Summer 2011

Health and Safety

Keene State College

Welcome to the third issue of the Keene State College Health and Safety Committee’s Newsletter. Many thanks to Matt Norton, chief editor 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 (srice2@keene.edu; ext. 82879) or any of our members.

Inside this issue:

Severe Weather Watches and Warnings

Heat Stress

Hurricane/Tropical Storm Watch-- Hurricane/tropical storm conditions are possible in the specified area, usually within 36 hours. Tune in to NOAA Weather Radio, commercial radio, or television for information.

Hurricane/Tropical Storm Warning-- Hurricane/tropical storm conditions are expected in the specified area, usually within 24 hours.

Do you know the difference between a weather watch and a warning? A warning is more severe than a watch. Here are the official terms from the National Weather Service and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Severe thunderstorm watch is issued when the weather conditions are such that a severe thunderstorm is likely to develop. (A severe thunderstorm has winds at least 58 miles per hour or hail at least 3/4 inch in diameter.) When you hear a thunderstorm watch, go to a safe place right away and listen to the radio or television for more information.

Severe thunderstorm warning is issued when a severe thunderstorm is expected in the specified area, usually within 24 hours. Stay tuned to the radio or television news.

A Tornado Watch -- Tornadoes are possible. Stay tuned to the radio or television news.

A Tornado Warning -- A tornado has been sighted. Take shelter immediately!

The safest area in a building during a tornado is usually the basement or an interior hallway of the lowest floor. Seek shelter under sturdy furniture if no basement is available.

If outside and unable to get to a building, lie flat in the nearest depression or ditch. Never wait out a tornado inside a car.

Heat Stress

When heat is combined with other stresses such as hard physical work, loss of fluids, fatigue or some medical conditions, it may lead to heat related illness and even death. The more you work in the heat, the better your body becomes at keeping cool. If you are not used to working in the heat you may need a week or two to get acclimatized or used to it. Heat stress is serious but also 100% preventable. Follow these simple tips to prevent heat stress:

-- Limit your time in the hot environment.

-- Limit the physical demands on the job.

Heat exhaustion symptoms include headache, dizziness, weakness, confusion, vomiting, fainting, and/or pale clammy skin. If the body can’t cool itself through sweating, heat exhaustion or heat stroke can occur.

Heat exhaustion symptoms include headache, dizziness, weakness, confusion, vomiting, fainting, and/or pale clammy skin. Move to cool area, elevate legs, remove heavy clothing, drink cool water, and apply wet cloth to skin

Heat stroke is much more serious. Symptoms include dry pale skin with no sweating, hot red skin that looks sunburned, inability to think straight, seizure, and/or unconsciousness. Call 911, move victim to cool area, loosen heavy clothing, place ice packs at armpits and groin.

http://wwwstatic.kern.org/images/diabetesAndTpf/Thermometer.gif
Lightning Safety

Lightning is unpredictable and deserves a tremendous amount of respect. One never knows when or where the next bolt will touch down. If possible, get inside a sturdy building or any vehicle with a hard metal roof (with the windows shut). If you are caught outside:

— Avoid small covered shelters (dugouts, picnic shelters, etc.) as they may increase your potential for being struck.
— Avoid areas connected to or near poles, towers, and fences.
— Avoid any location that makes the person the highest point in the area.
— Avoid open areas.

Lightning strikes more than 400 people each year in the United States, and about 60 of those lead to death, according to the National Weather Service. Most lightning strikes and fatalities occur during July (http://abcnews.go.com/Technology/Health/story?id=7883386&page=1). People who have been struck by lightning do not carry an electrical charge. If the lightning victim shows signs of cardiac or respiratory arrest:

— Call 911
— If possible, move an injured person to a safer location before starting CPR
— Initiate CPR

— Use and automatic external defibrillator (AED) as soon as possible.

Ticks and Lyme's Disease

According to the NH Division of Public Health Services, the rate of Lyme disease in NH is among the highest in the nation and in most NH counties over 50% of deer ticks are infected with bacteria causing Lyme disease. Removal of a deer tick within 36 hours of attachment can prevent disease transmission. In approximately 70% of patients, illness first manifests with a red rash that expands slowly, often with central clearing (appearing as a bull’s-eye target or rash).

— Avoid tick-infested areas when feasible.
— Wear light-colored clothing that covers arms and legs so ticks can be more easily seen.
— Tuck pants into socks and apply tick repellent to exposed skin
— After being outdoors search your body for ticks and remove them promptly.

Bicycle Rules of the Road from the Dept. of Motor Vehicles

Bicyclists must:
— Signal turns and stops unless both hands are required on the handlebars for balance.
— If riding two abreast, keep within a single lane and do not hold up traffic (riding more than two abreast is against the law).
— Never ride on sidewalks (they are for pedestrians).
— Never hang onto other vehicles in any manner.
— Yield the right of way to pedestrians.
— Obey the same rules of the road as drivers of other vehicles.
— Never carry a passenger unless in an attached seat.
— Never carry articles that interfere with the control of the bicycle.
— Ride in the same direction as other vehicles.
— A bicyclist must stop on request of a police officer who wishes to inspect the bicycle.

The following equipment is required on all bicycles:
— Reflector
— Brakes strong enough to stop one wheel on dry, level, clean pavement.
— For riding after dark, a white headlight.