

New York State School Safety Group 491

Safe Schools Agenda

Route to:

Superintendent
 School Business Off.
 Athletic Director
 Supt. Bldgs/Grounds
 Site Administrators
 Transportation Dir.
 Lunch Director
 Classroom Teachers

Volume 13, Issue 4

April 2006

A monthly service provided to help you with your efforts to make your school safe for students, staff and the public

Fourteen Students Killed By School Buses Last Year

The Kansas State Department of Education has been recording bus loading/unloading fatality statistics since 1970. Since that time, 1,121 students have died as a result of being hit either by their own school bus or by an illegally-passing driver. The first survey showed 75 student fatalities but that number dropped to an average of about 15 per year over the past decade.

The total of 20 student fatalities recorded in 2004-2005 was a significant increase from each of the previous 4 years. There were 12 in 2003 and 2002, 13 in 2001, and 9 in 2000.

The six student deaths attributed to having been caused by illegally passing motorists are actually the lowest in four years. The big increase is in the number of students killed by their own school buses.

Eleven of the twenty students were in the 5 or 6 year old category. Fifteen of the fatalities were females.

The study results give us reason to refresh the awareness of bus drivers on the vulnerability of their charges, especially females, and those very young. Driver judgment has to make up for the sometimes poor judgment of young children.

Are You Ready for a Major Hurricane?

“There are indications that the Northeast will experience a hurricane larger and more powerful than anything that the region has seen in a long time,” according to the AccuWeather.com Hurricane Center. In 1938, 600 people were killed

and more than \$6 billion in property losses were caused by a hurricane which hit the northeast.

The Sport of Cheerleading

Not so long ago, there was confusion as to whether cheerleading was a sport or an “activity.” Today, there is no doubt that cheerleading is a sport, demanding rigorous training, athletic exertion and teamwork. Because of its extreme athleticism, the sport of cheerleading requires close attention to safety standards.

A recent Southern Illinois University cheerleading accident has spurred the American Association of Cheerleading Coaches and Administrators (AACCA) to ban certain aerial and towering stunts. The accident involved a fall from a 15 foot human pyramid, resulting in a concussion and a fractured neck for the cheerleader. Other recent accidents at the collegiate level left two cheerleaders paralyzed. In both of these cases, lawsuits have been filed, alleging negligence on the part of the school and the cheerleading coach.

Granted, high school cheerleaders do not generally execute as demanding – and dangerous – routines as do college cheerleaders. Nevertheless, cheerleading accidents at the high school level are not unheard of. This is a good time to review the safety standards and practices of local cheerleading programs.

- Does the district have a written manual, including lesson plans for progressive development of skills?
- Have all cheerleading coaches completed an AACCA safety certification course recently? Is this true also of non-staff members who coach?

Visit our Website at www.nysgroup491.com

Email: info@nysgroup491.com

Program Administrator: Professional Underwriters, 1-800-833-8822

- Do coaches participate in local, state or national coaches' conferences?
- Are practice facilities organized with safety in mind, and is there an emergency plan?
- See www.aacca.org for the AACCA Cheerleading Safety Manual.

Slip and Fall Prevention

Slips and falls are the most common causes of injuries on the job. As such, their prevention deserves a fresh look from time to time.

The most effective strategy for reducing the number of slips and falls is good housekeeping. Good housekeeping is more than a good appearance – it is keeping everything where it belongs and not allowing anything to be where it does not belong. This is especially true of tools, cords, water, ice, oil, books, pencils, hand trucks, carts, etc. etc. When any of these items are left where they do not belong, like in a walking aisle, someone can slip, trip, fall and get injured. A good safety rule is that if you drop it, pick it up – now. Don't wait. If you have finished with it, put it away.

The second strategy is based on the understanding that everyone in the organization is responsible for the safety of self and co-workers. If you find a potential slip and fall condition that can be corrected immediately, correct it. If not, warn your fellow employees by posting signs while someone gets help.

Use good equipment arrangement and placement of material. Don't overload anything that can be transported. Overloading makes material harder to transport but easier to dump.

When you are using a cart, make sure the wheels are in good shape and watch where you are going. Check the floor for obstructions.

Wear safe footwear – the right type of soles, with low heels. Keep non-slip floor mats in traffic areas and constantly wet areas to provide better traction.

Walk, don't run. Never make a sudden direction change on a slippery surface.

Slip and Fall Inspection Checklist

1. Are floors clean, dry as possible and free of holes, protrusions and other walking hazards?
2. Are passageways and floors clear of obstructions which could cause a trip and fall?
3. Are floor openings such as holes and pits provided with covers, standard guardrails and four-inch toe boards?
4. Are stair rails provided with stairs with four or more risers?
5. Do all straight ladders and extension ladders have non-slip feet?
6. Are all ladders frequently inspected on a regular basis for serviceability? Are all ladders provided with steps and rings 12" apart?
7. Are garden hoses, electrical cords, telephone cords, or other obstructions allowed to remain across walk areas or work areas?
8. Are custodial carts and equipment arranged in such a way so as not to create a traffic hazard?
9. Are parking areas free from rocks, loose sand, debris, holes, projections, etc. that could cause a tripping accident?
10. Are entrance doors to buildings, offices and other areas in good working order?
11. Is lighting adequate in all hallways, stairwells and doorways?
12. Is carpeting securely fastened to the floor, including binding strips?
13. Do mats or other types of protection lie flat and free from tripping hazards?
14. Are there any other areas where mats should be provided?

