

RISK MANAGEMENT SAFETY AND LOSS CONTROL

THIS MONTH'S SAFETY EMPHASIS IS EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

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Risky Business

SAFETY & LOSS CONTROL NEWS — SEPTEMBER 2021

VOL 6, NO 9

Plan for the Unexpected

Emergencies and disasters can strike anyone, anytime, and anywhere. They can include events such as earthquakes, active violence threats, and wildfires. They can be



stressful, frightening situations that cause confusion, anxiety, and disorder. Emergencies at work can present a unique set of hazards and challenges, such as chemicals, workers at remote job sites, and large-scale facility evacuations. During an emergency, the first priority is always life safety. Preparedness helps people approach emergencies in a systematic, calm, controlled manner. It includes testing communication systems, plans for many groups to work together effectively, and systems to get people to a safe location. Effective emergency preparedness is key in minimizing the impacts these events can cause. Would *you* know what to do during a workplace emergency?

~Kayvan Vafa

by Norman Wright

A Step in the Wright Direction

Historians find no single cause for the War of 1812 (June 18, 1812 – February 16, 1815). It is attributed to a European war between Britain and France, a British embargo of United States goods bound for Europe, expansion of the United States into the Ohio River Valley



and its effect on the Canadian and French fur trade, and the searching of U.S. ships, military and commercial, for British deserters.

The Royal Navy stopping and seizing U.S. ships on the open sea and impressing sailors and passengers into the Royal Navy, including those with certificates of U.S. citizenship, was the primary or final straw resulting in the conflict.

The U.S. failed, however, to make adequate preparation for the conflict. Numerous times, our fledgling nation attempted to invade Canada and failed. We expected these invasions to

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Failing to

planning

plan is

to fail

Wright Direction continued...

be relatively easy. We had the notion that Canada represented the soft underbelly of the British Empire; overestimated our support among Canadians, and underestimated British power.

The U.S. militias were no match to the coalition of British troops. The U.S. lost battles repeatedly, even losing Fort Niagara, property within the U.S. boundaries. The British coalition consisted of British regulars, Voltigeurs Canadiens (French Canadians), First Nations and Métis (aboriginal Canadians), and the Black Corps (free and enslaved Canadians of African descent). The U.S. troops consisted of ill-prepared and poorly trained militias from the northern states. As a result, the U.S. lost the war with Canada. In preparing for disasters, we are much like the ill-prepared U.S. militias that fought the Canadians in the War of 1812. We make assumptions that may be incorrect and act upon them.



We live in a choice area in the Bay Area, a short drive from beaches and the mountains. Within a relatively short time, we can be skiing or surfing. We rely on Interstates and State highways to travel to our favorite destinations. Unfortunately, we also live in areas prone to natural disasters. Earthquakes, wildfires, droughts, floods, extreme weather, and even tsunamis are part of our heritage. We also have Public Safety Power Shutoffs (PSPS) disrupting our lives.

Are we prepared for future events, or are we presuming that these disasters will not be a problem like the Canadians? We have faced these disasters in the past and survived, but are we prepared for a new event? For example,

in 1989, we had a significant event in the Bay Area, disrupting lives and transportation. Thirty-two years later, are you any more prepared for the next earthquake?

This month is National Preparedness Month. National Preparedness Month is an observance each September to raise



awareness about the importance of preparing for disasters and emergencies that could happen at any time. <u>Ready.gov</u> has outlined four steps to prepare, assigning an effort to each week of the month.

(SEE WRIGHT DIRECTION PAGE 4)

FLU SEASON MEETS COVID-19 (THE SEQUEL)

Flu related illnesses, hospitalizations and death were drastically reduced last flu season thanks to increased vaccination rates, face coverings, and social distancing. In the 20/21 season, there were only 2,000 lab confirmed flu cases compared to the 19/20 season with 200,000. Flu-related hospitalizations were the lowest on record. The CDC recommends that virtually everyone six months and older get a flu shot. This year, they are recommending people get vaccinated early - by the end of October. This may overlap with getting the COVID-19 vaccination or the boosters, so talk with your healthcare provider about the timing that is right for you.

Other ways to ward off flu this season: avoid close contact with people who are sick, wash your hands frequently, and don't touch your eyes, nose, or mouth. We've seen how these preventive measures worked in significantly reducing illness, hospitalizations, and deaths related to flu last year; these same measures can prevent the spread of COVID-19 too. Let's stay safe again this year.



More info: https://cchealth.org/flu/

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County Community Warning System

In an emergency, timely information can save your life! The more notice you have to evacuate, the better the chances that you, your loved ones and pets can evacuate safely. The Contra Costa County Community Warning System (CWS), maintained by the Office of the



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Sheriff, is an all-hazards system, designed to alert the community of an emergency through multiple communication tools. To receive CWS alerts you must register your cell phone number or home phone number, home address, and email address. Your information will be kept confidential and will not be used for any other purpose other than for emergency alerts. To register for CWS, visit <u>www.coccocws.us</u> or call 925-655-0111 today! In addition to official CWS messages for evacuations, shelter-in-place orders and the like, local traditional and online media can be good resources.

Additional Resources

- Twitter Resources: CWS: @CoCoCWS, Fire: @Contracostafire, Sheriff: @cocosopio
- Contra Costa County Crisis Center: <u>www.crisis-center.org/211</u>
- Contra Costa County Public Information: <u>https://contracosta.ca.gov/</u>
- Contra Costa County Fire: <u>www.cccfpd.org/</u>
- Tune your radio to KCBS 740 AM

Wright Direction continued...

Week 1 September 6-10: Make a Plan

Talk to your friends and family about how you will communicate before, dur-WEEK ing, and after a disaster. Update your plan; include California Department of Public Health (CDPH) recommendations due to the coronavirus.

Week 2 September 13-17: Build a Kit

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WEEK Gather supplies for everyone living in your home that will last for at least 72 hours after a disaster. Do not forget the unique needs each person or pet may have in case you have to evacuate quickly, including medications.

Week 3 September 20-24: Low-Cost, No-Cost Preparedness

WEEK 3

Limit the impacts that disasters have on you and your family. Know the risk of disasters in your area. Learn how to make your home stronger in the face of storms and other common hazards. Check your insurance coverage to make sure it is up-to-date.

Week 4 September 26-30: Teach Youth about Preparedness

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Talk to family members about preparing for emergencies and what to do in case you are separated. Reassure them by providing information about how they can get involved.

Communication plays a crucial role in disaster preparedness. Not just in communicating to family and friends, but also in receiving information from civil authorities and the media. Lack of communication can have severe consequences.

The most significant land victory of the



War of 1812 was the Battle of New Orleans (January 8-26, 1815). The battle thwart ed a British effort to gain control of a critical American port at the mouth of the Mississippi and elevated Maj. Gen. Andrew Jackson to national fame and a future presidency. Sixty-two Americans and 2,032 British soldiers were among the causalities. However, the battle, because of poor communications, started 15 days after American and British negotiators in the Netherlands had signed the Treaty of Ghent on December 24, 1814. (Note: After receiving the treaty, the U.S. Senate ratified it on February 16, 1815.)

Stay connected with reliable emergency services information in your work and home areas. These communications will help you make timely, quality decisions in an emergency.**

Important Safety Training Dates for 2021

Most in-person training classes are still suspended, but there are plenty of safety training classes available online at Vector Solutions and the County's Intranet! We are also excited to present a new offering of classes via ZOOM meetings and hybrid combinations of online/skills demonstrations. Consider these safety and compliance classes: **General Coronavirus Training in Vector Solutions:**

- Courses Coronavirus 101 What You Need to Know (Newest Version)
- Courses Coronavirus 102 Preparing Your Household
- Courses Coronavirus 103 Managing Stress and Anxiety
- Courses Coronavirus 104 Transitioning to a Remote Workforce
- Courses Coronavirus 105 Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Workplace
- CCC COVID-19 Safety Training
- COVID-19 Reporting Positive Results to Public Health
- Tailgate CCC Emergency Evacuation Procedures during COVID-19

COVID-19 Training webinars at <u>COVID-19 Resources</u> on the County Intranet:

- COVID-19 Training: AB 685 & Cal/OSHA Emergency Regulations
- COVID-19 Prevention Program 03-23-2021
- COVID-19 Vaccination Webinar 09-02-2021

General Safety Training:

- CCC Injury and Illness Prevention Program (IIPP) Training
- CCC Wildfire Smoke Safety for Employees (Annual requirement)
- CCC Driver Safety Training
- CCC Office Ergonomics Awareness Training
- CCC Emergency Evacuation Procedures All County
- CCC HSD 2020 Workplace Violence Prevention
- TAILGATE Workplace violence
- Check Vector Solutions for Dates and Instructions • TAILGATE - Shelter in Place Procedures - Violence Log into the Vector Solutions website at

www.targetsolutions.com/ccc for the full list of

RERESHER CLASSES

AVAILABLE NOW!

ONLINE, ZOOM, and HYBRID classes available now!

Preparing for Public Safety Power Shutoffs

Many of us have seen preparedness alerts from Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E) regarding the potential for rolling blackouts. These outages (also known as Public Safety Power Shutoffs [PSPS]) are enacted when high fire danger conditions, such as excessive winds during heat waves, are present. Since power can remain out for extended periods of time, it is important to be prepared for these events. PG&E provides important steps that everyone should take to prepare for these

- Before the outage, set refrigerators/freezers to their coldest settings until power is restored
 Use coolers to keep food cold while the power is off
 - Limit opening refrigerator and freezer doors. When the power is off, food can be kept cold for up to 4 hours in refrigerators, 48 hours in freezers
 - Buy and keep shelf stable foods
- Have a backup key to replace electronic keys/badges
- Turn off/unplug appliances and equipment which may spark or surge when power is restored
- Buy a battery-powered or crank radio

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- Download or print documents you may need
- Locate free wi-fi locations in nearby areas
- Invest in portable mobile and laptop battery chargers (solar versions may be available)
- Charge cell phones & backup chargers in advance and stock up on batteries for key items you rely on
 - Consider purchasing battery-powered LED lights or solar lanterns
 - Consider the needs for pets
 - Keep cash on hand and fill up gas tanks
 - Leave a light on to alert you when power returns
 - Know how to manually open your garage door
 - Keep flashlights in reach
 - Ensure your electric vehicle's battery is fully charged
- Find space outside to use generators, camp stoves and charcoal grills
- Write emergency numbers down and keep them somewhere accessible
- Check on your neighbors
- Make sure backup power and generators are ready to safely operate and have extra gas on hand for generators





- Stock up on first-aid supplies
- Keep extra prescription and non-prescription medications on hand and easily accessible
- Plan for medications that require refrigeration
- Charge medical devices fully and have plans for backup power



Wildfire Preparedness - More Important Then Ever



Most Californian's have become aware of the dangers of wildfire. In recent years, Northern California has experienced devastating wildfires that have impacted the area and caused numerous fatalities. Contra Costa County has created a <u>Wildfire Preparedness and Evacuation Guide</u> to provide residents with an overview of the steps they can take to prepare themselves, their families and neighbors should an evacuation

become necessary. The guide contains important recommendations and safety tips all residents should review and implement to help protect themselves and their property if a wildfire occurs. It also contains methods to help prepare for evacuations and how to sign up for emergency alerts so you can stay informed during these emergencies. Information included in the guide includes:

- □ **Red Flag Warnings:** How to understand the warnings, what they mean, and actions to take when they are issued
- Preparing Your Home: Steps to take to protect your home before a wildfire begins, such as clearing dry vegetation (creating a defensible space)
- How to Create an Emergency Plan: Information on what should be included in your plan and how to create these plans to meet the needs of your family
- Planning for your Animals: Don't forget the pets! Includes tips on preparing when animals need to be evacuated and their supplies
- □ **How to Create a 'Go Kit:'** How to create a grab-and-go emergency kit
- □ **How to Stay Informed:** Methods to stay informed when evacuation orders are issued
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Contra Costa County Residents Guide

- □ **The Importance of Knowing Your Neighbors:** Tips to help you and your neighbors work together to keep each other safe
- □ **Tips for Evacuations:** What to do when an evacuation order is issued
- □ Cues for First Responders: Signs for your home in an evacuation
- □ **Preparing for Power Outages:** Steps and supplies to prepare for outages
- D Preparing for Other Hazards: Helpful tips on other emergencies such as earthquakes

Check out Cal Fire's Ready, Set, Go video: https://www.readyforwildfire.org/prepare-for-wildfire/ready-set-go/

Earthquakes: The Hazards and Impacts

Earthquakes can cause immediate hazards and impact communities for days, weeks, even years after they occur. Understand the hazards and potential impacts of earthquakes - can you think of any others? Prepare your home, furnishings, family, and supplies now for safety and comfort for at least 72 hours after an earthquake emergency.





Know the Locations of Emergency Equipment

During an emergency at a County facility, it is important to know the location(s) of key safety equipment. Depending upon the nature of the emergency, workers may need to quickly access



this equipment to assist other employees, extinguish small fires, or provide first-aid. Since the availability and location of emergency equipment varies from facility to facility, it is important to review your facility's available emergency supplies and their locations so you can be prepared and react quickly. Prompt response in an emergency can not only help minimize the impacts these emergencies can cause, but also reduce the severity of injuries when prompt firstaid is provided. Emergency equipment which may be available at your facility include those shown to the left. Know the locations of such equipment in your facility before an emergency occurs!

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Plan to take part in the Great Shakeout Earthquake Drill scheduled for 10/21/21 at 10:21 am

Resource links on the Shakeout.org website you may find important to review:

- <u>Seven Steps to Earthquake Safety</u> describes what to do in various situations, no matter where you are when you feel earthquake shaking.
- Earthquake Safety Videos
- Earthquake Country Alliance documents, videos, and graphics for Seniors and People with Disabilities (https://www.earthquakecountry.org/accessibility/)
- Recommended Earthquake Safety Actions For Parents and Care Providers of Young Children and Infants (PDF)
- Information from the <u>California Earthquake Authority</u> on tips to strengthen your homes and insurance options to reduce financial risk with details on <u>structural</u> <u>risks and how to strengthen your house</u> against earthquake damage.

What NOT to do:

- DO NOT get in a doorway! An early earthquake photo is a collapsed adobe home with the door frame as the only standing part. From this came our belief that a doorway is the safest place to be during an earthquake. In modern houses and buildings, doorways are no safer, and they do not protect you from flying or falling objects. Get under a table instead!
- **DO NOT run outside!** Trying to run in an earthquake is dangerous, as the ground is moving and you can easily fall or be injured by debris or glass. Running outside is especially dangerous, as glass, bricks, or other building components may be falling. You are much safer to stay inside and get under a table.
- DO NOT believe the so-called "triangle of life"! In recent years, an e-mail has circulated which recommends potentially life threatening actions, and the source has been discredited by leading experts. <u>Read our special report</u> to learn more.

WATCH EARTHQUAKE SAFETY VIDEOS!

https://www.youtube.com/watch? v=GSDmqLQmMN0&list=PLs1gMujRSBY2t7JB4V S-AymFwN-6Lvg20&index=4





TRAINING TIME

...is all the time!

Compliance Trainings

Workplace Diversity

Upcoming Trainings (2021)

Implicit Bias Awareness (Zoom)

• Tuesday, September 28th

Implicit Bias for Supervisors and Managers (Zoom)

• Thursday, September 30th

Email <u>Ivy Hughes</u> for enrollment.

Training Time Resources

- See in the Lens of Diversity
- Putting Yourself in Someone
 Else's Shoes

Training Unit Contacts

Training Assistant

Ivy Hughes

rmintern@riskm.cccounty.us

Training Manager

Ron Martin

ron.martin@riskm.cccounty.us

Through the Lenses of Diversity: Looking Beyond Compliance

Aside from being a compliance training that must be completed every three years, the Workplace Diversity training has immeasurable value as it provides a foundation upon which selfreflection and a reshaping of the workplace can occur. Have experiences at your organization led you to become more understanding of differences between yourself and your coworkers? Has it been easy to get to know people with backgrounds different from your own at your organization? Do employees of different backgrounds interact well? Is there a demonstrated commitment to meeting the needs of employees with disabilities? Are employees of different ages valued equally?¹ Answers to questions such as these can signal the state of diversity and inclusion in our workplace, and help us strategize ways to make it more diverse and inclusive for everyone.

How do diversity and inclusion help the organization? By bringing greater innovation and creativity, providing a vast range of skills, boosting productivity, and increasing customer insights, diversity and inclusion raise employee satisfaction, increase the size of the talent pool from which employees are selected, attract the best talent, and contribute to higher revenues.² Supporting these points is a 2018 McKinsey & Company study that found that "gender-diverse companies [perform] 21% better than the national average" and "ethnically and racially diverse companies had 43% higher profits." Additionally, these companies

outperformed-by 33%-the companies whose staff demographics matched the national average.³

"Diversity is about counting heads. Inclusion is about making heads count."

We hear the terms "diversity" and "inclusion" all the time in today's workplace, but what do they really mean? As Dr. Steven Jones, one of America's top experts on diversity, states in the video "See in the Lens of Diversity" (linked under "Training Time Resources" in the left-hand column), "Diversity is about counting heads. Inclusion is about making heads count." In other words,



diversity refers to the acknowledgement and understanding of similarities and differences among people in the workplace. *Inclusion* involves having representation present from all company sectors when forming and executing a diversity program in the workplace.⁴ To further illustrate the difference between diversity and inclusion, if a department's staff reflects the labor force in Contra Costa County (i.e. about 51% of the County's labor force is female, and 51% of the department is female; about 26% of the County's labor force is Hispanic or Latino, and 26% of the department is Hispanic or Latino, etc.⁵), the department is diverse. Being *inclusive* requires that the knowledge and feedback of the diverse populations be solicited when decisions are being made, and that their insights be implemented in organizational processes. If you are working on a community project, who has had a voice in the plans, made suggestions, and provided feedback? If you spend a lot of time on a team or in a working group, does everyone on your team have an equal opportunity to complete tasks and provide information? If you have ever had a project that you were *really* enthusiastic about fall flat with the target audience, consider: Were all of the stakeholders' perspectives solicited, considered, and valued when the project was being developed? In reflecting on these scenarios, we begin to discover where diversity and inclusion gaps may be occurring in our organization-and we have taken the first step towards filling those gaps.

With the knowledge that diversity and inclusion shortcomings exist, how do we increase diversity and inclusion in our organization? One important avenue to be explored is education. Training can reduce biases long-term, and the Workplace Diversity compliance training on Vector Solutions is a great place to start! Promoting awareness and encouraging acceptance, the Workplace Diversity training describes strategies for creating a positive and accepting work environment.⁴ To assign the Workplace Diversity training to yourself and complete it, log into Vector Solutions at http://www.targetsolutions.com/ccc. Type "Workplace Diversity" into the search bar and click on the course when it appears in the box below the search bar. Click on "Launch Course," and the training will begin. Vector Solutions are self-paced, meaning that your progress will be saved if you choose to complete a training in more than one sitting. If you need to navigate back to a training, log in to Vector Solutions and click on "My Assignments" in the left-hand column of the Home page. Click on the desired training, and you will be able to

continue from your previous stopping point.

Another way to increase your awareness of your own biases and learn methods for addressing them in the workplace is to enroll in an Implicit Bias Awareness (IBA) training or an Implicit Bias for Supervisors and Managers (IBSM) training (if you are supervisory personnel). While they are not compliance trainings, the Implicit Bias trainings are recommended for the deeper insight that they provide into our own biases, how they affect the workplace, and how we can better address those biases. Implicit Bias training dates are listed in the "Upcoming Trainings" section of the column on the left-hand side of the first page of this article, and they are also posted on the Vector Solutions Bulletin Board. To enroll in an Implicit Bias training, send an email to <u>Ivy Hughes</u>. Please note that there is a prerequisite of Workplace Diversity for IBA, and prerequisites are available on Vector Solutions.

Finally, in the left-hand column of this article–under "Training Time Resources"–are links to videos that provide additional information and different ways to think about diversity and inclusion.

Sources:

- ¹ Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Survey
- ²<u>8 Reasons Why Diversity And Inclusion Are Essential To Business Success</u>
- ³ What's To Come In 2021 For Diversity, Equity And Inclusion In The Workplace
- ⁴ Vector Solutions Workplace Diversity Training
- ⁵ Contra Costa County, California, United States Census Bureau (2020)





Help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases like COVID-19

WASH YOUR HANDS

Wash your hands with soap and warm water regularly.



COVER A COUGH OR SNEEZE

Cover your cough or sneeze with your sleeve, or tissue. Dispose of tissue and wash your hands afterward.

DON'T TOUCH

Avoid touching eyes, nose or mouth, especially with unwashed hands.





KEEP YOUR DISTANCE

Avoid close contact with people who are sick.

STAY HOME

If you experience respiratory symptoms like a cough or fever, stay home.

GET HEL

If you experience symptoms of COVID-19 (cough, fever, shortness of breath), call your health care provider or local health department before seeking care.

MORE INFORMATION

Follow the California Department of Public Health: @capublichealth and www.cdph.ca.gov/covid19



Seasonal Safety: Fall



With Summer coming to a close, Fall is quickly approaching. While the new season is full of fun activities and events, it also brings its own unique set of seasonal hazards and safety concerns at

work. Cooler weather brings relief from the summer heat, but changes in the weather, such as rain and fog, can increase the chances of vehicle incidents. Falling leaves can cover the ground, making slips, trips, and falls more likely. Shorter days

can also increase the dangers for employees who may be working or driving in the dark. Addressing fall workplace safety topics, such as those listed below, by discussing them at your next safety meeting, is a great way to ensure that everyone stays safe and enjoys the season.

Avoid Slips, Trips, Falls

Employees may track in water and wet leaves, leading to slippery floors and the potential for trips and falls. Outdoor surfaces like walkways can also become very slippery. This fall workplace safety hazard can be remedied with a variety of simple fixes. For instance, place industrial-strength mats near doors, clean walkways regularly to remove leaf accumulation, and post signs alerting employees and visitors of slippery floors.

Prevent Cold and Flu

Cold and flu season is here, and with it the risk of spreading illness around the workplace. Cold and flu prevention is key, such as encouraging sick workers to take a day off or work remotely, and offering easy access to hand sanitizer and cleaning supplies. Cover your mouth when coughing or sneezing, and dispose of tissues in the trash. See the <u>Health Services Flu website</u> for more information.

Driver Safety

The transition from summer to fall means many changes in road conditions. These include slick roads due to rain, standing water on roadways, or slippery streets lined with frost or ice. Remind employees to be aware of potential hazards and drive defensively, and review autumn driving tips for a refresher on best practices. Check vehicle tire pressures and wiper blade condition. In addition, the darkness makes it challenging to see pedestrians and bikers, so drivers should be especially vigilant in sharing the road.

Prepare for Colder Temperatures

Fall brings with it cooler temperatures, so whether your workplace is an office or warehouse, you'll likely be adjusting the thermostat. Remind employees who work outside, or in chilly indoor environments, of the risks of lower temperatures and the importance of dressing appropriately and taking warm up breaks. Also ensure that employees know what to do in case of inclement weather.

