Enjoying Water Recreation Responsibly

With summer in full swing now, many of us will find ourselves enjoying numerous activities that come with the season. Naturally, water recreation comes to mind when we think of the summertime. I wanted to share with you some information that I hope will help you and your families fully enjoy your summer water activities as safely as possible. I am inspired to write this article because recently, my 10 year old daughter and I had an exciting, yet dangerous adventure near some swift moving water (less than one foot deep) while we were hiking here in the Western NC Mountains. Had it not been for her quick wits, our story might not have had a happy ending.

Many of the things we consider enjoyable and “everyday” activities bring with them some of the most hazardous situations we face. Whether we’re swimming with the kids at the pool, beach, or nearby swimming hole, it is always important to remind ourselves of the hazards we face when we are around water so that we can enjoy our off time as much and as safely as possible. It is always a good idea to refresh our memories in order to maintain a safe playing environment whenever we may find ourselves near the water this summer.

Swimming Safety

The hazards associated with owning or visiting a swimming pool are quite obvious; however, drowning statistics really do reveal just how serious the dangers really are. It is vitally important to never leave children unattended near swimming pools, lakes and rivers, and to make sure in situations where lifeguards are not present that a competent adult is always present to ensure the safety of children playing in and around the water. After auto accidents, drowning is the second leading cause of injury related accidental death for children ages 1 to 14. The following are water safety tips and statistics from the Center for Disease Control.

Barriers around household swimming pools are essential to keeping young children away from the water. Did you know that a four-sided isolation fence provides an 83% decrease in the risk of children drowning as opposed to a traditional three sided property-line fence?

The majority of drownings among children between the ages of 1 and 4 happen in residential swimming pools. In most of these cases, the children had been out of sight for less than five minutes and were in the care of at least one parent. Be sure pool gates remain locked and that children playing in the water are under adult supervision at all times. If a child goes missing and there is a pool nearby, always check the pool first. If a child is drowning, every second is vital to their survival and recovery.

Water settings like the ocean, lakes and rivers are a bigger risk for older individuals, often because hazards like rip currents and swift water aren’t easily seen and are often ignored. In 65% of the drowning incidents involving those 15 years and older, natural water settings are where the accidents occurred. Familiarize yourself with the hazardous nature of whatever water settings you are enjoying and never underestimate the incredible power of moving water, even if it looks safe on the surface.

Never go boating without proper life jackets, and be sure children wear their life vests at all times. Approximately 70% of fatalities related to boating are due to drowning, and of those, 90% of the drownings occurred to individuals not wearing life jackets.

Alcohol and water recreation do not mix. In up to one half of adolescent and adult deaths related to water activities, alcohol is involved. Keep in mind that being out in the sun heightens the effects of alcohol.
New Recycling Rules Take Effect July 1

Being at an institution of higher learning, you can’t avoid it: it’s quiz time! Pick the wastes that are banned from landfills in our State:

- Aluminum Cans
- Glass Containers
- Hard Bound Books
- Newspapers
- Phone Books
- Plastic Bottles
- Cell Phone Batteries

Because of their reuse potential and the recycling capacity that was available, North Carolina began banning the following wastes from landfills as early as 1990: aluminum cans, plastic bottles [those are the only two listed above], antifreeze, lead-acid batteries, oyster shells, motor oil & filters, white goods, tires, wooden pallets, and yard waste.

Beginning on July 1st, the list will grow to include televisions, computer equipment, and --for community colleges and other State institutions--mercury-containing thermostats and fluorescent lamps.

Recycling computer parts and TVs is pretty simple. When its their time to go, call one of the vendors on the State recycling contract and set a date for them to drop by.

Recycling Program Elements

Community colleges (and all other State institutions) that have unserviceable thermostats or burned out fluorescent lamps must have a program in place that includes the following three components:

1. point of contact
2. compliance, and
3. status report.

First, a point of contact for your school must be identified. Their name, email address, and other contact information must be provided to NC DENR. This can be done on the web at: www.surveymonkey.com/s/HNLYJTX. The main role for this person is to share any emails or correspondence from DENR with the proper individual(s) on-campus.

Procedures for compliance with the accumulation and recycling rules is the next component. These procedures must address the collection, safe storage, and proper recycling of these items along with the arrangements that are in place with recycling vendors. They should be also be written and understood by all whose job responsibilities over-lap with some aspect of this program.

For your convenience, the collection and storage rules that apply to most if not all of the NCCCS’ schools, i.e., the rules for “small quantity handlers,” are included at the end of this article. Simply put those in a folder along with a copy of the State recycling contract for lamps and mercury-containing articles (Term Contract No. 926B, which is the same contract for battery recycling) and a statement of how your employees will be trained to understand their recycling responsibilities, and the written procedures for your compliance program will be in place.

A status report is the final component of the program. The law states that every regulated State entity will have to report on their compliance status by December 1st. As of press time (I’ve always wanted to say that) DENR did not know what form that report will take, but according to Joe Fitzpatrick, DENR’s answer man for this program, your college’s point of contact will be emailed with additional information this fall.

If you would like communicate with Mr. Fitzpatrick directly, he can be reached by telephone at (919) 715-6499 and by email at Joseph.Fitzpatrick@ncdenr.gov

Collection and Storage

Lamps and thermostats must be containerized when taken out of service.

Containers must be marked with the date the first item was put in the container and the words:
- “Universal Waste”
- “Used Fluorescent Lamps” or
- “Used Mercury-Containing Thermostats”

Containers must be kept closed unless in use.

Containers must be disposed of within one (1) year from accumulation start date.
Job Safety Analysis (JSA) Work Sheet

At our 2011 EHSI Spring Safety Conference held at Pitt Community College on April 28, 2011 we had a presentation on JSAs. We were going to have the presentation and a short workshop to develop a JSA, but our programs were running a bit long and the JSA workshop didn’t happen, so you all thought you successfully avoid the JSA worksheet. Not so. We are going to give you another opportunity to view the JSA worksheet.

Most JSA worksheets are very similar and the worksheet used here is the same as the worksheet given out at the EHSI Conference. It contains the usual blocks for the filing and historical Who, What, Why and When. We typed the form just so you don’t have to try and decipher my printing, but a written form is usually much quicker. Also, we want to remember that we have a few JSA’s to do campus-wide so we don’t want to make the job a career. The JSAs can be done quickly, reviewed and implemented. Then if additional areas, items or corrections are seen you can quickly do another JSA. That’s the great thing about the JSA analysis it’s not etched in stone it is very “F-L-E-X-I-B-L-E.”

The JSA worksheet inserted in this newsletter is a JSA worksheet for a Custodian’s job/tasks. The worksheet is not 100% complete for most custodians and it wasn’t intended to be complete, but it will give you a basic understanding of how the JSA worksheet should look and what information it will contain.

Lastly you can read about and study JSA’s for a long time or you can just go out and do it. The just doing it will get a lot more done and you’ll find you learn something new with each JSA you do.

US Labor Department Launches National Outreach Campaign To Protect Workers From Heat-Related Illnesses

WASHINGTON – Secretary of Labor Hilda L. Solis today will announce, from Anaheim, Calif., a national outreach initiative by the U.S. Department of Labor’s Occupational Safety and Health Administration to educate workers and their employers about the hazards of working outdoors in the heat and steps needed to prevent heat-related illnesses.

"As we move into the summer months, it is very important for workers and employers to take the steps necessary to stay safe in extreme heat,” said OSHA Assistant Secretary Dr. David Michaels. "Drinking water often, taking breaks and limiting time in the heat are simple, effective ways to prevent heat illness."

Heat can be a real danger for workers in jobs ranging from agriculture and landscaping to construction, road repair, airport baggage handling and even car sales. OSHA has developed heat illness educational materials in English and Spanish, as well as a curriculum to be used for workplace training. Additionally, a new Web page provides information and resources on heat illness – including how to prevent it and what to do in case of an emergency – for workers and employers. The page is available at http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/heatillness/index.html.

Federal OSHA has worked closely with the California Occupational Safety and Health Administration to adapt materials from that state’s successful outreach campaign on heat illness for use in this national effort. In addition, OSHA is now partnering with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration on weather service alerts that will incorporate worker safety precautions when heat alerts are issued across the U.S. NOAA also will include pertinent worker safety information on its Heat Watch Web page at http://www.noaawatch.gov/themes/heat.php.

OSHA will leverage relationships with other state and local partners, employers, trade organizations, unions, community groups, educational institutions and health care professionals to disseminate training materials, and educate workers and employers, on the hazards of working in the heat and how to prevent heat-related illnesses.
EHSI East Safety Conference at Pitt Community College

EHSI held their annual Safety Conference for the eastern community colleges on April 28 at Pitt Community College. The western conference will be held on October 26 at Blue Ridge Community College in Flat Rock.

EHSI CONTACT INFORMATION
Web Site: http://www.blueridge.edu/ehsi/
EHSI Staff:
Allen McCullough  
828-694-1749  
jamesmc@blueridge.edu
Chuck Arrowood  
828-694-1738  
jc_arrowood@blueridge.edu
David Martin  
828-694-1759  
dm_martin@blueridge.edu
Ruth Kidd  
828-694-1767  
ruthk@blueridge.edu

Ask EHSI

Answers to standards or regulations questions that are researched by the EHSI staff.

Q What are the fire drill requirements for high school students in the Early College program?

A The state fire marshal’s office requires a quarterly fire drill for high school students attending early college on our campuses. All other students should participate in an annual drill. In either case, records of the drills should be kept on file. Your local fire marshal or fire chief may assist you in preparing for these drills.

EHSI SafetyNet Training Schedule

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