



# THE EHS CONNECTION

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH & SAFETY NEWSLETTER APRIL 2017

## WHAT CAN I DO?

### REAL STEPS A PERSON CAN TAKE TO SAVE THE PLANET

**TURN OFF** unnecessary electronics or lights when not in use.

**CHANGE YOUR LIGHT**—If every household in the United State replaced one regular light bulb with one of those new compact fluorescent bulbs (CFLs), the pollution reduction would be equivalent to removing one million cars from the road.

**RECYCLE**—It really makes a difference. Recycling anything uses less energy and less water (not to mention less RAW materials) than manufacturing anything new. Make the extra effort to rinse out your spaghetti sauce jars, soup cans, and plastic soda bottles. Composting food waste for the garden helps return valuable nutrients to the soil. Remember, the more you recycle, the less waste goes to the landfill. Look for recycle bins and use them. If you don't see one when you need it, hold onto your trash until you do.

**BUY RECYCLED PRODUCTS**—In many cases, products made from recycled materials require less energy to produce as compared to those made from virgin materials. For example it takes 75% less energy to make steel items from recycled steel. Another thing to look for is the recycled content of office paper—look for a minimum of 30 percent POST CONSUMER WASTE, not just recycled. And finally purchase the goods with less packaging—this means less energy to produce the package, less waste that goes to the landfill, and fewer trips to the curb to dispose of your trash.

**GIVE IT AWAY**—Before you throw something away, think about if someone else might need it. Either donate to a charitable organization or post it on a web site designed to connect people and things, such as Freecycle.org.

**WALK, BIKE, OR USE PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION** instead of driving.

**CARPPOOL** if you do drive.

**CONSOLIDATE SHOPPING TRIPS** and bring your friends along.

**JUST SAY NO TO PLASTIC BAGS**—The plastic bags you bring home from the supermarket probably end up in a landfill. Every year, more than 500 billion plastic bags are distributed, and less than 3% of those bags are recycled. They are typically made of polyethylene and can take up to 1,000 years to biodegrade in landfills that emit harmful greenhouse gases. Reducing your contribution to plastic-bag pollution is as simple as using a cloth bag (or one made of biodegradable plant-based materials) instead of wasting plastic ones. For your next trip to the grocery store, BYOB.

**USE RECHARGEABLE BATTERIES**—Each year 15 billion batteries produced and sold and most of them are disposable alkaline batteries. Only a fraction of recyclable batteries are actually recycled. Buy a charger and a few sets of rechargeable batteries. Although it requires an upfront investment, it is one that should pay off in no time.

**RETHINK BOTTLED WATER**—Nearly 90% of plastic water bottles are not recycled, instead taking thousands of years to decompose. Buy a reusable container and fill it with tap water—a great choice for the environment, your wallet, and possibly your health. The EPA's standards for tap water are more stringent than the FDA's standards for bottled water.

**INVEST IN YOUR OWN COFFEE CUP**—If you start every morning with a steamy cup, a quick tabulation can show you that the waste is piling up. Invest in a reusable cup, which not only cuts down on waste, but also keeps your beverage hot for a much longer time. Most coffee shops will happily fill your own cup, and many even offer you a discount in exchange!

**WASH IN COLD OR WARM**—If all the households in the U.S. switched from hot-hot cycle to warm-cold, we could save the energy comparable to 100,000 barrels of oil a day. (And only launder when you have a full load.)

**BUY LOCAL**—Consider the amount of pollution created to get your food from the farm to your table. Whenever possible, buy from local farmers or farmers' markets, supporting your local economy and reducing the amount of greenhouse gas created when products are flown or trucked in.

**EAT ORGANIC**—Organic foods are grown without the use of synthetic chemicals and make use of more traditional and environmentally friendly farming methods. This means less pollution of our water, air and soil, and less degradation of our soil as well.

**BUY ECO-FRIENDLY**—There are a large number of environmentally friendly alternatives now in the marketplace and the more people purchase and use them, the more affordable they get. Soaps, detergents, shampoos, conditioners, toothpastes, which are made from renewable vegetable sources and are more easily biodegraded, are all available. Many of these items are better for you as well. (Deodorant is one very good example.)

**"GIVE A HOOT, DON'T POLLUTE"**—Think about how you dispose of items and do it properly. Anything dumped into a storm drain gets released directly into the watershed. Storm drains do not go through a wastewater treatment process; they simply transport water to a local surface water source (i.e., a creek or stream, or river, or lake). Any trash not properly thrown away generally makes it into a waterway and is eventually transported into our oceans and gyres like the "North Pacific Garbage Patch." Polluting any waterway, pollutes all water ways; we are all connected.

**"SAVE THE PLANET, EAT YOUR VEGETABLES"**—It sounds silly, but it's true. Try to eat lower on the food chain. More energy and more water is invested (with no gain) in each step of the food chain. Plus, fruits and vegetables provide more of the vitamins, minerals, and fibers that our bodies need to be healthy. And the more you get from your food, the less you need from supplements (i.e., vitamins and various other pills). This ends up tying back into one of the fundamental —R's: Reducing. Eat what you need instead of popping pills.

**TALK**—The more we talk about these issues, the more we learn, educate and reinforce the need for real, perpetual changes in basic lifestyle habits. Peer pressure works. If you impress upon your friends the importance of their actions, change will happen.

**BE THE CHANGE**—If you want other people to change, it has to start with yourself. When you make changes you set the example for others. When people see you bringing reusable bags to the grocery store, or refusing a plastic bag, or running to pick up some trash you make them think. If enough people do this, we can create change simply through our actions and our examples. As Ghandi said: "Be the Change You Wish to See in the World".

Rice Creek Field Station will host an Earth Day Celebration on Saturday, April 15th



DISTRACTED DRIVING AWARENESS MONTH 2017



# TOP THINGS DRIVERS ARE DOING THAT THREATEN TRAFFIC SAFETY

*As Distracted Driving Awareness Month kicks off, National Safety Council urges Americans to #justdrive*

With motor vehicle deaths increasing substantially, the National Safety Council identified some of the top driver behaviors and beliefs that put all roadway users at risk and increase the likelihood of being involved in a crash. Compiled through NSC surveys conducted over the last 12 months, the alarming driver habits and opinions could help partially explain why deaths are rising and underscore the importance of raising awareness, particularly in April which is Distracted Driving Awareness Month.

"Most Americans recognize risky drivers on the roadways, but they are not adopting safer behaviors themselves," said Deborah A.P. Hersman, president and CEO of the National Safety Council. "The notion that bad things happen to other people, but will not happen to us when we are distracted behind the wheel, is akin to playing Russian roulette."

## SOME OF THE TOP DISTRESSING THINGS DRIVERS DO - OR BELIEVE THEY CAN DO - INCLUDE:

- ⇒ 47 percent of drivers believe it is safe to send a text either manually or via voice-dictation systems.
- ⇒ 45 percent say they feel pressure from employers to check email while driving; however, 44 percent say they have crashed in the last three years while they were either commuting or traveling for business.
- ⇒ 35 percent of teens - a cohort that has seen an increase in fatal crashes - would use social media behind the wheel.
- ⇒ 17 percent of teens feel their own distraction may have contributed to a crash.
- ⇒ 71 percent believe they can have up to 3 drinks before they are not safe or too impaired to drive.
- ⇒ 33 percent believe it is acceptable to drive with less than four hours of sleep. In fact, drivers who are tired can be as impaired as drivers who are legally drunk.
- ⇒ 32 percent say new cars can essentially drive themselves.
- ⇒ 13 percent have driven after using marijuana in the last month.
- ⇒ Two-thirds of drivers have felt unsafe because of another driver's distraction, but just 25 percent feel their own distractions have put themselves or others at risk.

The Council observes Distracted Driving Awareness Month each April to remember the thousands lost each year to preventable crashes. Visit [nsc.org/ddmonth](http://nsc.org/ddmonth) for information and resources.

*From National Safety Council*

## YOU'VE GOT ONE JOB: DRIVING SAFELY!!!

If you're driving down the highway, do you think there is ever a circumstance when it's safe or smart to close your eyes for five seconds? Of course you don't. Keeping your eyes on the road is one of the first things we all learn about safe driving. So why would anyone ever think it is okay to text when behind the wheel, or do anything else that takes your attention from driving?

It takes about five seconds, on average, to read or send a text. Not a lot of time. But, in that span of time, with your eyes on your phone and not on the road, a vehicle travelling 55 miles per hour can travel the length of a football field. In that instant, over that distance, a life can be taken—maybe even yours. Distracted driving killed 3,477 people on America's roads in 2015.

During April's National Distracted Driving Awareness Month, NHTSA is partnering with our friends in state and local law enforcement and with advocates across the country to remind everyone about the dangers of distracted driving. We're airing ads that convey a powerful message about distracted driving. If you're caught texting and driving you'll be pulled over and ticketed because you're putting your life and your neighbors' lives at risk.

We all know that the screens on our phones, phablets and tablets can sometimes seem irresistible. Most of us have been scolded for bringing a device to the dinner table, taking out a phone in the middle of a party, or checking Twitter or Snapchat during an office meeting. (If you haven't, you're more disciplined than most.) But when you're behind the wheel being distracted by your phone is more than a social faux pas; it's an invitation to a deadly disaster.

Distracted driving is also about more than just electronic diversions. It's anything you're doing behind the wheel that undermines safe driving, including eating and drinking, fiddling with the music or the A/C, or checking yourself out in the mirror. Recently, a driver even became distracted by her dog who was riding with her. She took her eyes off the road, crossed the center line, and crashed head-on into a sheriff's deputy's vehicle in Davis County, Utah.

So during April's Distracted Driving Awareness Month, make a positive, lifesaving change that will make you safer year-round. Before you start the car, shut down your phone. Put it out of reach so you won't be tempted by it. Recommit yourself to safe driving by not giving in to distraction and by focusing solely on the road. You'll save yourself the cost of a ticket and maybe even save a life.

From: *National Highway Traffic Safety Administration*

## NEWS FROM THE JOINT LABOR MANAGEMENT HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

We are currently meeting twice a month and are working on several concerns that were brought to us by CSEA members. Below are ongoing concerns that we have assigned to sub-committees for further discussion/action:

**MECHANICAL ROOM PIPE LABELING**

**STOPPING UNSAFE WORK** - We need a procedure - how do we protect someone who questions if task/job they have been assigned is safe

**CONFINED SPACE EVALUATIONS** with PESH consultation

**EYEWASH STATION EVALUATIONS**

Have a safety issue or concern you would like to report? Please contact one of our committee members.

**THE COMMITTEE MEMBERS ARE AS FOLLOWS:**

### **CSEA MEMBERS**

Mark Sierson/Plumbing - Chair

Joe Scanlon/BTC

Brian Bateman/BTC

Fred Matteson/Plumbing

Melana Perkins/Custodial

Donna Monette/Custodial

Mike Flack/Custodial

Dan Hoefler/Electrical

Colleen Dewine/Grounds

Roy Ayotte/CHP

Jason Hrnecirik/CHP

Sharon Cromie/Health Promotion and Wellness - Secretary

### **MANAGEMENT REPRESENTATIVES**

Eric Foertch/EHS

Mary DePentu/Maintenance and Operations

Christine Body/EHS

Nick Scaturro/EHS

**ERGONOMIC ASSESSMENT:** CHRISTINE BODY HAS BEEN DOING ERGONOMIC ASSESSMENTS SINCE 1996 AND IS AVAILABLE TO DO THEM HERE ON CAMPUS. SHE CAN BE REACHED AT 312-2770 AND WOULD BE HAPPY TO ASSIST YOU WITH ANY QUESTIONS OR ISSUES.

# APRIL WORD SEARCH

For a chance to win a great prize (more like an OK prize, but-hey, it's a PRIZE!), complete the Word Search and send it via e-mail to [lisa.drake@oswego.edu](mailto:lisa.drake@oswego.edu) OR through Campus Mail: Lisa Drake, 110 Lee Hall. Make sure to put your name on it! The winner for March was Lisa Alvarado. Look for: Earth Day, Save the Planet, Pollution, Recycle, Post Consumer Waste, Carpool, Bike, Walk, Plastic Bags, Rechargeable, Bottled Water, Energy, Local, Organic, Eco Friendly, Distracted Driving, Crash, Texting, Social Media, Impaired, Phone, Biodegradable, Reusable, Screens, Batteries.

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C	T	H	E	R	E	S	T	H	I	L	W	Q	U	I	O	P	M	N	G	T	A
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## CALVIN SAYS:

HAPPY EASTER EVERYONE! PLEASE REMEMBER THAT CHOCOLATE BUNNIES AND JELLY BEANS ARE NOT GOOD FOR DOGS! GIVE THEM HEALTHY TREATS INSTEAD...LIKE CARROT STICKS!

## DUTCHISM FOR APRIL...

### FOG

A WHISPERING VEIL CREEPS SLOWLY UPON THE LAND,  
A MIST THAT OBSCURES OUR WRINKLED HAND,  
SILENTLY RISING TO OPEN OUR WAY,  
TO REWARD US WITH A WONDERFUL DAY.