Health and Safety Newsletter—Spring 2012

Keene State College

Welcome to the fourth issue of the Keene State College Health and Safety Committee’s Newsletter. Many thanks to Matt Norton, chief writer and senior majoring in Safety Studies. If you have a safety related suggestion or concern that you would like to share please contact Sylvie Rice.

Fire Safety —Matt Norton

Most of college students who live off campus rent from a landlord. The landlord is responsible for keeping the property up to date and safe with the proper equipment (smoke detectors) necessary to keep us safe. This is correct; but many people have been lulled into a false sense of safety because “I’ve got a smoke detector”. However, if the batteries are dead, it will do you no good.

Fire experts estimate that about a third of all detectors in this country have dead batteries in them. With that said, would it hurt if you periodically checked the detectors for peace of mind knowing that in the case of a fire you would be alarmed with enough time to evacuate the premises?

How do I check a smoke detector?

1. Press the test button on your detector and check that the device beeps or rings loudly.
2. Test your smoke detector once a month.
3. Avoid lighting candles under the detector to see if the alarm goes off. Repeated use of smoke to activate detectors can cause them to fail when a real fire occurs.

It only takes a couple of seconds to test a smoke detector, but this simple task could save your life.

Skate Boards and Long Boards—Matt Norton

As a pedestrian, there lies a concern or fear that a person on a skateboard or long board will collide with you as they zip around campus in and out of pedestrians.

Although it may not be respectful of the boarders to come as close as they do to your personal area; sometimes there is no other option. As a fellow boarder myself, I have experienced this awkward encounter numerous times and I have come up with a simple trick that could keep yourself and the boarder safe on and off campus.

The best way to be safe is to hold still, wait, and trust the skill of the boarder to ride by you. If you try and compensate or anticipate the boarder’s next move, you are putting yourself at a higher risk of colliding.

Although it may be tough to do, trust the skill of the rider and hold still until they pass safely. If we work together in harmony we can all be a little safer.
Stress Management—Matt Norton

Classes are almost over and we are all busier than ever. This part of the year as always is full of many tasks to complete, making our minds go in a million directions.

Trying to manage everything has the ability to make us stressed and overwhelmed. This is a very normal reaction and if not managed properly can turn a mole hill of a problem into a mountain that seems impossible to climb and overcome.

Active Shooter—Sylvie Rice

Although active shooter situations are very rare, we want you to be prepared in case the unthinkable happens. How you respond to an active shooter will be dictated by the specific circumstances of the encounter, keeping in mind there could be more than one shooter involved and that active shooting situations are quick, usually measured in seconds rather than minutes or hours.

If you find yourself involved in an active shooter situation, remain calm and use these guidelines to help you plan a strategy for survival.

Get Out!: If you can get out of the area safely, do so.

If you decide to flee during active shooting situation, make sure you have an escape route and plan in mind.

Ergonomics in the Office—Matt Norton and Sylvie Rice

“Ergonomics can be defined as the scientific understanding between man and his surroundings and applying the mechanical, anatomical and physiologic principles to prevent any injuries at home or work. Small errors done in day-to-day life end up giving you ergonomic injuries that could otherwise be well avoided.”

Making yourself aware of what those errors are and avoiding them will help you stay healthy.

- Think before you work
- Avoid awkward postures
- Work smarter not harder
- Take frequent short breaks to stretch

and maintaining the emotional health of students that will help them succeed in their academic endeavors; the Counseling Center at Keene State College offers a diverse range of short-term emotional health services to all KSC students.

To make an appointment, call 603-358-2437 or come up to the Counseling Center on the third floor of the Elliot Center.