



Risk Management Solutions

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ALABAMA MUNICIPAL INSURANCE CORPORATION
AND THE MUNICIPAL WORKERS COMPENSATION FUND, INC.

FALL 2008

Diving In: Is Your Pool Up to Code?

Richard Buttenshaw, Loss Control Representative, ARM-P, CIC

Even though Summer is over and people are thinking more about heading to football games than the local swimming pool, if your municipality maintains a public pool, you could be facing the possibility that your facility is no longer up to code by year's end due to new federal legislation. The Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act promotes the safe use of pools, spas and hot tubs by imposing mandatory federal requirements for suction entrapment avoidance. The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) began administering the Act in 2007 and it will become mandatory effective December 20, 2008.

So how does this Act relate specifically to public swimming pools? The mandatory federal requirement for entrapment avoidance requires:

Public Pool Drain Covers. Each public pool and spa, both new and existing, shall be equipped with drain covers conforming to the American National Standard ASME A112.19.8-2007 *Suction Fittings for Use in Swimming Pools, Wading Pools, Spas, and Hot Tubs* published by the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME). Compliance with this Standard will be enforced by the CPSC as a consumer product safety rule.

Public Pool Drain Systems. Each public pool and spa with a single main drain, other than an unblockable drain,



shall be equipped with one or more additional devices or systems designed to prevent suction entrapment that meet the requirements of any applicable ASME/ANSI Standard or applicable consumer product safety rule. In addition to a compliant drain cover, examples of such additional devices or systems include:

- Safety vacuum release system (SVRS)
- Suction limiting vent system
- Gravity drainage system
- Automatic pump shutoff system
- Drain disablement
- Or other system determined by the CPSC to be equally effective in preventing suction entrapment.

All pools and spas configured to comply with ANSI/APSP-7 *American National Standard for Suction Entrapment Avoidance in Swimming Pools, Wading Pools, Spas, Hot Tubs, and Catch Basins* will comply with each of these mandatory requirements. This standard is the only comprehensive approach to engineering swimming pools and spas to avoid all five suction entrapment hazards: hair entrapment, limb entrapment, body suction entrapment, evisceration/disembowelment and mechanical entrapment. The design requirements and construction practices in this Standard are based upon sound engineering principles, research, and field experience that, when applied properly, provide for a safe installation that exceeds the requirements of the Act.

So although Summer has come and gone, let's make sure our pools are in compliance and, more importantly, *safe* for our children come December. ■



Weather Safety: *HURRICANES*

From NOAA's National Weather Service: www.nws.noaa.gov/om/hurricane/

DURING THE STORM

When in a **Watch** area...

- Listen frequently to radio, TV or NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards for bulletins of a storm's progress.
- Fuel and service your vehicles.
- Inspect and secure mobile home tie-downs.
- Board up windows in case the storm moves quickly and you have to evacuate.
- Stock up on batteries, food that will keep, first aid supplies, drinking water and medications.
- Store lawn furniture and other loose, light-weight objects, such as garbage cans and garden tools.
- Have cash on hand in case power goes out and ATMs don't work.

Plan to evacuate if you...

- Live in a mobile or manufactured home. They are unsafe in high winds no matter how well fastened to the ground.
- Live on the coastline, an offshore island or near a river or flood plain. In addition to wind, flooding from storm surge waves is a major killer.
- Live in a high-rise. Hurricane winds can knock out electricity to elevators, break windows and more.

When in a Warning area...

- Closely monitor radio, TV or NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards for official bulletins.
- Close storm shutters.
- Follow instructions issued by local officials. Leave immediately if ordered!
- If evacuating, leave as soon as possible. Stay with friends or relatives, at a low-rise inland motel or at a designated public shelter outside the flood zone.
- DO NOT stay in a mobile or manufactured home.
- Notify neighbors and a family member outside of the warned area of your evacuation plans.
- Take pets with you if possible, but remember, most public shelters do not allow pets other than those used by the handicapped. Identify pet-friendly motels along your evacuation route.

If Staying in a Home...

- Turn refrigerator to maximum cold and keep closed.
- Turn off utilities if told to do so by authorities.
- Turn off propane tanks.
- Unplug small appliances.
- Fill bathtub and large containers with water in case tap water is unavailable. Use water in bathtubs for cleaning and flushing only. Do NOT drink it.

If Winds Become Strong...

- Stay away from windows and doors, even if they are covered. Take refuge in a small interior room, closet or hallway.
- Close all interior doors. Secure and brace external doors.
- If you are in a two story house, go to an interior 1st floor room.
- If you are in a multi-story building and away from water, go to the 1st or 2nd floor and stay in the halls or other interior rooms away from windows.
- Lie on the floor under a table or other sturdy object.

Be Alert For...

- Tornadoes. They are often spawned by hurricanes.
- The calm "eye" of the storm. It may seem like the storm is over but after the eye passes, the winds will change direction and quickly return

to hurricane force.

- Storm surge flooding. These high waves can be more deadly than hurricane winds. Leave the coast and stay away from low lying areas, creeks, streams and other inland waterways.

AFTER THE STORM

- Keep listening to radio, TV or NOAA Weather Radio.
- Wait until an area is declared safe before entering.
- Watch for closed roads. If you come upon a barricade or a flooded road: Turn Around!
- Avoid weakened bridges and washed out roads.
- Stay on firm ground. Moving water only 6 inches deep can sweep you off your feet. Standing water may be electrically charged from power lines.
- Once home, check gas, water and electrical lines and appliances for damage.
- Use a flashlight to inspect for damage. Never use candles and other open flames indoors.
- Do not drink or prepare food with tap water until officials say it is safe.
- If using a generator, avoid electrocution by following manufacturers instructions and standard electric code.

Helpful websites:

NWS hurricane links/forecasts/assessments:

www.weather.gov/os/hurricane

NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards: www.weather.gov/nwr

National Hurricane Center: www.nhc.noaa.gov

NOAA Hurricane Website: hurricanes.noaa.gov/

American Red Cross: www.redcross.org

Federal Emergency Management Agency: www.fema.gov

HOT TOPIC!

It's hurricane season again. Are you prepared?

Nobody expects an emergency or disaster – especially one that affects them, their employees and their business personally. Yet the simple truth is that emergencies and disasters can strike anyone, anytime, anywhere. You and your employees could be forced to evacuate your facility when you least expect it.

The U.S. Department of Labor has prepared a booklet that is designed to help you – the employer – plan for that possibility. The best way to protect yourself, your workers and your business is to expect the unexpected and develop a well-thoughtout emergency action plan to guide you when immediate action is necessary. For information or to receive a copy of this emergency plan contact the U.S. Department of Labor at www.osha.gov or contact Todd McCarley at the League office at 334-262-2566.

Loss Control Welcomes New FATS Coordinator



The Alabama Municipal Insurance Corporation, Inc. and Municipal Workers Compensation Fund, Inc. welcomes **Chuck Burns** as the Loss Control Department's FATS Coordinator. Chuck retired from the Alabama Department of Public Safety in 2004 with 28 years of service. Upon retirement, he held the rank of Trooper Captain, serving as Chief Examiner for the Driver License Division. Chuck also spent several years with the Highway Patrol Division (traffic enforcement/accident investigation) and in commercial vehicle enforcement with the Motor Carrier Safety Unit.

As FATS Coordinator, Chuck will be responsible for the Loss Control Department's recently upgraded Firearms Training System (FATS) which uses an advanced Bluefire(TM) wireless technology weapon simulator that incorporates features previously available only on tethered weapons. A Bluefire Chemical Spray and Taser are also included with this system as well as the latest in new scenarios.

In an effort to make training more realistic, FATS virtual weapons resemble the fit and function of live weapons to include recoil. FATS virtual training provides accurate, real-time diagnostics including point-of-aim, weapon status, trigger pressure and cant. Since there is no cord attached, the Bluefire Glock 17 improves training value by allowing realistic freedom of movement and magazine reloading. The number of rounds in the Bluefire Glock 17 magazine replicates the number of rounds in the actual weapon. The simulator must also be reloaded with a new magazine each time the magazine is emptied.

Contact Donna Wagner, Loss Control Coordinator, at **334-262-2566**, to schedule FATS in your area. ■

2009 Premium Discounts Available from MWCF

As medical care costs continue to rise, the Municipal Workers Comp Fund (MWCF) works to keep your premiums as low as possible. In 2008, 42% of the 624 MWCF members received a full 10% off their premium by appointing a Safety Coordinator and signing a *Statement of Commitment*, *Post Accident Drug Testing Agreement*, and having an approved Medical Protocol in place.

2009 Statement of Commitment

The *Statement of Commitment* is a two-page document comprised of safety standards that each member endeavors to follow. It is updated annually and mailed out to every member of MWCF during the month of November.

If it is signed and returned by December 1st, a 3% discount will be reflected on the 2009-2010 billing. This two page document must be renewed each year.

Post Accident Drug and Alcohol Testing Program

The Municipal Workers Comp Fund provides an additional 3% discount for those members that commit to a *Post Accident Drug and Alcohol Testing* program. In order to qualify a member must sign a "Participating Commitment" which will be enclosed with the above mentioned document and have such program certified by their attorney that the member's drug and alcohol policy is Fourth Amendment compliant. Unlike the *Statement of Commitment*, this document does not have to be renewed each year.

Medical Protocol

Another 3% discount is available to those members who establish and implement a Medical Protocol. This program is a great benefit to both the member and the claims management team. A sample protocol is included in the mailout for those members not yet having one on file. **For further information regarding this discount, call Tom Roper or Matt Graham at Millennium Risk Managers at 1-888-736-0210.**

MWCF members who participate in all three of these programs will receive a bonus 1% discount giving those members a full 10% discount on their annual premium for 2009! **All members are encouraged to watch for the *Statement of Commitment* information packet coming to you in November and return it promptly to take advantage of these benefits.** It will also be available for downloading from our website by going to the MWCF page at www.alalm.org. ■

Previous issues of this publication can be found by visiting www.amicentral.org or www.alalm.org and clicking on the MWCF link.

Defining Moment

Criminal Conversion is defined as the crime of exerting unauthorized use or control over another's property. Criminal conversion differs from theft in that it does not include the element of intending to permanently deprive the owner of the possession of that property. An example could be tapping someone's cable service or taking a joyride in a car with intent to return it. Note that the "unauthorized" use may begin after a period of authorized use, where, for example, a municipal employee uses his/her assigned vehicle for assigned duties then takes it on vacation without permission from the municipality he or she works for. The employee could be guilty of criminal conversion and coverage for the vehicle may be questionable. The employee may be personally responsible for any damages.

SKID CAR SCHEDULE

REMAINING DATES FOR 2008

- Ashland Oct. 7 – 17
- Fort Payne Oct. 28 – 31
- Orange Beach Nov. 11 – 21
- Montgomery Dec. 9 – 19

For more information, contact Donna Wagner at 334-262-2566.



Dates/locations subject to change.

Popular Safety DVDs

- 2.009 Personal Protective Equipment
- 2.010 Housekeeping on the Jobsite: A Plan for Success
- 4.015/9.092 Back Safety for First Responders
- 5.063 Defensive Driving for Government Employees
- 5.064 Backhoe Operator's Safety and Responsibility
- 5.065 Distractions: Behind the Wheel for Drivers
- 7.105 Groundskeeping Safety: Dealing with Bugs & Critters
- 7.106 Groundskeeping Safety: Be A Pro!
- 7.107 Heat Stress for Public Employees: Seeing Red
- 7.108 Protecting Your Feet: Learning Your ABC's

Call, FAX or e-mail your Video/DVD request to Rachel Wagner at: 334-262-2566; rachelw@alalm.org; or FAX at 334-263-0200.

EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES LAW HOTLINE

1-800-864-5324

Through a toll-free Employment Practices Law Hotline, members can be in direct contact with an attorney specializing in employment-related issues. When faced with a potential employment situation, the hotline provides a no-cost, 30 minute consultation.



*For more information, call:
334-262-2566.*



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