as a hazardous materials call – because it is.
- Wear SCBA through all stages of firefighting, including overhaul.
- Perform gross decontamination whenever leaving fire operations, preferably before removing your regulator.
- Bunker gear protects against heat, not carcinogens. In rehab, use wet wipes to remove toxic soot from your head, face, neck, underarms, and hands.
- "Shower within the Hour", or as soon as possible after the incident.
- Change and wash uniform clothing, including hood, immediately upon returning to the station.
- Ensure that all gear and apparatus are properly cleaned after the fire. Switch to B-Set gear, if available.
- Keep gear out of living and sleeping areas.
- Do not take contaminated clothing home or store it in a vehicle.
- Report every exposure using personnel injury tracking systems.
- Participate in annual medical surveillance. Early detection leads to better outcomes!
- Set the example by properly donning PPE at all incidents and ensure crew members do also.
- Establish policies for mandatory decontamination whenever crews move from the fire ground. This includes:
 - Using hose lines to perform gross decontamination of bunker gear and SCBAs
 - Ensure all crew members change and wash uniform clothing immediately upon returning to the station and can Shower within the Hour.
 - Station policies often include the routine washing of apparatus. Similar policies should address the routine washing of hoods and other PPE.
 - Ensure personnel are properly trained with and use in-station diesel exhaust systems.
- Establish policies for proper storage of PPE and prohibit PPE in living quarters.
- Establish and use personnel injury reporting systems to establish records of exposures.
- Advocate for the establishment of, and participation in, ongoing occupational medical surveillance.
- If possible, conduct overhaul 45 minutes after fire extinguishment to allow time for toxic gases to dissipate. Ensure all crew performing overhaul operations continue to wear SCBA.





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A Service Organization of the Association County Commissioners of Georgia and the Georgia Municipal Association

This Issue:

Clean Gear for Firefighter Health

