Safety Matters

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News & Notes

LIFTING TECHNIQUES FOR BAGS AND SACKS

Bags and sacks that contain items like fertilizer, mulch and stone are awkward items to lift and carry, and as a result, many people handle them improperly and risk injury. Here's the safe way to lift and carry bags and sacks that contain these types of items:

- ➔ Assume the safe lifting position.
- ➔ Grasp the load at opposite top and bottom corners.
- ➔ Power your body up with your legs and use your arms to raise the load to rest on your hip.
- ➔ Fully stand and move the load to rest on your shoulder.

HANDLING ITEMS IN HIGH PLACES

Getting a box down from a high shelf may not seem like a safety issue, but if you don't do it properly, you could end up with a sore back or some other injury. Here's how to move things *safely* from high places:

- Use a stool or platform instead of a ladder.
- Push up on the load to check how heavy and stable it is.
- See if you can break it down into smaller pieces.
- Get help if you think you might need it.
- Slide the load toward you, grip, then slide it down.

No matter the size, shape or weight of an item, lift it properly. You'll be glad you did!

Stay Out of Traction

Follow this safe lifting plan of action

Some back injuries are the result of a single event. Others are the result of damage done over the course of many years. Three types of injury are particularly common:

☒ **Strain—**overused or overstretched muscles.
☒ **Sprain—**torn ligaments from sudden movement.
☒ **Herniated disks—**loss of cushioning between disks because of strain or age.

One important way to prevent back injury is to use the right technique whenever you lift and carry any object. Here's how:

Pre-Lift Planning:

- Make sure the weight is stable so that it won't shift.
- Check to see that there are no points or sharp edges.
- Plan to take the easiest route—not necessarily the shortest one.
- Make sure there isn't anything in your path to bump into or trip over.
- Make sure you can unload easily and safely when you reach your destination.

Safe Lifting Position:

- Squat by bending at the hips and knees.
- Have your head, shoulders, and hips form a straight line.
- Make sure your feet are shoulder-width apart and turned out.
- Maintain your back's natural curves, don't bend it.
- Let your legs do the lifting, instead of your back.

Safe Carrying and Unloading:

- Make sure you can see where you're going.
- Move slowly, taking small steps as you carry.
- Avoid twisting your body when you turn; instead move your feet to turn.
- When you are ready to put the object down:
  - —Face the spot for unloading.
  - —Lower the object slowly using your legs, not your back.
  - —Keep your fingers away from the bottom as you put the load down.
  - —On an elevated surface, lower the load to the edge, then slide it back.

RIDDLES OF THE MONTH

1) Who sits in the corner, but travels all over the world?
2) I'm sometimes white and always wrong. I can break a heart and hurt the strong. I can build love and tear it down. I can make a smile but more often bring a frown. What am I?
3) How can you go over water and under water at the same time and not get wet?

Answers on page 2 Safety Bits & Pieces

SAFETY TIP OF THE MONTH

If your family is planning a trip to the zoo, a local museum or amusement park this summer, develop a plan for what to do if your child gets separated from you - and practice it.

Teach your child not to wander if they get separated from you, to identify and seek out employees or "officials" by their uniforms or badges and to stay away from strangers, especially those who entice the child with a gift or want help in finding a lost pet, like a cat or dog.

Your child should know their full name, address and phone number as well as your full name and cell phone number so they can be reunited with you quickly if they become separated from you.

Safety Bits & Pieces

GET IN THE SWIM WITH SWIM SAFETY

Follow these Top 10 safety tips from the United States Lifesaving Association:

1. **Swim near a lifeguard.** The risk of drowning at a beach without a lifeguard is almost 5 times as great as drowning at a beach with lifeguards.
2. **Teach children to swim** at an early age.
3. **Never swim alone.** A buddy can help if you get in trouble.
4. **Don't fight the current**. If you're caught in a rip current, swim parallel to the shore until you feel the current relax, then swim to shore.
5. **Swim sober.** Alcohol is a major contributing factor in many drownings.
6. **Leash your board.** This applies to both surfboards and body boards. With a leash, you won't be separated from the board, which can keep you afloat. Also, your board won't get loose and hit another swimmer.
7. **Don't float where you can't swim.** Don't float on an inflatable raft deeper than you can stand unless you're a good swimmer.
8. **Use life jackets on boats.** As many as 80 percent of boating accident deaths are from drowning. Have a life jacket for each passenger, and require children to wear one at all times.
9. **Don't dive headfirst.** Check for depth and obstructions before diving, and then go feet first the first time to make sure it's safe to dive.
10. **Be the lifeguard at home.** Drowning in a home pool is a leading cause of accidental death for young children. Never leave a child alone near the pool.

RIDDLES OF THE MONTH ANSWERS:

1) A stamp
2) A lie
3) By walking over a bridge with a pail of water on your head

"Gee, mom, none of the other kids are wearing their childproof caps."

July is UV Safety Month.

You may have heard of the two kinds of ultraviolet radiation that reach the surface of the earth, UVA and UVB, but you may not be sure which type of radiation is harmful. The answer is that they BOTH are. Too much UV radiation can cause skin cancer, cataracts and other eye conditions, as well as immune system suppression. To protect yourself, consider these practices:

• Use sunscreen to avert sunburn: Five or more sunburns can double your chance of getting skin cancer, so use a sunscreen with a high SPF number and cover every inch of exposed skin.

• Limit your time in the sunshine: Over-exposure to sunlight causes wrinkling and increases your chance of melanoma.

• Get in the shade: Whenever you can, get out of the direct rays of the sun, whether it's under an umbrella, an awning or just going inside for a while. The sun is at its most intense at noon and in the early afternoon.

• Stay hydrated: It's all too easy to overlook your body's need for water, but it's doubly important to stay hydrated in the summer, when fatigue can quickly catch up to you.

• When you're in bright light, wear sunglasses with UV protection, as it will help protect your eyes from the damaging effects of UV radiation.

• Use care when you're near water or snow, as those surfaces will reflect UV rays against you more intensely than you realize.

• Watch the UV index: It's there to help you gauge your risk and whether you should even be in the sun at all.

Why it may seem a bit odd to have a national safety month devoted specifically to ultraviolet radiation, the recommendations above hopefully demonstrate to you the benefit of UV Safety Month is to drawing attention to the risks of ultraviolet radiation.

Safety Reminder:

KEEP SAFE IN THE HEAT

When temperatures soar, perhaps one of the most important things you can do to prevent heat stress is to drink water. Drink water all through the day so that you end up consuming at least 8 to 10 glasses. Drink 2 to 4 glasses of water each hour while exercising or working in the heat.

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE...

A clerk in a shoe store was trying to persuade a customer that a certain pair of shoes fit him. "Those shoes are too narrow and too pointed," said the customer. The salesperson replied, "But they are wearing narrow, pointed shoes this season." "That may be," said the suffering patron, but I'm still wearing last season's feet!"

QUOTATION OF THE MONTH

"Those who expect to reap the blessings of freedom, must undergo the fatigue of supporting it."

Thomas Paine (1737-1809)
Founding Father of the United States

From the State of Delaware's Office of Highway Safety...

DUI is a Total Buzz Kill

Fines. Attorney's Fees. Mandatory DUI Classes. It is never worth the risk to drive impaired. If law enforcement pulls you over for drunk driving, you will be arrested. In Delaware the consequences are real:

- Last year, 5355 people were arrested for Driving under the Influence. (That's an average of over 100 people a week!)
- 37 people were killed in alcohol-related crashes in 2011.
- Violators face jail time, the loss of licenses, higher insurance rates, and dozens of other unanticipated expenses from attorney fees, fines and court costs, car towing and repairs, lost time at work, etc.

One too many is way too many. So remember, "DUI is a Total Buzz Kill." Don't let an arrest ruin your summer. Have a plan before you go out:

- Designate a sober driver every time.
- Know the DART routes in your area.
- Program the number of a cab company in your phone.
- Call a friend or family member.
- Walking impaired is never a good alternative.

Drive Sober. Arrive Alive DE.

For more information about DUI, go to www.DUIrealtime.com. To learn more about this and other traffic safety topics, go to www.ohs.delaware.gov.