

# New York State Public Entities Safety Group 497

## Safety Agenda

\_\_\_ Chief, Fire Department  
\_\_\_ Site Administrators  
\_\_\_ Commissioners  
\_\_\_ Human Resources  
\_\_\_ Supt. Bldgs/Grounds  
\_\_\_ Elected Officials

Volume 12, Issue 10

October 2005

Published by NYS Public Entities Safety Group 497 – Dedicated to improving workplace safety

### ICE=In Case of Emergency

Here is a new safety tip that you can pass on to all members of your organization, whether yours is a municipality, a volunteer fire district or other public entity. Chances are that your firefighters and police already know about it, but the knowledge needs to be communicated to the members of their families as well.

Technology has changed the ways in which we communicate in many ways, not the least of which is the ubiquitous cell phone. Few new wallets include “in case of emergency” cards so paramedics have learned to look to an accident victim’s cell phone for clues to the injured person’s identity.

However, they find that most people who carry mobile phones rarely include emergency contact information. They may list “Mom” and “Dad”, but these may not necessarily represent the people to contact in case of an emergency.

The solution being advocated by the emergency responder community is to enter two **ICE** phone numbers into your cell phone address book, giving emergency responders more numbers to try in the event one contact is not available or if a number has been changed or disconnected.

Example: ICE #1 (xxx) xxx-xxxx Horatio

ICE #2 (xxx) xxx-xxxx Sally

### Walkway and Surface Safety

Slips, trips and falls account for a surprising number of injuries on the job. Preventing the conditions that lead to those kinds of injuries is an ongoing responsibility, and one of the ways to meet this obligation is to have an inspection and follow-up

program. This is the first of a series of checklists to help you in that endeavor.

### Housekeeping

- ✓ Is a documented, functioning housekeeping program in place?
- ✓ Are all worksites clean, sanitary, and orderly?
- ✓ Are work surfaces kept dry or are appropriate means taken to assure the surfaces are slip-resistant?
- ✓ Are all spilled hazardous materials or liquids, including blood and other potentially infectious materials, cleaned up immediately and according to proper procedures?
- ✓ Is combustible scrap, debris and waste stored safely and removed from the worksite properly?
- ✓ Is all regulated waste, as defined in OSHA blood borne pathogens standard (1910.1030), discarded according to federal, state, and local regulations?
- ✓ Are accumulations of combustible dust routinely removed from elevated surfaces including the overhead structure of buildings, etc.?
- ✓ Is combustible dust cleaned up with a vacuum system to prevent the dust from going into suspension?
- ✓ Is metallic or conductive dust prevented from entering or accumulating on or around electrical enclosures or equipment?
- ✓ Are covered metal waste cans used for oily and paint-soaked waste?

## How Good Are Your Driving Habits?




The first GMAC national Drivers Test study of 4,900 licensed drivers revealed that millions of Americans lack basic knowledge of rules of the road and safe automobile operation. The study also evaluated everyday driving habits, revealing dangerous driving behaviors. The study results provide important information for staff members and their families.







*According to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS), a non-profit research organization funded by auto insurers, areas where respondents to the study showed lack of knowledge or a propensity for unsafe practices are also common causes of auto accidents.*

It has been a long time since my wife and I took our state's Department of Motor Vehicle (DMV) driver exam. One result is that we have a long lived disagreement about who has the right of way at a 4-way stop. Is it clockwise or counter-clockwise? We are a good example of an accident waiting to happen.

The survey asked 20 standard written driving test questions (taken from state driving tests.) The second section asked 20 behavioral and situational driving scenarios and insurance related questions.

Some of the key findings:

-  One in ten drivers on the road today failed to demonstrate adequate knowledge of the rules of the roads. If tested today, they would fail a test similar to one required to get a driver's license.
-  Rhode Island and the northeast have the least knowledgeable drivers.
-  Younger drivers (18-24 years of age) are most likely to fail a written drivers test.

-  At least 20% of drivers do not know that a pedestrian has the right of way at a marked or unmarked crosswalk. (According to IIHS, research shows that 43% of all pedestrian injuries and 22% of fatal injuries to pedestrians occur in collisions with motor vehicles at intersections.)
-  The nation's least knowledgeable drivers (the northeast) are the most likely to speed.
-  Younger drivers are most likely to speed.
-  One-third of drivers who drink admit that they would drink and drive even if they suspected they were over the legal limit.
-  Half of Americans do not know how to merge into heavy traffic.
-  Sixty per cent change lanes on a highway without using their blinker.

The study is a terrific resource for your next safety meeting, both to raise awareness of the need for defensive driving, and as an aid in helping staff to review their driving habits as well as the rules of the road. See [http://www.gmacinsurance.com/Press/NDTExecutiveSummary\\_052305.asp](http://www.gmacinsurance.com/Press/NDTExecutiveSummary_052305.asp). And <http://www.insurancejournal.com/news/national/2005/05/26/55472.htm>.

You can also take the survey at the GMAC site. Good way to begin the safety meeting. You might also obtain copies of your state DMV driving rules for all staff members.

Another proactive approach would be to arrange to sponsor driver refresher courses on site – with the added potential for insurance premium cost reductions.