

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.

Please Note: All LGRMS newsletters will be digital as of September 1, 2019.

Safety Theme Article

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

Training Calendar

Disaster Response & Recovery

Thomasville, Thomas County	Sept 9
Cordele, Crisp County	Sept 10
Brunswick, Glynn County	Sept 11
Statesboro, Bulloch County	Sept 12

Health Promotion Champion

Tifton, Tift County	Sept 17
Statesboro, Bulloch County	Sept 18
Macon, Bibb County	Sept 19
Cartersville, Bartow County	Sept 24
Gainesville, Hall County	Sept 25

Law Enforcement Liability

Tifton, Tift County	Sept 23
Statesboro, Bulloch County	Sept 24
Macon, Bibb County	Sept 25
Cartersville, Bartow County	Sept 26

Safety Coordinator Modules 1 & 2

Statesboro, Bulloch County	Aug 28
Tifton, Tift County	Sept 5
Cartersville, Bartow County	Sept 16
Gainesville, Hall County	Sept 18

Safety Coordinator Modules 3 & 4

Statesboro, Bulloch County	Aug 29
Tifton, Tift County	Sept 6
Cartersville, Bartow County	Sept 17
Gainesville, Hall County	Sept 19

Workers Compensation

Macon, Bibb County	Aug 27
Cartersville, Bartow County	Sept 4

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.



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Don't Underestimate Workplace Hazards!

Keep Your Office Safe



Don't Underestimate Office Hazards!

We often think that our public safety and public works folks have the most hazardous jobs in our cities and counties. Most people think that working in an office is a pretty safe and easy job, but look around. There are existing hazards and potential accidents just waiting to happen!

As a person who has worked both in the field and in offices, I think back to several things that I did or observed that could have resulted in injury. One office had an old filing cabinet; whenever you opened the bottom drawer, the top one opened too. If not careful, a busted head would be the result when one stood up. Or having a file cabinet tip over on me because it was top heavy. Staff not using the correct posture when lifting heavy boxes, or retrieving that four-inch-thick, fifteen-pound digest from an overhead shelf in the records room (while standing on a swivel chair). I've seen coworkers trip over a low file drawer that got left out, and trip over electrical cords strewn about the floor. Poorly maintained carpets or uneven floors can cause trips and falls as well.

There are some easy steps that your office workers can do which do not require a lot of extra time to keep our office environment safe. All employees should report any potential or existing hazards to their supervisor—whether it's a slippery floor, too-dark area, or electrical problem—in order for it to be taken care of before someone gets hurt. They should also take responsibility and if they drop it, pick it up; if they spill it, clean it up; if they take it out, put it back; if it's full, empty it.

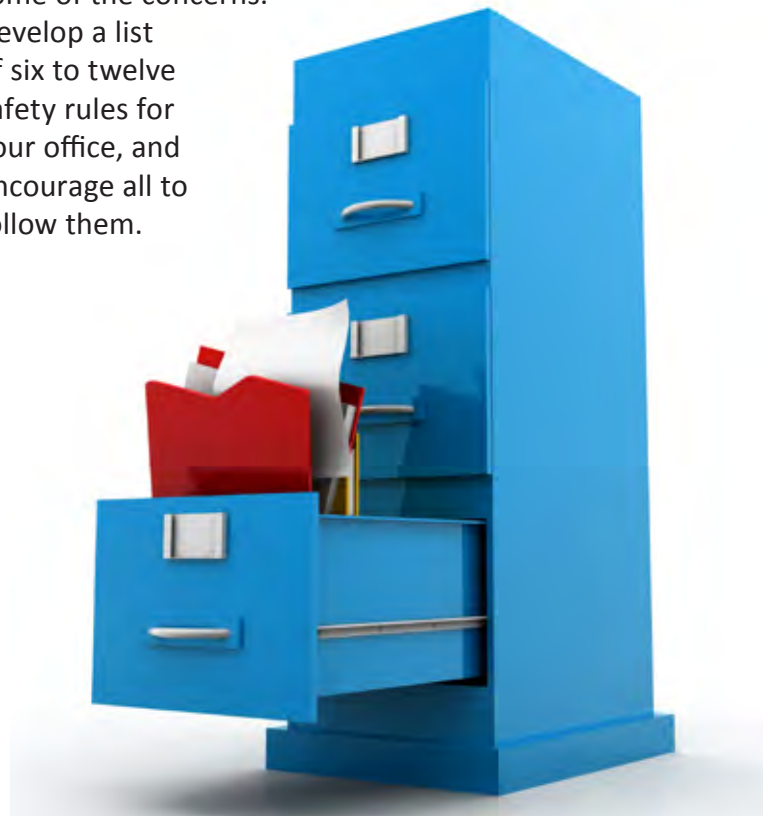
Here are some inspection points and questions on office safety that you and your office coworkers can use to help identify hazards:

- Are file cabinets top heavy or overloaded?
- Are boxes, papers, and books stored safely on top of files?
- Are lights turned on in dark work areas?
- Are file cabinet or desk drawers left open?
- Are there signs to watch your step at elevators?
- Are spills cleaned up promptly?
- Do you see people standing on their chairs or desktops to reach something high, rather than use a step stool?

- Do electric cords stretch across floor?
- Are power strips used correctly?
- Are fire exits clearly marked, and are employees familiar with them?
- Is there enough space under desk or workstation for employee to take cover in an emergency?
- Are fire drills conducted regularly?
- Are coffee makers, griddles, or heating elements placed in a safe location and inspected regularly?
- Are storage areas clean and neat?
- Are handrails and stairways well lit?
- Does your office have a good housekeeping program?
- Is the floor or carpet in bad condition? Uneven floors can be fall hazards.
- Do people leave wastebaskets or boxes in walkways?
- Do you see persons wearing dangling jewelry or floppy clothing while running a shredder? Guys with ties shouldn't try this.

We all need to pitch in and keep our workspace clean, neat, and safe for our fellow workers. Try having an office meeting and discuss some of the concerns.

Develop a list of six to twelve safety rules for your office, and encourage all to follow them.





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Step by Step
***Not by Slip,
Trip, or Fall***



**Be Proactive
in Preventing
Accidents!**

It is Our Responsibility

Many local governments have safety rules, department policies, job procedures, and safety regulations. These are in place to help protect workers from harm. With rules, we sometimes forget that safety is primarily a personal responsibility. Workplaces can be covered with warning signs, safety posters, and bulletin boards. Safeguards can be installed on each piece of equipment. We can attend training sessions and be told of safe ways to do work, but none of these things can ensure freedom from accidents unless we want to prevent them. It's up to us!

Unless we realize that our own actions determine whether accidents happen – and until we accept responsibility for these actions – injuries will occur.

Who operates tools and equipment? Who controls how we do a particular job? The answer, of course, is “We do”.

Being Accountable

Machines do not reach out and bite. Tripping hazards don't grab a person's feet. Hand tools don't slice and jab into flesh by themselves. Yet, judging from the statements people use to describe their injuries, one would think that the tools and equipment they use were alive.

People who make such statements are not fully aware that they are accountable for their own actions and must accept the responsibility for them. Little can be done to prevent accidents and injuries until individuals accept this responsibility. When we follow good workplace practices and

safety rules, many accidents can be prevented. And when each individual employee brings an acceptance of personal responsibility and accountability into the workplace every day, everyone's risk of injury drops dramatically.

Consider a driver of one of our larger vehicles who jumps down to the ground from the cab, spraining an ankle in the process.

What caused this accident? An irresponsible individual would lay the blame on the vehicle, or say, “I always dismount my vehicle this way.” A person who accepts responsibility would acknowledge this was improper.

Bad luck, other people, inadequate tools, and unfavorable conditions are just a few of the favorite reasons people use to absolve themselves of personal accountability when things go wrong.

Accepting responsibility for our actions is a sign of maturity. It means we believe firmly that it's up to us to do everything we can to prevent accidents. No one else can accept our safety responsibility for us.

Ask yourself this question: “Who is responsible for your safety”? If you are not sure, just look in the mirror.





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Where's The Hazard?

***Watch for
Foreign Objects;
Prevent Injury
and Damage***



Foreign Object Debris and Prevention

Foreign object debris (FOD) is serious business at airports, and can cause damage that costs airlines, airports, and airport tenants millions of dollars every year. FOD is any object that does not belong in or near airplanes and, as a result, can injure airport or airline personnel and damage airplanes.

Local governments have their own FOD problems. If we do grounds maintenance or right-of-way mowing, we also have to be concerned with FOD. Any object in an inappropriate location which, as a result of being in that location, can damage equipment or injure our employees or citizens or their property is a hazard. Local governments can reduce the hazard by taking steps to prevent these type of incidents.

FOD includes a wide range of material, including loose hardware, broken pavement fragments, trash, hazardous materials, building materials, rocks, metal, road debris, and partially buried hazards as shown in our poster this month. All could potentially injure someone or cause damage to equipment or facilities.

Exercise

Discuss scenarios your crews may have encountered or use the scenarios below and discuss prevention. Discuss other incidents you or your crews may have experienced.

Mowing Right of Way

A tractor and mower cutting the right of way hits a piece of hidden road debris, throwing it from the mower and hitting a passing vehicle, causing damage to the windshield.

Mowing a Recreational Athletic Field

The mower blade hits the partially buried pipe, as in the poster, causing damage to the mower or throwing pieces out, with the potential for hitting and injuring a citizen or fellow employee.

Prevention

- Conduct a walk-through inspection for high grass areas prior to cutting.
- Never operate a mower in areas where you cannot see the ground without inspecting first.
- Ensure all guards (chains, flaps, etc.) are in place and serviceable.
- Stop mowing when pedestrians or motor vehicles pass nearby.
- Always be alert and wear personal protective equipment (eye, hearing, head, seatbelts).
- Ensure operators are trained.





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U.S. POSTAGE PAID
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This Issue:

Workplace Hazards Slip, Trip, and Fall Foreign Object Debris

