

Safety 1st

Florida Department of Financial Services

Division of Risk Management

200 East Gaines Street

Tallahassee, Florida 32399

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SAFETY & LOSS PREVENTION Outlook

ISSUE 3 | VOLUME 5 | MAY - JUNE 2014

A Focus on Safety Best Practices

The 2014 hurricane season is here! Is your agency or university prepared? In this issue of the *Safety and Loss Prevention Outlook* newsletter, find out how social media—such as Govtwit.com and Facebook—may provide the communication tools you need to improve your hurricane preparedness program. In our Safety Spotlight, we talk one-on-one with Division of Emergency Management’s State Meteorologist Amy Godsey.

Safety awareness is a key best practice—we will additionally tell you why June is the perfect time to promote safety. Check out these stories and much more in this May/June 2014 issue of the *Safety and Loss Prevention Outlook* newsletter. As always, we look forward to your feedback on how we are doing. You may submit feedback or story ideas and articles to the following email address:

statelosspreventionprogram@myfloridacfo.com.

A Focus on Safety Best Practices: Part 2 Safety Awareness

“A focus on Safety Best Practices” is a three-part feature series where the Division of Risk Management takes an in-depth look at the importance of three key safety best practices. In the first installment, we looked at management commitment as a key best practice to any safety program. In this second installment, we examine the importance of promoting safety awareness.

Although accidents and injuries happen in the workplace daily, many of these incidents can be reduced or even prevented. One key best practice in preventing workplace accidents is a strong commitment to promoting safety awareness on a consistent and continuous basis.

As an agency or university safety coordinator, you know safety awareness involves making sure your employees are aware of circumstances, situations, and practices which can cause unsafe working conditions. However, the problem many safety coordinators face is making sure their safety awareness message and efforts are being promoted on a continuous basis. For instance, how often do employees at your agency or university think about safety? Do your employees think about safety at all times, including when they are at home and at work? If safety issues are only covered with employees during new employee orientation, but given little attention afterwards, employees will not consider safety as a top priority. In fact, if employees do not receive continuous safety messages, then the only time they will consider safety a top priority is when they have suffered an accident or injury.

Continued on next page

SAFETY & LOSS PREVENTION OUTLOOK

Once employees have suffered an accident, it is too late to focus on the safety issues that could have prevented the accident from happening in the first place, which is why promoting safety awareness on a continuous basis is a critical safety best practice. Increasing awareness of safety on a daily basis can not only help prevent injuries and keep workers safe from harm, but also saves the organization money in workers' compensation costs.

One agency with an outstanding safety awareness program is the Florida Department of the Lottery. Mr. Larry Ochalek, Alternate Safety Coordinator with the Department of the Lottery, says that the Florida Lottery takes the safety of their employees very seriously and is committed to an ongoing safety program consisting primarily of safety awareness activities. "We strive to cultivate an institutional philosophy of safety awareness at the core level, and we continuously message our employees with safety awareness reminders, tips, and best practices which help our employees remain cognizant of job hazards," said Mr. Ochalek.

A FOCUS ON SAFETY BEST PRACTICES



"If we did all the things we are capable of, we would astound ourselves."

~Thomas Edison

There are several safety awareness activities the Department of the Lottery performs; however, one safety awareness activity that gets a lot of positive feedback from their employees is the department's *Weekly Safety Minute* message. The *Weekly Safety Minute* message is an email that is sent out every Monday to all Lottery employees. Mr. Ochalek said that this weekly safety message is very important, because almost half of the employees are Lottery sales representatives who are on the road—when they receive the *Weekly Safety Minute* message first thing each Monday morning on their blackberry or computer, it sets the safety tone for the week and gets employees off to a good start. In addition to the *Weekly Safety Minute*, the Department of the Lottery reinforces its safety message through *Monthly Safety Tips* and *Safety Notes* sent to their Safety Awareness Committee members, and quarterly Safety Awareness Committee conference calls. Also, the department's Safety Awareness Committee members work diligently to ensure they are promoting safety awareness at the local level. "We found that what works best for promoting safety awareness is repetition and reinforcement of our agency safety motto to "Keep Safety First" through the use of email and other methods," said Mr. Ochalek.

Mr. Ochalek added that he encourages safety coordinators to praise employees for pointing out a safety issue that needs resolving. Mr. Ochalek says he praises an employee who brings him tips on topics such as how to safely unload promotional materials from a Lottery van without hurting his/her back or how to avoid a slip-and-fall injury. "If it is important enough for them to call you with an issue or share a safety tip, it is important enough for you to praise those efforts," said Mr. Ochalek.

Safety awareness is a key safety best practice, which must be done on a consistent and continuous basis if you want to see significant results. "I believe that because we are proactive and involved in strong safety awareness efforts at such a deep level, we have steadily reduced the frequency and severity of accidents over the years," said Mr. Ochalek.



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Department of Environmental Protection Secretary Vinyard Communicates Safety as a Top Agency Priority

In the first installment of our three-part feature series titled “*A Focus on Safety Best Practices*,” we discussed the importance of management commitment. In addition to the feature article on management commitment which can be found in our March/April 2014 newsletter issue, we would like to share with you an April 3rd safety message sent out by Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) agency head Secretary Herschel T. Vinyard, Jr. to all DEP employees.

The Division of Risk Management, State of Florida Loss Prevention Program (SFLPP) thanks Secretary Vinyard for his commitment to safety, and extends a special thank you to DEP Safety Coordinator Jeff Loflin and his entire safety team in making sure DEP employees think about safety first, last, and always. With special permission from DEP, Secretary Vinyard’s safety message appears below.



A MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY Herschel T. Vinyard Jr.

Dear Colleagues:

The safety of Department employees in the workplace is of utmost importance. We owe it to each other to make sure that our DEP friends and co-workers return to their families each night in good condition! We all need to thank the Safety Office and the safety managers involved in the program for their passion for our safety.

The Department of Financial Services, Division of Risk Management determined recently that DEP met all 27 of the State Loss Prevention Standards, and **exceeded the requirements** for seven of the standards. DEP is the first state agency where the Risk Management safety program review reported **no findings or recommendations for improvement**.

Jeff Loflin, our Safety Officer, has made our agency’s safety program a model for other state agencies. DEP safety managers in the various divisions and districts provide safety training courses throughout the state. Extensive safety training is also available to employees online. Safety inspections are conducted in our state parks and offices to ensure our public lands and facilities are safe for both the public and our employees. When an employee or volunteer is injured on the job, the Safety Officer follows up with the injured person and their supervisor to evaluate the events which led to the injury, makes recommendations and implements corrective action to prevent a recurrence.

These efforts are paying off. As shown below, 20 percent fewer Workers’ Compensation claims were reported in 2013 than in 2012.

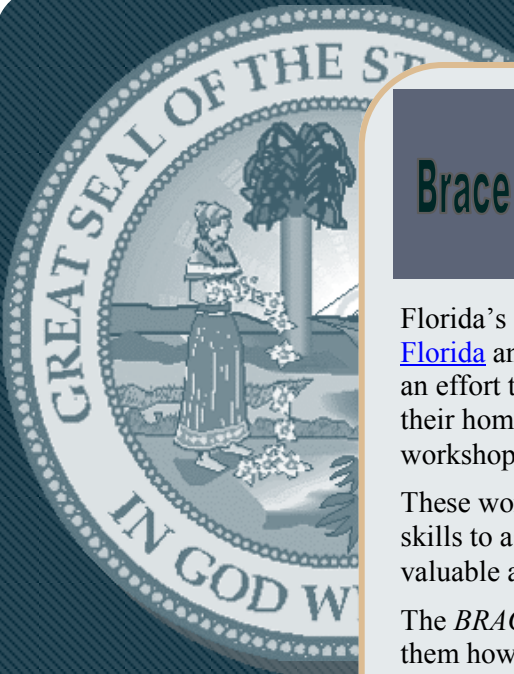
	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>% decrease</u>
Workers’ Comp Claims	410	325	(-20.73%)

I want to commend Jeff and all of our agency’s safety managers for their outstanding service, and to thank all DEP employees who take safety seriously. You are making a difference!

Herschel T. Vinyard, Jr.
Secretary



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“Live as if you were
to die tomorrow.
Learn as if you were
to live forever...”

~Mahatma Gandhi



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Brace for the Storm Workshop



Florida's [Division of Emergency Management](#) has partnered with [Volunteer Florida](#) and the [Be Ready Alliance Coordinating For Emergencies](#) (BRACE) in an effort to engage homeowners throughout the state to take the time to prepare their home for the next disaster by participating in a series of informative workshops.

These workshops are designed to provide homeowners with the knowledge and skills to assist them in mitigating future disaster caused damage to their most valuable asset, the home they live in.

The *BRACE for the Storm* workshop can be delivered via the internet to teach them how to prepare their homes for the next wind disaster. Participants also learn how to save money on the windstorm portion of their homeowner's insurance premium.

The Be Ready Florida initiative takes mitigation to the next level by providing the knowledge homeowners need to mitigate the effects of hurricanes, floods, wildfires and the other disaster that threaten Floridians throughout the year.

To register for the *Brace for the Storm* workshop and others, go to: <http://www.bereadyflorida.org/>

National Safety Month is the Perfect Opportunity to Promote Safety Awareness

The start of June marks the beginning of hurricane season, and it also marks the beginning of the National Safety Month campaign sponsored by the National Safety Council (NSC). This year's campaign theme is "*Safety: it takes all of us.*"

National safety month is the perfect opportunity to increase safety awareness by engaging employees on safety related matters. As you learned in our *A Focus on Safety Best Practices* profile features series, safety awareness—conducted on a consistent and continuous basis—is a key best practice in preventing workplace accidents and injuries.

Each week during National Safety Month is a new safety theme to engage employees and help them remember that safety is everybody's responsibility. If you have not planned any activities for National Safety Month, it is not too late! Contact the State of Florida Loss Prevention Program for electronic safety flyers from the NSC that you can post around your agency. Also, be sure to share with your employees our safety crossword puzzle highlighting National Safety Month.



SAFETY & LOSS PREVENTION SPOTLIGHT



In this issue of the *Safety Spotlight*, the Division of Risk Management is pleased to feature Ms. Amy Godsey, State Meteorologist with the Florida Division of Emergency Management.

Ms. Godsey is responsible for analyzing meteorological data to determine weather-related threats to Florida. She is also responsible for serving as a liaison between the meteorological community and the emergency management community to enhance the Division of Emergency Management’s preparedness and response mission capabilities. Whenever the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) is activated, Ms. Godsey, along with the state meteorologist team, is responsible for conducting the following activities: analyzing weather hazards faced by first responders, participating in press conferences and conference calls, and presenting at State Emergency Response Team (SERT) briefings.



“It’s fine to celebrate success, but it is more important to heed the lessons of failure.”

~Bill Gates

As the 2014 Atlantic Hurricane season begins, Ms. Godsey says one way the Division of Emergency Management helps to promote hurricane preparedness is by conducting its annual statewide hurricane training exercise. The annual hurricane training exercise took place May 19 through May 22 at the State Emergency Operations Center in Tallahassee. The exercise allowed participants to get an opportunity to practice Florida’s emergency plans and procedures for a potential hurricane making landfall in the state. In addition, Ms. Godsey often promotes hurricane awareness by holding speaking engagements and training presentations for state agencies and other non-profit organizations or community groups on the topics of severe weather safety or hurricane preparedness.

A hurricane preparedness tip that safety coordinators should keep in mind for the hurricane season is to know your risk. “Safety coordinators should know their total storm risk, such as potential risk from flooding, wind, tornadoes, and storm surge,” said Ms. Godsey. Safety coordinators should also take advantage of hurricane preparedness resources, including hurricane preparedness websites such as Floridadisaster.org, as well as new weather technology which includes social media

and other applications to stay up to date before, during, and after a major hurricane or storm. The 2014 hurricane season is expected to be average to slightly below average, but meteorologists cannot predict outside of 10 days where or when storms will form, which is why it is important to always be prepared. Ms. Godsey said, “It only takes one storm to cause major damage to people and property.”



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“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed, citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”

~Margaret Mead



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Ms. Godsey, who has been with the Division of Emergency Management since July 2006, says what she loves most about her job is meeting and educating people on weather safety. “I enjoy my job and I enjoy seeing how what I do makes a difference,” said Ms. Godsey. One of the things Ms. Godsey is proud of regarding her work is her efforts in helping other states create state meteorologist positions and her work to help increase the visibility and importance of serving as a state meteorologist. However, one of the most challenging parts of her job, Ms. Godsey shared, is when she hears about weather related fatalities.



Ms. Godsey is a 2006 graduate of Florida State University, where she earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Meteorology and minor in Physics. She is also a member of several professional organizations, including the Florida Sea Grant Advisory Committee, the National Tsunami Hazard Mitigation Program Committee, and the American Meteorological Society Board of Governmental Meteorologists. When she is not at work, she enjoys playing music on her saxophone and spending time with her 9 month-old baby boy and husband, who is also a meteorologist with the National Weather Service.

Safety Tips

The following safety awareness tips involve simple changes that you can implement immediately to assist you in increasing your safety awareness efforts while also substantially impacting how often employees think about safety at your agency or university.

Safety Awareness Tips to Increase Safety Awareness at your Agency

- ◆ Display safety posters, such as the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) poster titled “Job Safety and Health: It’s the Law,” in a prominent location instead of a back room or other infrequently used space.
- ◆ Send out weekly safety messages to all employees based on workers’ compensation claim reports to show how you are doing and how you can improve.
- ◆ Actively participate in National Safety Month at your agency by creating safety activities to highlight the National Safety Council’s June safety month campaign.
- ◆ Place a sign promoting proper ergonomics near each computer workstation.
- ◆ Keep Material Safety Data sheets (MSDS) on every chemical regularly used in the office, including cleaning products.

Can Social Media Improve your Hurricane Preparedness?

The 2014 Atlantic Hurricane Season began on June 1st, and with the start of any new hurricane season, state and local governments are always looking for ways to improve their hurricane preparedness, communication, and response time. This is why many government agencies are beginning to use social media tools such as Facebook, Twitter, and GovTwit.com to engage the public and raise awareness of hurricanes and other natural disasters before, during, and after the storm.

In fact, Allison Pennisi, Senior Communications and New Media Specialist for the New York City Office of Emergency Management (NYC OEM), recently shared during an April 29th emergency management webinar hosted by Hootsuite Enterprise how the NYC OEM used social media during such incidents as Hurricane Sandy and the East Harlem explosion to help keep citizens safe. Ms. Pennisi said the rise of social media has opened new opportunities and has changed the way government agencies engage with citizens; however, there are some concerns government agencies should consider before implementing a social media policy. You can also contact Ms. Pennisi directly at appennisi@oem.nyc.gov to learn more social media best practices.

As more government agencies begin to realize the importance of developing a social media strategy, many of them are also beginning to realize that implementing social media tools internally and externally requires potential changes in work processes and policies. If you are thinking about implementing a social media strategy to improve your hurricane preparedness program, it is important to make sure your strategy aligns with your organization's overall mission and communication goals. Your social media strategy should also target performance analysis which includes understanding and addressing organizational baseline goals of using social media and what your organization will clearly be measuring and why.

So, as you think about this year's hurricane season and your role as an agency or university safety coordinator, one question to ask yourself is "Can social media improve my agency's hurricane preparedness program?" According to Dr. Philip J. Klotzbach and Dr. William Gray of Colorado State University, the 2014 hurricane season is expected to have a below-average number of named storms and hurricanes. Dr. Klotzbach and Dr. Gray predict 9 named storms, 3 hurricanes, and 1 major hurricane; however, it only takes one hurricane or even just a strong tropical storm to cause a major emergency situation to arise. The decision to develop or not develop a social media policy for hurricanes and other natural disasters could mean the difference between life and death.

If you are thinking about implementing a social media policy at your agency or university, be sure to read the Social Media Best Practice document provided by *GovTwit* at:

http://www.govdelivery.com/pdfs/Social_Media_Best_Practices.pdf



Additional Emergency Management Resources

www.floridadisaster.org

www.noaa.gov

www.FEMA.gov.

www.dhs.gov



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DEFENSIVE DRIVING TRAINING A TOOL TO REDUCE CLAIMS

The chart below represents automobile-related claims reported between July 1, 2013 and May 31, 2014, due to automobile accidents involving State of Florida employees, where the employee was allegedly at fault.

Be sure to keep your employees up to date on the latest Florida driving laws. Sign up for the computer-based FDOT Defensive Driving course presented by the Division of Risk Management (DRM).



Click here to access the Defensive Driving course: <https://lms.fldfs.com/>

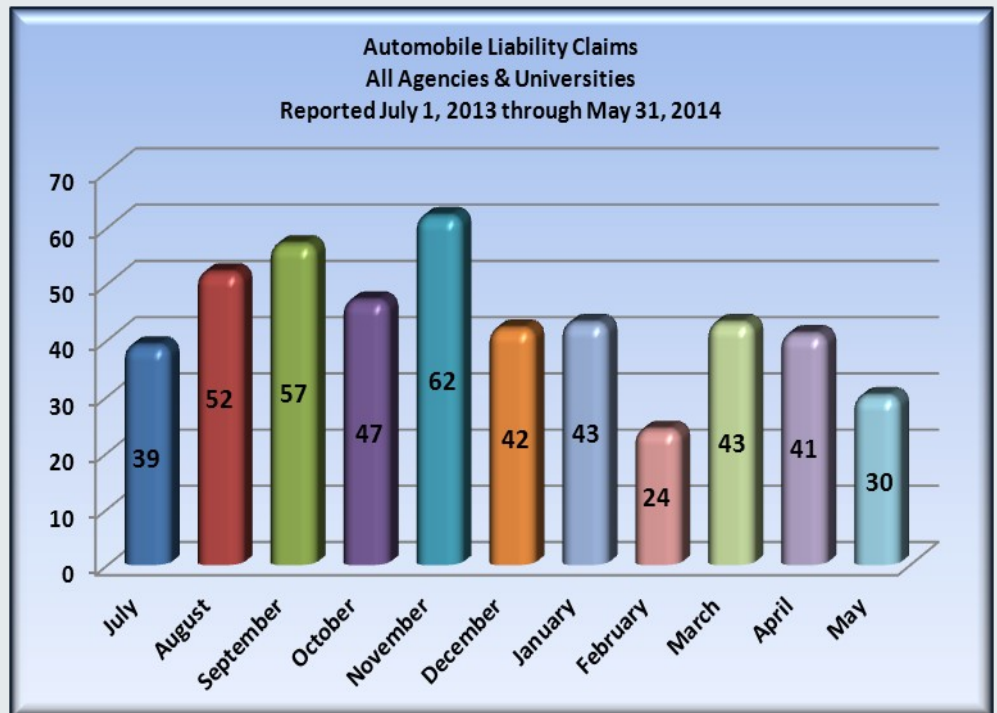
One of DRM's goals in offering this course is to track whether or not vehicle crashes are decreasing as a result of the training. In this issue of the newsletter, we provide you with the latest auto liability trending data since the March 2014 launch of the Defensive Driving course. You may also contact Melanie Cowgill at 850-413-4776 for additional reports and other analyses of the impact of the training on your workers' compensation and auto liability costs.

“I don't know the key to success, but the key to failure is trying to please everybody.”

~Bill Cosby



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“The people who get on in this world are the people who get up and look for the circumstances they want, and if they can’t find them, make them.”

~George Bernard Shaw



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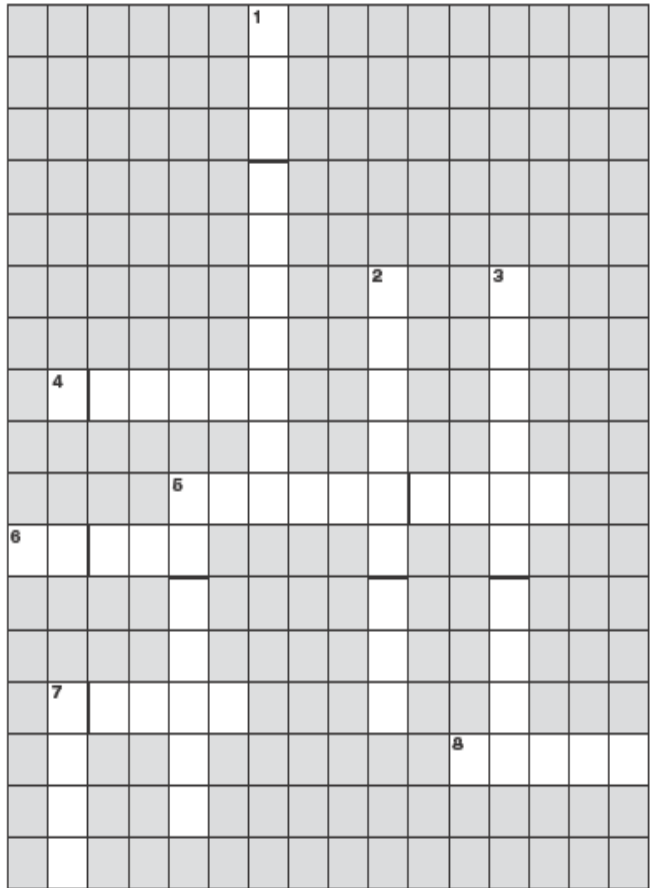
- Week 1:** Prevent prescription drug abuse
- Week 2:** Stop slips, trips and falls
- Week 3:** Be aware of your surroundings
- Week 4:** Put an end to distracted driving

Across

- 4. Adding handrails, maintaining good housekeeping and cleaning up _____ will help minimize the risk of falls.
- 5. Avoid _____ walking and remain alert for any surface changes.
- 6. Take _____ breaks every 15 minutes when working or playing outdoors.
- 7. Hands-free devices do not reduce cognitive distraction to the _____.
- 8. Store _____ objects close to the floor.

Down

- 1. To prevent UV damage, wear a hat and _____.
- 2. Keep medications in their original _____.
- 3. Wear the proper personal _____ equipment for your environment.
- 5. Tell other people not to call you when they know you are _____.
- 7. Carrying extra pounds can cause an extra strain on your _____.



NATIONAL SAFETY MONTH

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 NSC.ORG

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Answer Key:
 1. Sunburn
 2. Containers
 3. Prescription
 4. Slips
 5. Distractions
 6. Rest
 7. Back
 8. Handrails

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Legislative Update

The 2014 Florida Legislative session ended on Friday, May 2, and one of the bills the State of Florida Loss Prevention Program (SFLPP) tracked throughout the session was SB 392. SB 392 is a bill which revises statutes that control minimum and maximum speed limits on certain roadways in the State of Florida. The bill authorizes, but does not require, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to increase the speed limit on all National System of Interstate and Defense Highways.

The bill authorizes a 5-mile-per-hour increase in existing statutory maximum speed limits on state highways in Florida as follows:

- ▶ **75 mph on limited access highways.**
- ▶ **70 mph on any other highways outside an urban area of 5,000 or more persons with at least four lanes divided by a median strip.**
- ▶ **65 mph on other roadways under FDOT jurisdiction.**

Update: On June 2, 2014, the bill was vetoed by Governor Rick Scott, citing safety reasons. A copy of the veto letter to Secretary of State, Kenneth W. Detzner, can be found at: <http://www.flgov.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/SB-392-Veto-Letter.pdf>

HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS SALES TAX HOLIDAY began on May 31, 2014, and ended on June 8, 2014. During the holiday, the following items were exempt from the state sales tax and county discretionary sales surtaxes. The list outlines some of the important items which you need to have in the event of a hurricane in your area.

- ◆ Portable self-powered light sources selling for \$20 or less.
- ◆ Portable self-powered radio, two-way radio, or weather band radio selling for \$50 or less.
- ◆ Tarpaulins or other flexible waterproof sheeting selling for \$50 or less.
- ◆ Self-contained first-aid kits selling for \$30 or less.
- ◆ Ground anchor systems or tie-down kits selling for \$50 or less.
- ◆ Gas or diesel fuel tanks selling for \$25 or less.
- ◆ Packages of AA-cell, C-cell, D-cell, 6-volt, or 9-volt batteries, excluding automobile and boat batteries, selling for \$30 or less.
- ◆ Nonelectric food storage coolers selling for \$30 or less.
- ◆ A portable generator selling for \$750 or less.
- ◆ Reusable ice selling for \$10 or less

BACK TO SCHOOL SALES TAX HOLIDAY beginning August 1, 2014, and ending August 3, 2014. During the holiday, the following items are exempt from the state sales tax and county discretionary sales surtaxes:

- ◆ Clothing, footwear, wallets, and bags that cost \$100 or less.
- ◆ School supplies that cost \$15 or less per item.
- ◆ The first \$750 of the sales price for personal computers and related accessories purchased for noncommercial home or personal use, including tablets, laptops, monitors, input devices, and non-recreational software.

“Don’t cry because it is over, smile because it happened.”

~Dr. Seuss



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Safety Education & Training Opportunities

69th Annual Workers' Compensation Educational Conference & 26th Annual Safety & Health Conference

August 17-20, 2014

Orlando, FL

The 69th annual *Workers' Compensation Safety and Health* conference will be taking place in Orlando, Florida at the Orlando World Center Marriott from August 17-20, 2014. The three-day conference will discuss the most prominent issues in workers' compensation and workplace safety and will also include numerous breakout sessions for risk managers, safety professionals, adjusters, attorneys, medical case managers, and regulators.

For more information on this training opportunity, visit www.wci360.com.

Interagency Advisory Council Meeting

August 19, 2014

Tallahassee, FL

The next quarterly Interagency Advisory Council on Loss Prevention meeting is tentatively scheduled on Tuesday, August 19, 2014, at The Hermitage Centre, 1801 Hermitage Boulevard, Tallahassee, FL 32308.

Webinar—How to Get Problem Workers to Comply

June 25th

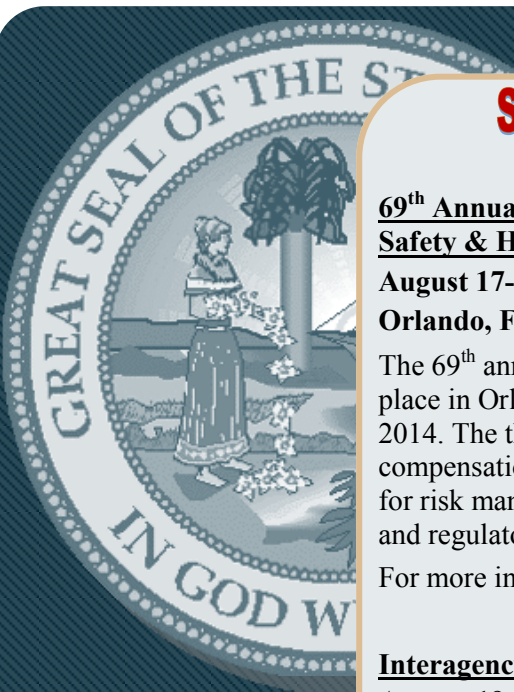
No Charge

The greatest challenge in achieving both your performance and safety goals is worker compliance. In this webinar sponsored by the National Safety Council, you will learn why some workers ignore safety rules and regulations, how to identify problem workers, and how to improve safety related behaviors and reduce safety risk. To register, click the link: <http://www.talenclick.com/webinar-how-to-get-problem-workers-to-comply/>

FREE Fall Protection Webinar 2014

On April 30, 2014, The USF *SafetyFlorida* and the USF OSHA Training Institute Education Center partnered to host a free fall protection webinar geared towards the construction industry in an effort to promote better practices against fall prevention, create safety awareness through training and applicable standards, and ultimately decrease worksite fatalities. This training is particularly valuable to universities with construction projects or any agency that is conducting renovation or construction projects.

Although this webinar took place April 30, 2014, USF *SafetyFlorida* and USF OSHA Training center has made the training available for download. To download the *Fall Protection* webinar presentation, click the link. http://usfoticecenter.org/files/FallProtectionWebinar_2014.pdf



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Compensation Claims (850) 413-3123

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Safety Coordinator Appointment Form (850) 413-4756

Workers' Compensation Claim Change Form (850) 413-4802

Govtwit (n.d.) govtwit.com New Twitter Guides for Government Agencies and Employees: Referenced 2014 from: <http://www.govloop.com/profiles/blogs/new-twitter-guides-for-government-agencies-and-employees>

Be Ready Florida (n.d.) bereadyflorida.org Brace for the Storm Referenced 2014 from: <http://www.bereadyflorida.org/>

National Safety Council, nsc.org, Safety: It Takes All of Us: Referenced 2014 from: http://www.nsc.org/nsc_events/Nat_Safe_Month/Pages/home.aspx

Florida Division of Emergency Management (n.d.) floridadisaster.org Referenced 2014 from: <http://www.floridadisaster.org/family/>

Government Facebook and Twitter (n.d.) govdelivery.com: Referenced 2014 from: http://www.govdelivery.com/pdfs/Social_Media_Best_Practices.pdf

Department of Financial Services Learning Management System lmsdev.fldoi.gov Florida Department of Transportation Defensive Driving Course: Referenced 2014 from: <http://lmsdev.fldoi.gov/course/view.php?id=95>

Department of Financial Services, Division of Risk Management (n.d.) myfloridacfo.com: Referenced 2014 from: STARS (claims management software)

Florida Senate (n.d.) flsenate.gov: Referenced 2014 from: http://www.flsenate.gov/PublishedContent/Session/2014/BillSummary/Transportation_TR0392tr_0392.pdf

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