



'LEADERS' DEBUT

LGRMS rolls out new Law Enforcement Active Driving Emergency Response Systems this summer. - p. 13

PUBLIC WORKS

Tips for public works and others working in the heat of the summer. - p. 6

PARKS & REC

Peak summer season leads to certain risks for public parks. - p. 7

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Natalie Sellers continues her journey in law enforcement risk management. - p. 11

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The opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors and do not reflect the views of LGRMS, ACCG, or GMA.



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UPCOMING WEBINARS AND TRAINING

Safety Coordinator I & II

FULL DAY | 8:30AM-3:30PM

Aug. 5 - Tifton, GA [🔗](#)

Aug. 12 - Statesboro, GA [🔗](#)

Aug. 19 - Macon, GA [🔗](#)

Sep. 9 - Cartersville, GA [🔗](#)

Sep. 17 - Gainesville, GA [🔗](#)

Safety Coordinator III & IV

FULL DAY | 8:30AM-3:30PM

Aug. 6 - Tifton, GA [🔗](#)

Aug. 13 - Statesboro, GA [🔗](#)

Aug. 20 - Macon, GA [🔗](#)

Sep. 10 - Cartersville, GA [🔗](#)

Sep. 18 - Gainesville, GA [🔗](#)

Workers Comp Program

HALF DAY | 8:30AM-12:30PM

Aug. 26 - Cartersville, GA [🔗](#)

Sep. 16 - Gainesville, GA [🔗](#)

Law Enforcement Risk Specialist Conference

Sep. 30-Oct. 1 - LaGrange, GA [🔗](#)

PAST WEBINARS ON YOUTUBE

Responding to a Use of Force Incident

Jan. 24, 2024 [🔗](#)

Georgia Open Records Act

Sep. 21, 2023 [🔗](#)

Reasonable Suspicion-based Drug Testing

Apr. 25, 2023 [🔗](#)

Employee Social Media Activity and Political Divisiveness in the Workplace

Aug. 25, 2021 [🔗](#)



Events subject to change.
Check website for updates.

lgrms.com/training-event-calendar.aspx



A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR



By Dennis Watts
Training and Communications Manager

Welcome to the June/July combined edition of SHARE, the monthly publication of Local Government Risk Management Services (LGRMS). SHARE is sent to all GIRMA/IRMA, and WC, members 10 times per year around the 20th of the month. SHARE has two sections: (1) a general safety and risk, and (2) a worker safety-focused section. We cover topics and issues most relevant to local governments in Georgia. We look forward to your feedback.

If you are not currently on the distribution list to receive our monthly newsletter, it can be downloaded for free from the LGRMS website (www.lgrms.com).

In this issue

This month's Safety Theme is warm weather hazards for home and workplace, where we discuss sun and heat, insects, animals and other critters, poisonous plants and other hazards. Just for fun, we also include a throwback theme from July 1995 on the same topic. This still has some relevant and useful information, even after 30 years.

Our Law Enforcement Matters section has Natalie Sellers continuing part 2 of a Journey in Law Enforcement. We also have an article on our new Narrative Driving Program, written by guest writer Aliya Hoyt, called "Law Enforcement Active Driving Emergency Response

Systems" (LEADERS, for short) developed by Griffin Attaberry with some details on what to look forward to.

Vincent Scott parallels our Warm Weather Hazards Theme with a focus on public works. Chis Ryan has two articles focused on employee financial wellbeing and skill-based versus degree-based hiring. Weston Cox has some general safety tips for parks and recreation.

Dan Beck in his Director's Corner discusses and recommends that all local governments enhance their emergency preparedness through an online Crisis Coordinator Certification Program that fulfills multiple training requirements.

Be safe.

Dennis

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HELP US REDUCE VEHICLE CLAIMS

Law enforcement motor vehicle claims continue to be our most expensive



DIRECTOR'S CORNER

By Dan Beck, LGRMS Director

The trend of law enforcement motor vehicle related claims continues to lead all claim types as the most expensive, in both workers' compensation and property and liability. The good news is that agencies with a strong safety culture can have a massive impact on reducing motor vehicle claims frequency and their associated costs.

Below are guidelines to reduce motor vehicle crashes from the Network of Employers for Traffic Safety (NETS), the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), and the Occupational Safety & Health Administration prescribes within a paper called [*Guidelines for Employers to Reduce Motor Vehicle Crashes*](#), to assist anyone in implementing a strong safety culture to reduce motor vehicle trends.

Step 1: Management Commitment and Employee Involvement

The safety of an organization's employees as they drive for work, and to and from work, is so important that it requires the attention of top-level management. Senior management can provide leadership, set policies and allocate resources (staff and budget) to create a safety culture. Actively encouraging employee participation and involvement at all levels of the organization is a good practice and will help the effort to succeed.

Step 2: Written Policies and Procedures

A written statement emphasizing the commitment to reducing traffic-related deaths and injuries is essential to a successful program. Create a clear, comprehensive and enforceable set of traffic safety policies and communicate them to all employees. These are the cornerstones of an effective driver safety program. Post them throughout the workplace, distribute copies periodically, and discuss the policies at company meetings. Offer incentives for sticking to the rules, and point out the consequences of disregarding them.

Step 3: Driver Agreements

Establish a contract with all employees who drive for work purposes, whether they drive assigned company vehicles or drive their personal vehicles. By signing an agreement, the driver acknowledges awareness and understanding of the organization's traffic safety policies, procedures, and expectations regarding driver performance, vehicle maintenance and reporting of moving violations.

Step 4: Motor Vehicle Record Checks

Check the driving records of all employees who drive for work purposes. You must screen out drivers who have poor driving records since they are most likely to cause

problems in the future. The MVR should be reviewed periodically to ensure that the driver maintains a good driving record. Clearly define the number of violations an employee/driver can have before losing the privilege of driving for work, and provide training where indicated.

Step 5: Crash Reporting and Investigation

Establish and enforce a crash reporting and investigation process. All crashes, regardless of severity, should be reported to the employee's supervisor as soon as feasible after the incident. Company traffic safety policies and procedures should clearly guide drivers through their responsibilities in a crash situation. All crashes should be reviewed to determine their cause and whether or not the incidents were preventable. Understanding the root causes of crashes and why they are happening, regardless of fault, forms the basis for eliminating them in the future.

Step 6: Vehicle Selection, Maintenance and Inspection

Selecting, properly maintaining and routinely inspecting company vehicles is an important part of preventing crashes and related losses. It is advisable that the organization review and consider the safety features of all vehicles to be considered for use. For the latest information on crash test ratings and other important vehicle safety information, visit www.safercar.gov. To report a concern about a defect or problem with your vehicle, contact the NHTSA Auto Safety Hotline at 1-888-DASH-2-DOT.

Personal vehicles used for company business are not necessarily subject to the same criteria and are generally the responsibility of the owner. However, personal vehicles used on company business should be maintained in a manner that provides the employee with maximum safety and reflects positively on the company.

Step 7: Disciplinary Action System

Develop a strategy to determine the course of action after the occurrence of a moving violation and/or "preventable" crash. There are a variety of corrective

action programs available; the majority of these are based on a system that assigns points for moving violations. The system should provide for progressive discipline if a driver begins to develop a pattern of repeated traffic violations and/or preventable crashes. The system should describe what specific action(s) will be taken if a driver accumulates a certain number of violations or preventable crashes in any period.

Step 8: Reward/Incentive Program

Develop and implement a driver reward/incentive program to make safe driving an integral part of your business culture. Safe driving behaviors contribute directly to the bottom line and should be recognized as such. Positive results are realized when driving performance is incorporated into the overall evaluation of job performance. Reward and incentive programs typically involve recognition, monetary rewards, special privileges or the use of incentives to motivate the achievement of a predetermined goal or to increase participation in a program or event.

Step 9: Driver Training/Communication

Provide continuous driver safety training and communication. Even experienced drivers benefit from periodic training and reminders of safe driving practices and skills. It is easy to become complacent and not think about the consequences of our driving habits.

Step 10: Regulatory Compliance

Ensure adherence to highway safety regulations. It is important to clearly establish which, if any, local, state, and/or federal regulations govern your vehicles and/or drivers. These regulations may involve, but may not necessarily be limited to the following:

- Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA)
- U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT)
- National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA)
- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
- Employment Standards Administration (ESA)

Source: [*Guidelines for Employers to Reduce Motor Vehicle Crashes*](#)

NOTES *from the* ROAD

BEST PRACTICES FOR SAFE TRAVELS



Risks of Outdoor Work

With a proactive approach, public works departments can safeguard the health and productivity of their workforce during peak summer conditions.

By Vincent Scott
LGRMS Risk Control Consultant

Workers performing outdoor tasks such as road maintenance, landscaping, or utility repairs are especially vulnerable to high temperatures. Extreme heat, dehydration, sun exposure and UV risks are significant hazards for municipal public works departments during the summer.

Prolonged exposure can lead to heat exhaustion or heat stroke, both of which are serious medical emergencies. Dehydration reduces physical performance and cognitive ability, as well as exacerbate underlying health conditions.

In addition to heat-related illnesses, workers face an increased risk from prolonged exposure to the sun. Ultraviolet (UV) radiation can cause painful sunburns, premature skin aging, and significantly increase the risk of skin cancer. Eyes are also vulnerable to UV damage, which can potentially lead to cataracts or other vision problems over time.

To mitigate these risks, departments must enforce safety measures, including providing shaded rest areas, encouraging frequent hydration, and rotating crews to limit prolonged exposure. Workers should be equipped with wide-brimmed hats, UV-protective clothing, sunglasses, and high-SPF sunscreen. Training should cover early signs of heat stress and the importance of sun protection.

By taking a proactive approach to managing extreme heat and sun-related hazards, public works departments can safeguard the health and productivity of their workforce during peak summer conditions.

LGRMS offers numerous safety training opportunities through in-person, regional training, webinars, and our Local Gov U web-based training. Please contact your risk control consultant to identify what works best for your organization.



RISK CONNECTION

REDUCING RISK FOR YOU AND YOUR EMPLOYER

PARKS PRIORITIZE SUMMER SAFETY

Managing sports, camps and pools creates operational challenges during peak season

By Weston Cox
LGRMS Risk Control Consultant

The summer months for parks and recreation departments can be a very busy time. Managing different sports activities, camps and water activities can be difficult during this time of year. Safety in city and county parks and recreation departments is essential to ensure that public spaces remain welcoming and secure for all users. Proper safety measures protect both visitors and staff while reducing liability risks for municipalities.

Aquatic Facility Safety

Swimming pools and splash pads require strict safety protocols due to higher risks of slips, falls and drowning. Lifeguards must be certified, and all aquatic facilities must comply with state health regulations, including regular water quality testing.

Proper signage about depth, rules and emergency procedures must be clearly visible. Splash pads should be monitored to prevent overcrowding and water contamination. Regular maintenance and cleaning schedules help ensure safe conditions for all users

Athletic Field Safety

Ball fields require thorough attention to safety, particularly due to the risk of injuries from defective



Photo by Blulz60, iStock, in Duluth, GA.

equipment and uneven surfaces. Regular inspections should be conducted to ensure fences, dugouts, lighting and bleachers are secure and in good repair.

Equipment checks should include examining all safety barriers, ensuring proper field drainage and maintaining appropriate lighting levels for evening games and practices.

Staff Background Checks

Conducting thorough background checks on all coaches

and recreation staff who interact with children and youth is crucial. These checks help prevent misconduct and ensure that individuals trusted with public responsibility meet community safety standards.

All staff members should undergo regular training updates and maintain current certifications in their respective areas of expertise.

Emergency Preparedness

High-traffic areas and public buildings within parks should always be equipped with well-stocked first aid kits and automated external defibrillators. Staff should be trained in CPR and first aid to respond effectively to emergencies, especially during large events or athletic games.

Regular drills and equipment inspections ensure that emergency responses can be carried out swiftly and correctly. Clear communication channels and visible emergency contacts also support quick and effective responses.

Playground Safety

Playground safety is another critical aspect of parks management. Hazards such as broken equipment, exposed bolts, loose surfaces or sharp edges must be addressed immediately. Regular maintenance and cleaning help prevent accidents and promote health,

especially in areas frequented by young children.

Surfaces under equipment should be made of impact-absorbing materials like mulch or rubber. Keeping these areas free of litter, animal waste and debris is not only about aesthetics but about maintaining a safe, sanitary environment for play.

Signage and Landscaping

Proper signage containing rules, warnings and general park information should be displayed at all city and county playground locations. Ensure that all trees and shrubbery are properly maintained and cut back in these areas.



Confirm that there are no dead or rotted limbs or debris that could potentially harm visitors. Regular landscaping maintenance helps prevent accidents and keeps facilities looking professional.

Additional Resources

When it comes to managing parks and recreation activities within cities and counties, you can never be too careful. Implementing comprehensive safety protocols protects community members while ensuring that recreational facilities remain valuable assets for residents of all ages.

For additional information, please visit the National Recreation and Park Association educational website, learning.nrpa.org, for a wealth of training opportunities.

Photo by krblokhin, iStock, in Savannah, GA.



LIABILITY BEAT

HELPING CITIES AND COUNTIES REDUCE PROPERTY AND LIABILITY RISK



Hiring for Skills Over Degrees

Employers widen the talent pool by focusing on what employees can do, not where or how they learned it.

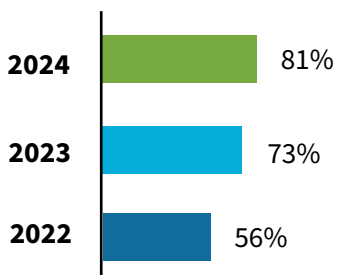
By Chris Ryan
LGRMS Sr. Risk Control Consultant

More and more employers are changing how they hire people. Instead of only looking at college degrees, they're focusing on what workers can actually do. This is called "skills-based hiring."

Here's how it works: Employers care more about your abilities than where you went to school. Can you solve problems? Are you good at working with others? These things matter more than having a diploma.

This new way of hiring is becoming increasingly popular. In 2024, 81% of companies used skills-based hiring. That's way up from just 56% in 2022, according to talent assessment platform TestGorilla.

Employers Practicing Skills-based Hiring



Source: TestGorilla

Why are employers making this change? There is a shortage of workers for open positions, so companies are looking for new ways to find good employees.

The COVID-19 pandemic taught business owners an important lesson. They learned that workers who can adapt and learn new things are super valuable. When everything changed quickly, these flexible workers helped companies survive.

Jim Link works for the Society of Human Resources Management (SHRM), a group that helps companies with hiring. He says companies want workers who can talk to people well, learn new things, and convince others of their ideas.

"We used to think about keeping businesses going by focusing on equipment and supplies," Link explains. "Now we're thinking about people. Do we have the right workers with the right skills for today and tomorrow?"

Some companies are also dropping the rule that you need a college degree for certain jobs. A study by Indeed (a job website) found that fewer job postings require a four-year degree now. In 2019, about 20% of jobs required a degree. By 2024, that number dropped to about 18%.

Employers that stopped requiring degrees for some jobs found something interesting. About 73% of them successfully hired good workers who wouldn't have qualified before, according to SHRM's research on hiring trends.

This change is helping both workers and employers: Workers get more job opportunities, and employers find the skilled people they need.

Source: shrm.org



Do we have the right people with the right skills and enough workforce numbers for today and tomorrow?

—Jim Link, SHRM-CP, SHRM CHRO

BENEFITS OF EMPLOYEE FINANCIAL WELLNESS

By Chris Ryan
LGRMS Sr. Risk Control Consultant

Employers are starting to care about their workers' money problems. For years, businesses have focused on keeping employees physically and mentally healthy. Now they're also thinking about financial health.

Companies are learning that when workers worry about money, it affects everything they do at work and at home. That's why more employers are adding benefits to help with financial wellness.

Not many companies offered financial planning help in the past. In 2023, only 14% of workers could get financial planning benefits at their jobs. But by 2024, that number jumped to 28%. That's double what it was before! This information comes from PNC Bank's report on financial wellness at work.

Even more companies plan to offer these benefits soon. By 2026, nearly half of all employers are expected to have complete financial wellness programs, according to Transamerica.

"Financial wellness is becoming a main benefit, not just an extra perk," Link explains. This is really important because more than half of all workers say they stress about money every single day. Some worry about it multiple times each day! A financial services company called ZayZoon surveyed 5,000 employees and found this out.

What kind of financial help do workers want most? Morgan Stanley did research and found these top three things:

- Help planning for retirement
- Assistance with financial planning
- Guidance on investing money for retirement goals

Workers also want financial benefits that fit their specific needs. Different age groups want different types of help.

Younger workers might need help saving money for their first house or paying off student loans. Baby Boomers want to learn more about managing money. Millennials and Generation Z prefer getting personal coaching and financial planning help.

Dr. Ragan Decker works at SHRM and studies workplace trends. She says all the older generations agree that saving for retirement is their biggest money goal. But Gen Z workers care most about improving their credit scores, according to PNC Bank's research.

"This shows that companies need to think about what different age groups need," Decker explains. "Each generation has different financial worries and goals."

When companies help workers with money problems, everyone benefits. Workers feel less stressed and can focus better on their jobs.

Source: shrm.org

LAW ENFORCEMENT MATTERS

REDUCING RISK FOR PUBLIC SAFETY AGENCIES

A Journey in Law Enforcement Risk Management PART TWO

By Natalie Sellers
LGRMS Sr. Law Enforcement Risk Consultant

Risk management is most effective when an internal process or system identifies and manages issues before a loss occurs. This type of risk management can be referred to as Operational Risk Indicators. In Part One of this series, risk threshold, appetite and boundaries were briefly discussed as triggers for mitigation. When there are systems in place that are enforced and adhered to, and using corrective action, they will set a tone for departmental safety culture, preventing the drift to unsafe law enforcement practices.

This article will review operational risk indicators to measure and manage departmental issues before problems occur. Law enforcement leadership can implement a multifaceted systems approach to identify issues before they result in departmental losses, injuries and motor vehicle crashes. Risk management is all about preparation to prevent losses.

Let's examine how leadership can use comprehensive systems to keep officers and the public safe using key performance indicators.



"You can't manage what you don't measure."
— ***W. Edwards Deming***

1. People: education, experience, staffing levels, employee and customer surveys, experienced benchmarking, authority levels, and management experience.
2. Processes: quality scorecards, analysis of errors or root cause analysis, areas of increased activity or volume, review of outcomes, internal and external review, identification of areas of highest risk, and quality of internal audit procedures.
3. Systems: benchmarking against industry standards and internal and external review systems, analysis to identify strengths and weaknesses, identification of areas of highest risk, and development of strategies to mitigate associated risks.

People

Benchmarking your staff's education, training, and experience can help with shift placement/assignments, reduce adverse outcomes, and enhance department

training schedules based on your agency's current and desired state. For example, when leadership closely monitors the number of automobile crashes and the types of crashes happening departmentally, and investigates the root cause, education, training and discipline can be used to reduce future occurrences. By studying the root cause of the crash, an agency can develop countermeasures to prevent future occurrences through education, training, or discipline.

Processes

Process systems are beneficial for leadership. We often don't analyze an error; we hide it. Learning from mistakes can teach others not to make the same mistakes and create a culture of sharing information.

Examining previous years' claims and lawsuits can help identify areas of highest department risk and develop key risk indicators and audit procedures to prevent future losses. When crime increases in a particular area, leadership may send concentrated patrols out to deter crime. This same process works internally as well. When crashes increase, find out why and how to prevent them. Is it night shift due to decreased visibility? Is there an increase in traffic around your area? Is it back-to-school time, and therefore an increase in traffic patterns? Prevention techniques will be ineffective without knowing the "why" crashes happen.

Systems

A set of quantifiable measurements to gauge organizational performance is vital to successful operation. A review of employee performance, both

internally and externally, can reveal actual performance and drive changes when performance is not satisfactory. Identifying departmental strengths and weaknesses can prevent problems by turning weaknesses into strengths.

And finally, in the ever-evolving world of law enforcement risks, develop strategies to mitigate future risks. Data collection and synthesizing results into actionable insights are at the heart of systems management.

Bad leaders react. Good leaders plan. And great leaders think. Analyze your department's past losses to identify and mitigate any future occurrences. Focused key performance indicators aim to measure and monitor organizational operational performance.

As we continue this law enforcement risk management journey, let's review and apply the concepts discussed. To make informed, consistent operational decisions about safety and operational effectiveness, establish your department's risk threshold and appetite, which is the amount of risk you are willing to accept to pursue objectives. If that threshold is breached, action will be required. Leadership can use risk threshold and appetite to set up alert systems through defined operational risk indicators.

A system to assess high-risk tasks in law enforcement can help reduce litigation, termination, and drift from unsafe practices. When evaluating current departmental systems on operational risk indicators, consider the people, the process, and the systems. Ensure that all are fine-tuned and assessed to help reduce departmental exposure. Our next article will discuss root cause analysis and its role in departmental risk management.

LAW ENFORCEMENT RISK SPECIALIST CONFERENCE 2025

Sept. 30-Oct. 1, 2025

Great Wolf Lodge 150 Tom Hall Pkwy, LaGrange, GA
Schedule and Registration Information: lgrms.com

LGRMS, GMA and ACCG proudly present the first Law Enforcement Risk Specialist Conference. Join us at the Great Wolf Lodge in La Grange for this two-day event where speakers Terry E. Williams, John "Jack" Ryan and Steve Campbell discuss insurance defense, motor vehicle and civil liability, jail operations and emerging trends regarding recent Supreme Court rulings.

REGISTER NOW



REDUCING ACCIDENTS, REDUCING PREMIUMS

By Alia Hoyt
for LGRMS

*How the LEADERS program plans to take charge
of law enforcement vehicle safety*

Most private citizens have noticed a significant increase in their auto insurance premiums in recent years. With that in mind, try to imagine the uptick in costs associated with insuring the thousands of law enforcement vehicles in use in Georgia's cities and counties. The price tag is sobering, to say the least.

Then there's the fact that accidents and property damage are sometimes accompanied by injuries. That's why Local Government Risk Management Services (LGRMS) commissioned the development of an innovative new driver training program, which officially launches this summer in local government law enforcement agencies around Georgia.

Known as Law Enforcement Active Driving Emergency Response Systems (LEADERS, for short), the program introduces the practice of "narrative driving" as a strategy to reduce motor vehicle accidents. The program is designed to improve verbal communication skills, situational awareness, and hazard perception to help officers drive more safely and effectively.

Unpacking the Causes of Increased Insurance Rates

There are a lot of reasons that insurance rates have gone up in recent years; however, a couple are particularly related to law enforcement vehicles. Stan Deese, Director of Risk Management Services for Georgia Municipal Association (GMA), explains that the frequency of auto accidents in general has skyrocketed since the post-COVID-19 pandemic return to work.

"People seem to be driving more aggressively," he says, noting that this is true for all drivers and that accident rates have never been this high. This naturally translates into more accidents involving law enforcement vehicles. The current tort environment doesn't help, either. "When you couple increasing accidents with the higher cost of settling third-party bodily injury claims and repairing vehicles owned by the city, the actual dollar cost of each accident is more expensive now," Deese adds.

Cities and counties alike are reporting increased costs

where law enforcement vehicles are concerned. “Both of their number one losses are motor vehicle-related,” says Dan Beck, Director at LGRMS. “The group with the most opportunity for improvement is law enforcement, which makes up half of all of the losses,” Beck says, noting that law enforcement-related motor vehicle claims within ACCG’s and GMA’s insurance pools total roughly \$10 million per year.

Indeed, there are likely thousands of accidents involving law enforcement vehicles every year in Georgia. Metro Atlanta was hit especially hard with a rate increase of 189 percent over the last four years, Deese says. “If the program can reduce the frequency of accidents through a better training platform, even 10 percent would be a huge dollar savings for our cities, and it could save someone’s life,” Deese explains. “Something needs to happen because it has just gotten out of control.”

Ashley Abercrombie is the Director of Property & Casualty Programs for ACCG, which manages the insurance pools for counties in Georgia. “Many of these accidents are preventable,” she says.

Narrative Driving - Driving to Understand What the Roadway is Saying

With safety and fiscal responsibility in mind, Griffin Attaberry, Public Safety Risk Consultant at LGRMS, set out to research and develop the LEADERS program. The idea was to revamp a system that historically relied on driving simulators and replace it with a more hands-on training approach. To make the pivot, he looked to outside sources such as private industry and public safety entities in other areas to find out more about their successes with the practice of narrative driving (also known as commentative driving).

Never heard of narrative driving? It’s more intuitive than you might think. In fact, many drivers do it to some extent already when they mutter aloud about road conditions or the missteps of other drivers. “Narrative driving is verbalizing what you are seeing while you are driving. You are actively engaged in hazard recognition,” Attaberry explains, adding that people can think of it as active listening married to active driving. This active state is vital, he says, because, “In public safety, on their day off, they still drive. So it’s easy to become complacent in their driving because they do it on and off duty.”

To kick off the program, LGRMS conducted two pilot training sessions with the Henry County Police Department (HCPD) and the Griffin Police Department (GPD). Officers are taught to constantly evaluate and verbalize key things like road conditions, current speed, speed limit, curves ahead, and traffic light status. They even say out loud actions like “mirror check” and “shoulder check” when they do them. According to Attaberry, an example is, “I’m approaching an intersection, the light is red, I’m slowing down, checking my mirrors,” or, “I’m approaching a stale green light [that is when the light is already green when first approached], the speed limit is 35, my speed is 30, the light is going to stay green, continuing through the intersection.”

Narrative driving also helps officers to better process outside factors, such as pedestrians, people not wearing seatbelts, and even spot potential crimes in progress. It’s not just for emergency situations. “We would like drivers to do this when they are driving normally without lights and sirens,” Attaberry explains. “If we can get them to make this second nature, then when they do have to respond with lights and sirens, it is going to help them recognize hazards sooner and avoid being in a collision.”

In the pilot sessions, officers underwent four hours of training. Roughly three hours of that is in the classroom with an instructor who details the “how-tos” of narrative driving, as well as a portion on due regard related to Georgia law. After that is complete, each student spends time with an instructor who evaluates them on their hazard recognition and narrative driving skills. This is done in one of two 2024 Ford Expeditions purchased by LGRMS for the benefit of the GMA and ACCG insurance pools.



“We’ve equipped them with the aftermarket crash avoidance technology and driver improvement telematic systems,” Attaberry says. “The goal is for our membership to take this training and have them integrate it into their driving culture in their department local government to reduce preventable accidents.”

The Feedback So Far

To date, the feedback on LEADERS has been overwhelmingly positive. Captain Kaylen Krueger Hayes with the GPD appreciated that trainees were able to learn via the lecture, complete with video examples, then implement skills hands-on by practicing narrative driving with a trainer present. “That seems to be more impactful than just seeing slides in a PowerPoint,” she says.

Captain Matthew Marlowe with the HCPD, who has been a driving trainer for 33 years, thinks that the training will enhance safety by a significant margin. “Narrative driving makes them more aware of their surroundings and prevents tunnel vision,” he explains. “When you get into the vehicle, you start losing your peripheral vision, and you may miss things like pedestrians, other vehicles, and street hazards. The more aware the officers are, the safer they’re going to drive.”

The best part is that narrative driving is not difficult to master. “Once you go through the program, you find yourself doing it naturally, especially knowing the benefits of it,” says Caleb Smith, Master Police Officer with GPD. “The training will make other officers think about their actions, which I personally believe will reduce officer-involved accidents.”

Captain Marlowe is impressed by the program’s simplicity, yet comprehensive nature. “It takes an issue that we all know exists, and it presents a solution,” he says. “Instead of teaching little fixes, you can work through it.”

LEADERS Moving Forward

LGRMS will begin rolling out the LEADERS program to members of GMA and ACCG risk pools in the summer of 2025. Ideally, each member agency will see some reduction in motor vehicle claims quarter over quarter, with a goal of reaching a 20 percent reduction over a 24-month period.

Captain Krueger Hayes and Captain Marlowe both report that their respective agencies plan to implement the training as part of police academy coursework and will also conduct annual retraining for existing officers to refresh their skills. “We had one of our Field Training Officers do a narration running code and recorded it on the body cameras,” Captain Krueger Hayes explains. “We plan on putting it into our training.”

Ashley Abercrombie with ACCG is fully in favor of these implementations. “LEADERS not only helps prevent damage to law enforcement vehicles and other parties on the road, but also helps the officers avoid on-the-job injuries or deaths cause by auto accidents.” A primary goal should be for the officers to arrive safely at the incidents to which they are called and arrive home in the same shape they left in that morning.

Improved driving skills can help decrease workers’ compensation injuries, auto liability claims from third parties, and damage to the law enforcement vehicles. Lessons learned from LEADERS can help lower insurance premiums and costs within deductibles. This frees up funds for use in other areas, which is particularly helpful in this era of tighter budgets and stretched resources.

For more information about LEADERS, contact your LGRMS Law Enforcement or Public Safety Risk consultant.

Take a moment to exercise your brain and relieve stress by solving these fun safety puzzles! Answers on page 22.

WORD SEARCH

Confused	Headache	Stroke
Cramps	Nausea	Sweating
Dizzy	Pulse	Temperature
Exhaustion	Red	Vomiting



MATH SQUARES

The missing values are the whole numbers between 1 and 9.
 Each number is only used once.
 Each row is a math equation.
 Each column is a math equation.
 Remember that multiplication and division are performed before addition and subtraction.

	x		-		27
x		-		x	
	+		+		19
-		+		+	
9	÷	3	-		1
33		-1		7	



SAFETY THEME

KEEPING OUR MEMBERS SAFE ON THE JOB AND AT HOME

BE SAFE OUTSIDE! WARM WEATHER HAZARDS

By Dennis Watts
LGRMS Training and Communications Manager



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

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

Participant Sign-In Sheet: 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.

This month's theme focuses on hazards to outdoor workers — including water, wastewater, parks, groundskeepers, public works, streets, police, and fire — can be exposed to physical hazards and biological hazards. Employers should train their workers about their workplace hazards, including hazard identification and recommendations for preventing and controlling their exposures.



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Sun and Heat

Extreme heat can cause heat stroke, heat cramps, heat exhaustion, and heat rash. Take shade breaks and hydrate throughout the work shift. Ultraviolet radiation (UV) can cause sunburn and, potentially, skin cancer. Limit skin exposure by wearing long-sleeved shirts, long pants, and hats. Use sunscreen, and reapply when needed.

Insects

Diseases may be spread by mosquitos and ticks. Mosquito-borne diseases include West Nile virus; tick-borne diseases include Lyme disease. Limit skin exposure (follow the same clothing recommendations as for sun and heat) and use repellent. Be aware of spiders (black widows, brown recluse) in dark moist places, heavy bush, or trash. Stinging insects, such as bees, wasps, yellow jackets, ants, and scorpions, can be found everywhere. Wear gloves when moving materials or trash and be alert for nests in the ground or on trees or bushes.

Animals and Other Critters

Threats include venomous snakes (rattlesnakes, copperheads, cottonmouth water moccasins, and coral snakes). Rattlesnakes and copperheads range throughout the state; cottonmouths generally range from Middle Georgia to South Georgia, and coral snakes are common in South Georgia. Along with the above clothing recommendations, heavy boots and chaps can provide additional protection.

Poisonous Plants

Poison ivy, poison oak, and poison sumac can cause allergic reactions from skin contact. They can also be dangerous respiratory hazards if they are burned. In addition to long sleeves, long pants, and gloves, use barrier creams prior to exposure, and thoroughly wash affected areas immediately after exposure. Keep in mind that your clothing could still have residue, so carefully wash them separately from other clothing.

Other Hazards

Outdoor workers may encounter other hazards in addition to the physical and biological hazards described here. They may be exposed to pesticides or other chemical hazards, traumatic injury hazards, or



Photo by Martina Tobolova, iStock



Photo by Tatyana Consaul, iStock

other safety and health hazards depending on their specific job and tasks. Employers should train outdoor workers about their workplace hazards, including hazard identification and recommendations for preventing and controlling their exposures.

For more information, contact your county extension agent or visit the CDC website at www.cdc.gov/niosh.

Reprinted from April 2014 LGRMS Safety Theme.

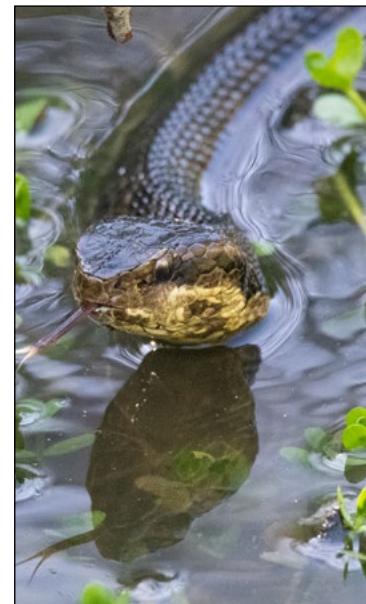


Photo by Kevin McDonald, iStock

DON'T LET THE SUMMER HEAT GET YOU DOWN

The LGRMS newsletter has come a long way! Check out this article from a 1995 memo, part of the original Monthly Safety Theme Program.

Cities and counties still find value in our monthly safety theme in 2025!

It doesn't take an Einstein to realize that local government work in Georgia in the summer is HOT - HOT - HOT. Whether in enclosed building areas such as shops, storage areas and other facilities or in the outdoors such as parks and recreation, road work, police and fire or sanitation, just about every local government employee will experience hot weather this summer.

Several heat related disorders plague summer time workers who are not "in the know" about conditions that can hurt or even kill you if you don't take precautions.

While these disorders have different names and are of differing levels of danger, they all come from your exposure to four basic factors, which are temperature, humidity, radiant heat (such as from the sun) and air velocity. Your physical conditioning plays a major role in how your body is effected by these factors as well.

The body reacts to high external temperature basically by circulating blood to the skin, which allow the body to give off this excess heat through the skin. When you are performing heavy physical labor less blood is available for this and therefore less heat is released. Sweating is another means by which the body naturally protects itself, however, this is effective only when the humidity is low enough to allow evaporation and if appropriate levels of fluids are replaced.

When the body cannot adequately dispose of

this excess heat, it is stored, which raises the body's core temperature and increases the heart rate. This sometimes results in the individuals' loss of concentration, irritability and sometimes sickness that effects their safe performance of work tasks. If precautions or rapid action is not exercised, fainting or even possible death may occur.

The following heat disorders are what can be expected with workers in hot environments:

Heat Rash

Heat rash, also known as prickly heat, most often occurs in hot and humid environments where sweat is not easily removed from the skin surface by evaporation. When complicated by infection, this disorder can be so uncomfortable that workers can not work or even sleep. This condition can be prevented by resting in a cool place and allowing the skin to dry.

Fainting

Fainting may be a problem to workers not accustom to working in hot environments and often occurs when an employee is simply standing still. The injury usually occurs when they come into contact with a solid object or the ground when losing consciousness. While recovery is usually quick, a precautionary measure would be to keep employees moving around rather than standing still.

July 14, 1995

TO: All Workers' Compensation and Liability/Property Insurance Pool Members

FROM: David Morrill, Director
Local Government Risk Management Services, Inc.

SUBJECT: Monthly Safety Theme Program
July, 1995 - "Don't Let Summer Heat Get You Down!"

We are pleased with the numerous reports from many member city and county governments indicating that our monthly theme program is working for them and is making it easier to "bring the safety message home" to their employees.

As a reminder, this format includes:

- * A detailed step-by-step approach for your department heads and supervisors to follow for each meeting.
- * A sign up sheet for all participants to sign as a record of their attendance.
- * Topic of discussion for the month.
- * "Tips" for presenters to make the presentation more meaningful.
- * Quiz/discussion questions for the participants.
- * Poster/bulletin for posting at the work sites to keep the subject fresh in the worker's minds.
- * Department/facility self inspection format for each department's use.

By conducting regularly scheduled safety meetings you will keep the safety message "alive" with your workers and will help prevent accidents and losses for your organization. We feel this format helps you accomplish this task in a quick and easy way. We strongly encourage your using this material to increase safety awareness and to cut your accident costs!

Heat Cramps

Heat cramps, which are painful spasms of tired muscles, often occur when workers drink large quantities of water but fail to replace their bodies' salt loss. Cramps may be relieved by rest, gentle massage of the muscle areas and replenishment of salted liquids.

Heat Exhaustion

Heat exhaustion usually comes about as a result of a loss of fluid through sweating when a worker has failed to drink enough fluids or take enough salt, or both. While the worker still sweats, he/she feels weak and fatigued and can sometimes experience giddiness, nausea or headaches. The skin is clammy and often moist, and the complexion pale and/or flushed, and body temperature normal or slightly elevated. Treatment for the effected worker includes rest in a cool (shaded) place and drink salted liquids. Severe cases may require longer periods of rest and medical care.

Heat Stroke

Heat stroke is a serious health condition and requires immediate identification and rapid action once discovered. This is caused by the body's failure to naturally regulate it's core temperature. Sweating stops and the worker cannot release excess heat. This often results in mental confusion, delirium, hot, dry skin which may be red or bluish in color, excessive temperature and sometimes loss of consciousness. Victims of heat stroke can and do die unless prompt treatment is applied. While medical attention is being sought, the victim must be removed to a cool place (air conditioned area) and their clothing soaked with cool water. Fan the victim to promote the cooling effect.

Prevention

As with any stress related disorder, prevention is the key. With the knowledge that this summer is going to bring possible heat stress disorders to the workers, the following preventive steps should be strongly considered before your crews "hit the road."

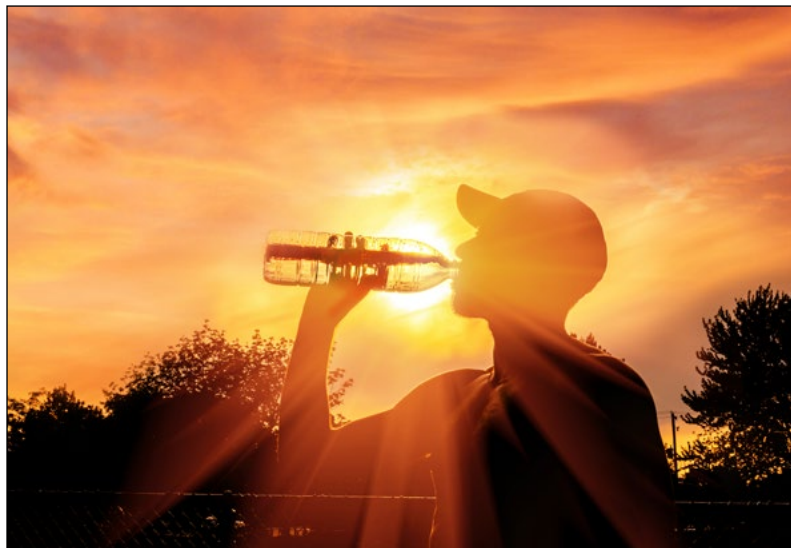
1. Acclimatization. Short exposures followed by longer periods of work will prevent many cases of heat stress. Gradually work your employees into a 100% work day over a five day break in period. This will help them gradually get used to working in heat.
2. Engineering controls. Use plenty of fans and local exhaust systems when

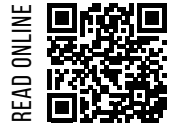
you can to keep air circulating. Shield employees with hats and shaded areas when possible. When extreme conditions prevail, consider a water spray device to keep workers cool and hydrated.

3. Work practices. Water - water - more water. . .make it plentiful (up to a quart per worker per hour) and accessible to workers and encourage their drinking at least 8 ounces every 20 - 30 minutes while working in hot environments. Train all employees in the heat stress disorders and what to look for and how to treat a potential victim. Be sensitive to the worker with physical condition problems that could effect them while working in hot environments.
4. Alternate work and rest periods. Schedule heavy work during the cooler parts of the day and provide appropriate protective clothing (cotton, light shades). Supervisors should be trained to detect heat related disorders and should be encouraged to interrupt work if employees appear extremely uncomfortable.
5. Educate employees as to the hazards of fluid loss, dehydration and the importance of heat disorders. Ask local paramedics/medical personnel to help in this process.

We all complain about the heat . . . it's an American (and especially a Georgian) tradition. But we must educate our people to know the difference between being "hot and tired" and "on the verge of heat stress." For those who have experienced it, they will tell you that it happens very quickly and before they knew what hit them, they were in "never-never land." It is no picnic, believe us.

Use these tips and information to help you keep your cool this summer and "not let the heat get you down."





READ ONLINE

Do you know how to **BEAT THE HEAT**

Every employee should know the answer to these four questions:

WHAT FOUR FACTORS CAN LEAD TO HEAT STRESS CONDITIONS?

ANSWER:

- Temperature
- Humidity
- Radiant Heat
- Air Velocity

WHAT ARE TWO WAYS TO TREAT HEAT EXHAUSTION?

ANSWER:

- Rest in a cool area
- Sip salty liquids or water

Look for these signs of heat exhaustion:

- Sweating
- Clammy skin
- Fast, weak pulse
- Nausea or vomiting
- Muscle cramps
- Weakness
- Dizziness
- Headache
- Fainting

WHO SHOULD BE AWARE OF HEAT DANGERS ON THE WORK SITE?

ANSWER: Everyone.

- Department Head
- Supervisor
- Crew Chief
- Workers

WHAT IS THE MOST DANGEROUS CONDITION CAUSED BY HEAT?

ANSWER: Heat stroke, which can lead to unconsciousness and death. Seek medical help immediately.

Look for these signs of heat stroke:

- Body temp over 103°
- Hot, red skin
- Fast, strong pulse
- Dizziness
- Nausea
- Confusion
- Passing out



HOW TO USE THE MONTHLY SAFETY THEME

Here are some hints to help you get the safety message across to all employees each month.

Theme Poster

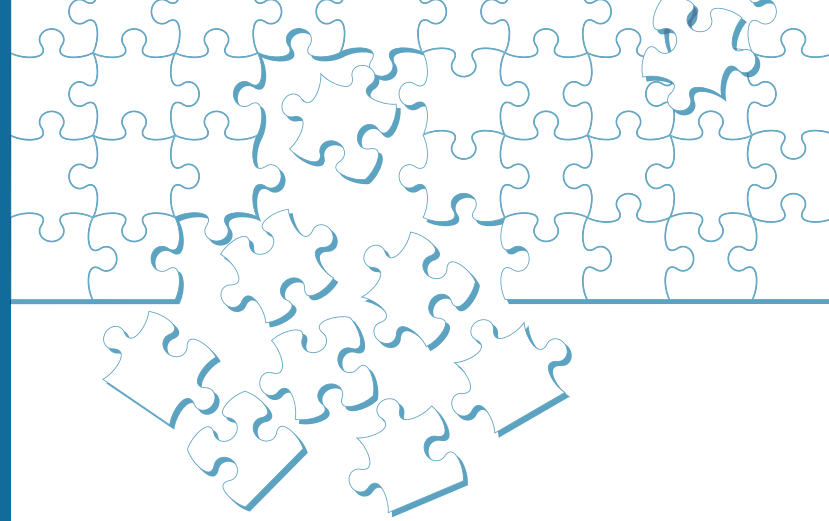
Make copies and post wherever you will get the most impact or email to your departments.

Theme Page

Repeats the poster message with the safety theme topic of the month.

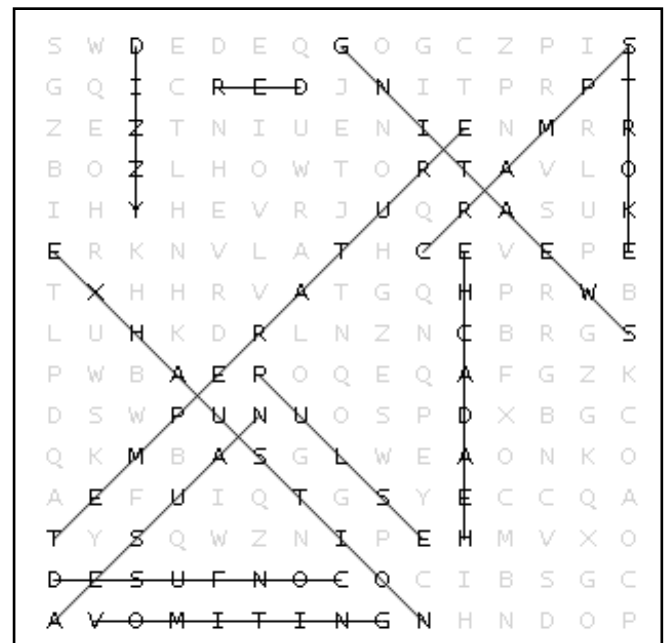
Safety Meeting Agenda

- Assemble participants.
- Hand out copy of theme page.
- Pass around Participant Sign-in Sheet.
- Read theme out loud and discuss aspects of the theme in the department. Give examples. Ask for ideas, etc.
- Discuss accidents/incidents/near misses over the last month.
- Issue safety Self-inspection Checklists for each department inspection team.
- Discuss inspection items noted from last reports and the status of completion of reported items.



PUZZLE ANSWERS

WORD SEARCH ANSWER



MATH SQUARES

7	x	4	-	1	27
x		-		x	
6	+	8	+	5	19
-		+		+	
9	÷	3	-	2	1
33		-1		7	

General Self Inspection Program

Location, Area, or Department: _____ Date: _____

Surveyor: _____

General Evaluation

	Needs Action	Needs Improvement	Good	Very Good
A. Property/Liability				
a. Fire protection	_____	_____	_____	_____
b. Housekeeping	_____	_____	_____	_____
c. Slip/trip/fall	_____	_____	_____	_____
d. Public safety	_____	_____	_____	_____
B. Employee Safety				
a. Safety meetings	_____	_____	_____	_____
b. Safety rules	_____	_____	_____	_____
c. Work conditions	_____	_____	_____	_____
d. Auto/equipment	_____	_____	_____	_____

Property/Liability

	Yes	No
Fire protection	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Emergency numbers posted	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fire extinguishers available/serviced	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fire alarm panel showing system is operational; no warning lights.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Automatic sprinkler system control valve locked in open position.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Automatic sprinkler heads clear of storage within three feet.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Flammable, combustible liquids stored in UL-listed containers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Flammable, combustible liquid containers stored in proper cabinet or container.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Smoking, No Smoking areas designated/marked.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any cigarette butts noticed in No Smoking areas.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments: _____

Housekeeping

Stairwells clear of combustible items.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Furnace, hot water heater, and electrical panel areas clear of combustible items.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Work and public areas are clear of extension cords, boxes, equipment, or other tripping hazards.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Floor surfaces kept clear of oils, other fluids, or water.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stored items are not leaning or improperly supported; heavy items are not up high.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments: _____

Slip/Trip/Fall

Stair treads are in good condition; not worn, damaged or loose.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Handrails for all stairs/steps.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Guardrails for all elevated platforms.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stair handrails are in good condition; not loose or broken.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Floor surfaces are even, with non-slip wax if applicable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
All rugs are held down or have non-slip backing.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any holes, pits or depressions are marked with tape, barricades, or guardrails.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wet floor signs are available and used.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments: _____

General Self Inspection Program

Public Safety

	Yes	No
Public areas kept clear of storage and supplies.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Emergency lighting for public assembly areas in buildings.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Evacuation plans posted for public assembly areas in buildings.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Public areas have necessary warning or directional signs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Construction work has barriers, covers, and markings.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Street and road signs noted in good condition, clear of obstructions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sidewalks smooth and even; no holes, no raised or broken areas.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments: _____

Employee Safety

Safety Meetings

Held in the department.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Meetings held ____ monthly ____ quarterly ____ other _____; documented	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Different topic each time.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Covers department safety rules.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Safety Rules

Rules specific for this department.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rules are written, posted in the department.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reviewed with new employees.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Work Conditions

Employees exposed to: ____ Heat ____ Cold ____ Rain/sleet/snow ____ Use of chemicals		
____ Noise ____ Work in confined spaces ____ Work in trenches		
____ Traffic ____ Blood/body fluids ____ Other _____		

Proper personal protective equipment available

Respirators, goggles, face shields, chemical gloves, traffic vests, appropriate clothing

Trench boxes/shoring for trenching, ear plugs/muffs, body armor (law enforcement)

Confined space equipment, harness, air testing equipment, ventilation equipment, tripod

Fire department turn-out gear, blood-borne pathogens kits

Personal protective equipment required to be worn.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employees trained on proper use.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Equipment properly maintained.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shop equipment has proper guards to protect from pinch or caught-between type injuries.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chemicals used in the department.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
MSDS sheets available; employees trained on hazards, proper use, proper PPE to use.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments: _____

Auto and Equipment

Seat belts provided.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Seat belts required to be used.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Drivers noted wearing seat belts.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
All lights working including strobe lights, turn signals.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tires in good condition, tread, sidewalls.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Glass in good condition; not cracked, broken.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reflective tape, signs in good condition.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any periodic, documented, self-inspection of the vehicles/equipment.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Proper guards on mowers, other equipment.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments: _____

Safety Meeting Attendance Sign Up Sheet

City/County: _____

Date: _____

Department: _____

Topic: _____

Attendees:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Next meeting scheduled for _____

Safety Coordinator _____

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LET US KNOW HOW WE CAN HELP YOU

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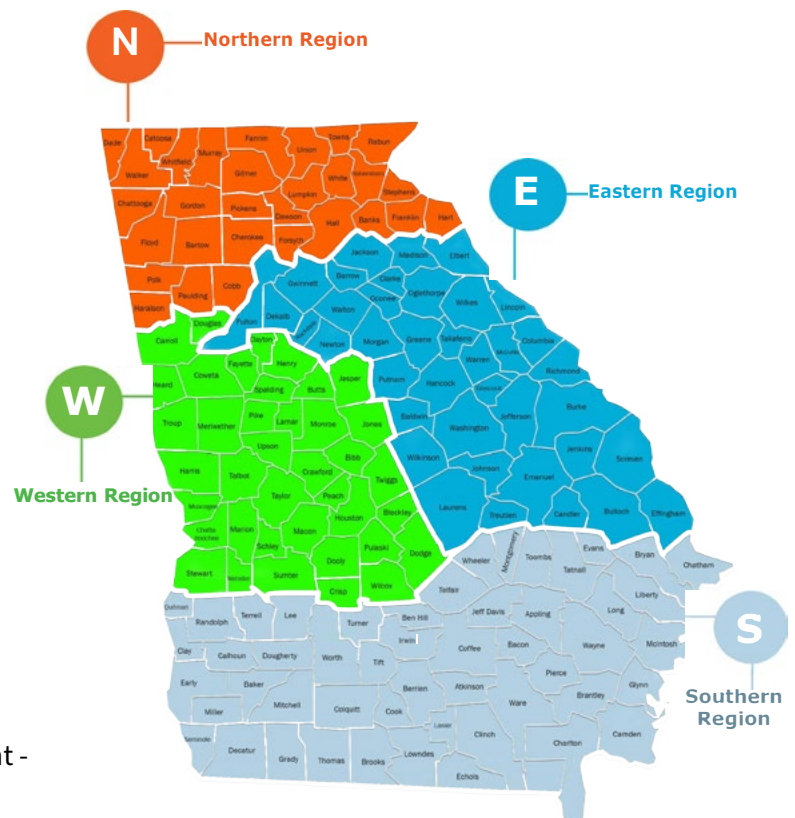
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