

# Welcome Back – *Safely*

Summer vacation is over for ten month employees. The job of cleaning facilities is over for the twelve month custodial/maintenance staff. The office staff's quiet summer schedules are back to normal. Welcome back to the beginning of another school year.

The summer routine is over and the new school year routine is about to begin. This transition is disruptive to everyone's schedule. The last thing on your mind is safety awareness.

Safety awareness means having the right attitude about safety - both your own and your coworker's safety. Safety awareness can help prevent injury, illness and accidental damage to school property.

Safety awareness begins with an attitude and commitment to safety by everyone in the organization. The school board must make safety a priority by setting policy and establishing goals for the top administrators of the district. The administrative staff must implement the school board's policies and insist that safety be a priority element of the decision making process. All staff personnel, both teaching and support, must follow safety rules and procedures as well as proactively support the safety effort as outlined by the school district administrators. It is each person's responsibility to act each and every time a hazardous act or condition is observed. Regardless of the situation, there is always an appropriate way to handle it so that safety is considered with the priority it deserves.

Your willingness to take the time to help prevent accidents is a direct measure of your safety awareness and attitude. With everyone pitching in, the burden of identifying and remediating unsafe acts and conditions is reduced to a manageable level.

Although formal safety inspections should be performed at least quarterly, each person should be responsible for eyeballing their own work area weekly. These informal inspections will help spot and eliminate hazards before they have a chance to cause problems.

Remember, safety awareness requires foresight and sound judgment. Employees who are safety conscious are alert and practice good safety habits. Safety awareness is one way you can control your own safety on the job.

Enjoy this time of transition, ***but do it safely.*** •

What safety awareness means:

Looking out for unsafe conditions in your work area.

Looking out for unsafe acts.

Learning how to work safely.

Observing the motto, "Safety First".

Working safely every day and in every phase of your work.

Knowing how to handle emergencies quickly and effectively.

# WETIP RESOURCES

**As a WeTip member**, your school has obtained a tool that has been serving communities since 1972. It will enable you to effectively combat school crimes using the WeTip anonymous hotline system 1-800-78-CRIME.

**The WeTip hotline system** is staffed 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, with 60 trained operators taking anonymous tips and relaying that information immediately to local law enforcement and school district contacts identified by the school district upon registering.

**The WeTip Anonymous Hotline** is Your Hotline to **USE**.

**Use the 800 number** in your internal newsletters, memos, etc., to let your school personnel know that you now have an anonymous hotline system.

**Use the 800 number** in all of your public relations literature. Let your school personnel know you are taking steps to make your school district the safest place possible for them.

**Post the “Crime Prevention Reporting Posters”** with WeTip hotline number in conspicuous areas for students, teachers, and other school personnel to see. They can call WeTip without fearing retaliation or reprisal.

**Post WeTip’s metal (all weather/reflective/graffiti resistant) signs** in at least two locations in your parking lot.

**Include the WeTip anonymous hotline number** in your press releases and media reports to reassure students, teachers, and other school personnel they can report crime without fear.

**Attend one of the complimentary seminars** hosted by WeTip to help you to better utilize WeTip and to answer your questions about WeTip’s newest programs.

**Anyone with information about any criminal suspect or missing child** can use the WeTip Website, [www.wetip.com](http://www.wetip.com), to submit a tip electronically by filling out the “submit tip” form.

Contact Marty Kalbach at 609-386-6060 extension 3024 or [mkalbach@njsbaig.org](mailto:mkalbach@njsbaig.org) with questions.

## Test Your Stroke IQ

Did you know that stroke affects four out of five people, either you or someone you know? Check your knowledge about this life-threatening event. Knowing these surprising facts could save your life of someone you love. **True or False:**

Stroke is also known as a “brain attack.”

Stroke is an old person’s worry.

There are ways to tell if someone’s have a stroke.

Stroke is the leading cause of adult disability.  
Once a stroke starts, it can't be stopped.  
You can't prevent stroke. **Answers below.**

**Answers:**

**True.** Experts sometimes refer to stroke as "brain attack" in the hope that people will regard it with the same urgency as a heart attack.

**False.** Nearly a third of strokes occur in people under age 65.

**True.** Symptoms may include weakness, numbness or paralysis on one side of the face, arm or leg; sudden blurred or decreased vision; difficulty speaking or understanding simple statements; dizziness; sudden severe, unexplainable headache. **Quick test:** See whether the person can answer a simple question, such as "Can you hear me?"

**True.** It's also the third leading cause of death.

**False.** Emergency medical help may include a clot-busting drug that works if given during the first three hours of an attack. Quick action is most important.

**False.** The National Stroke Association says 80 percent of strokes are preventable. *Some factors that can help lower your risks:* Keep your blood pressure under control (nearly one-third of people with high blood pressure don't know they have it), keep your cholesterol in check, know whether you have an irregular heartbeat known as atrial fibrillation and quit smoking. •

Claims Corner Article:

## **Workers' Compensation Claim Petitions, Informal Hearing Notices and Complaints Filed with the Labor Commission**

As the new school year approaches, we would like to provide information regarding legal actions which may be brought against an employer, by an employee who alleges an on-the-job injury. It is important for our membership to recognize the various forms, so that if they are received they can be expedited to the proper parties for handling.

A Claim Petition is a legal proceeding filed with the Division of Workers' Compensation. A Petition must be assigned to defense counsel and answered within 30 days. A Petition is filed by an attorney representing an employee for:

Monetary compensation for a permanent injury sustained while working for an employer.

Medical expenses for unauthorized treatment.

Payment of lost time benefits on a questionable claim. **If a Claim Petition is received, it should be forwarded to NJSBAIG immediately.**

An Informal Hearing Notice is filed by an employee, without attorney representation, to address minor concerns, such as, an unpaid bill or monetary compensation for a minor injury. This action involves only the employee, the Judge and a representative of the Employer. These matters are usually settled with one court date. No answer is required on an Informal; the Judge will notify all parties of the hearing date. **If an Informal Hearing Notice is received, it should be forwarded to NJSBAIG immediately.**

A Complaint filed with the Labor Commission is usually for reinstatement of sick time on a denied or questionable claim. These complaints are not covered under the Workers' Compensation Policy and should be expedited to the Board Attorney for handling. They usually will not be heard until after the Workers' Compensation claim is settled.

Should you have any questions, feel free to contact me at extension 3008 or Connie Rogers, at extension 3015.□

*Nancy Spector*  
*NJSBAIG Claim Supervisor*

## **WORKERS' COMPENSATION ACCIDENTS** **7/1/2006—6/30/2007**

Personnel	Frequency % of Claims		Cause	Frequency % of Claims
Educator	35.5		Fall Same Level	21.1
Educator Aide	18.4		Overexertion	16.1
Custodian	17.8		Special Education Acting Out	15.7
Office Worker	5.4		Struck By	13.7
Cafeteria	3.9		Struck Against	9.1
Educator Athletic	3.7		Fall Different Level	8.7
Trades	3.5		Student Altercation	3.8
Bus Driver	3.1		Internal/Sudden	2.5
Administrator	2.3		Caught Between	2.3
Other	6.4		Other	7.0

As usual the teachers led the way in accident frequency. (35.5) The custodians were third (17.8), but they only account for approximately 7% of the work hours. Therefore, the custodial rate of accident frequency is higher. Both teachers and custodians should be included in your safety program. □

*By Marty Kalbach*  
*NJSBAIG Loss Control Manager*

## **New School Chemistry Laboratory Safety Guide** ***Now Available On-line***

In 1984, the Council of State Science Supervisors, in association with the U. S. Consumer Product Safety Commission and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, published the safety guide, *School Science Laboratories: A Guide to Some Hazardous Substances*, to help science teachers identify hazardous substances that may be used in school laboratories and provide an inventory of these substances.

Because school science curricula have changed since then, the safety guide has been updated and revised to reflect those changes. This guide on safety in the chemistry laboratory was also written to provide high school chemistry teachers with an easy-to-read reference to create a safe learning environment in the laboratory for their students. The document attempts to provide teachers, and ultimately their students, with

information so that they can take the appropriate precautionary actions in order to prevent or minimize hazards, harmful exposures, and injuries in the laboratory.

The guide presents information about ordering, using, storing and maintaining chemicals in the high school laboratory. The guide also provides information about chemical waste, safety and emergency equipment, assessing chemical hazards, common safety symbols and signs, and fundamental resources relating to chemical safety, such as Material Safety Data Sheets and Chemical Hygiene Plans, to help create a safe environment for learning. In addition, checklists are provided for both teachers and students that highlight important information for working in the laboratory and identify hazards and safe work procedures.

This guide is not intended to address all safety issues, but rather to provide basic information about important components of safety in the chemistry laboratory and to serve as a resource to locate further information. •

*Nancy A Nord  
Acting Chairman,  
U. S. Consumer Product Safety Commission*

*John Howard, M. D.  
Director,  
National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health*

**Resource/Web Link:** Use the following link to get the complete “School Chemistry Laboratory Safety Guide”: [www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2007-107/pdfs/2007-107.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2007-107/pdfs/2007-107.pdf)

## Driver’s Record Checks

**M**ost district administrators are aware they are required to complete a driver’s license check of all bus drivers employed by their district. However, many are unaware the district can be exposed to liability from a driver who is on district business driving their own vehicle.

The employee’s policy is primary while driving their vehicle on board of education business. All employees driving their personal vehicle for board of education business should be fully appraised of that situation.

If the employee’s limits are exhausted, the board of education’s auto policy is secondary coverage. For this reason, a district should be aware of the driving record of all drivers who operate vehicles while on school business.

The district should discuss this issue with their board solicitor and insurance agent before developing a policy to address this issue. •

*By Tony Jones  
NJSBAIG Senior Loss Control Representative*