



# Speaking of Safety

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## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 From the President's Desk
- 2 Calendar of Events
- 2 Teen Driving Challenges
- 3 Slips, Trips & Falls
- 4 Child Safety Updates
- 5 Annual Meeting
- 5 Our Mission
- 5 Board of Directors

## From the President's Desk

The Safety Council for Southeast Michigan has been advertising and promoting several important events that we had coming up this fall including two grant-funded training opportunities in September and our important conference "Putting Safety & Health Into Action" scheduled for October. It is with great regret that we must cancel each of these opportunities, which we believe is due to the slow Michigan economy. We have generated interest in our conference and our Susan B. Harwood Grant training courses, however, the volume of registration forms were not enough for the courses or the conference to be successful.

We know that Michigan businesses are being hit hard by the slow economy and constantly fluctuating Wall Street. It seems that everyone is tightening budgets from the corporations to the employees and their families. The Safety Council wants to help our community by continuing to offer safety information and opportunities that aren't a detriment to the budget. The Safety Council's staff, Board of Directors, and trainers can provide the tools needed to keep Michigan's workers safe on the job, at home, and on the road. Please continue to watch our website and news releases for future opportunities.

Even if business is slow, there is no excuse to put safety issues on the back burner. In fact, it's the perfect time to review the corporate safety program and see how business as usual can be improved to help save money. Reducing waste and preventing accidents has a potential to improve the bottom line. In fact, keeping the employees at work and minimizing workers compensation costs will literally put money back in the budget and in our struggling economy. It's a good time to ask "how can we do things more efficiently or safer". If you need help answering these questions, then contact the Safety Council today. We are here to help.

The Safety Council is also continuing to work with legislators on Senate Bill 1066 (SB1066) which just passed the Senate and is now in the house. As we have reported, SB1066 will allow driver's points to be waived upon successful completion of a Basic Driver Safety Course and payment of all fees associated with the offense. This program has been successfully implemented in other states and we hope to see this legislation implemented in Michigan soon. This legislation will improve the overall traffic safety as well as create jobs. SB1066 will get the highest risk drivers into a one-day Basis Driver Safety Course which will teach them safer driving habits. This program will help keep ALL of Michigan citizens safe on the roads. Please write your legislators and ask for their support.

## Calendar of Events

### Register today for these upcoming classes & seminars:

October 24, 2008 - DDC 8, 8:30 am, Safety Council Training Center

November 7, 2008 - DDC-4, 8:30 am, Safety Council Training Center

November 21, 2008 - DDC 8, 8:30 am, Safety Council Training Center



Many of the Safety Council's scheduled training classes take place at the Safety Council Training Center in Bloomfield Hills. However, the Safety Council is able to take our training on the road. If you are interested in a special training opportunity for a group of colleagues, let us bring the training to your job site. The Safety Council's experienced trainers also customize classes to address the specific needs of the of the company or job functions that require the training. In addition, since the Safety Council is a non-profit organization, class prices are affordable to meet the most stringent budgets. Proper safety training is a simple way to improve the bottom line too. Safe employees and job sites equals less workman's compensation claims, days off work, and actually improves productivity. Any formula for success includes a safe workplace.

**Don't wait until an accident costs you too much.** Register for training today. Registration for all classes and seminars ends five (5) business days before listed start date. Payment must be made in advance to complete the registration process. Download our registration form from [www.safetycouncilsemi.org](http://www.safetycouncilsemi.org) under the Calendar page or Classes page.

For a description of class offerings or to register for any class, please contact the Safety Council by phone or email and keep checking the website! Call 248-858-8830 or email us at [info@safetycouncilsemi.org](mailto:info@safetycouncilsemi.org).

## Teen Driving Challenges

Adults do crazy things behind the wheel - eating, taking/making phone calls, fumbling with papers and toys for the kids in the backseat. All of this multi-tasking takes the focus off the road creating an increased risk for vehicle crashes. It also sets a terrible example for new teen drivers.

On September 9, 2008 the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) released a report discussing the question of whether youth and immaturity, or inexperience behind the wheel, contributes to a higher risk of vehicle crashes. Author Allan Williams compared crash rates from 1992-1996 of teen drivers in New Jersey, where licensure age is 17 and the age to obtain a permit is 16, to rates in Connecticut, where 16-year-olds can obtain licenses.

Williams found that New Jersey had a lower death rate for 16-year-olds and a slightly higher death rate for 17-year-olds than those in Connecticut. However, New Jersey's combined rate for 16- and 17-year-olds was still lower than Connecticut's crash rate. The study does not reflect current benefits of graduated driver licensing programs, which were not in effect in the early 1990s. Williams did conclude, however, that delaying permit and licensing ages would result in greater decreases in the crash rate for 16-year-olds when combined with graduated licensing.

The Safety Council has a Teen Driver safety program designed to protect Michigan's teen drivers. This two-hour Parent/Teen program discusses the many challenges that teen drivers face and how the teen and their parent can reduce the risk for vehicle crashes. The course discusses vehicle safety, driving routes and times, who can be in the car with the teen, and what distractions the teen can safely handle. The Teen Driver safety program supports Michigan's graduated licensing program. Both programs can make a great difference in the families of new teen drivers. Contact the Safety Council for more information about this important Teen Driver safety program.

## Slips, Trips & Falls

Slips, trips, and falls is often considered a workplace hazard, but falls are quickly becoming recognized as the major threat to the safety, health, and independence of the elderly. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) reports that in 2005, 15,800 people age 65 and older died from injuries related to unintentional falls; approximately 1.8 million people age 65 and older were treated in emergency rooms for nonfatal injuries resulting from falls, and more than 433,000 of these patients required hospitalization. The National Safety Council reports that 80% of fatal falls are to people age 65 and older.

Data obtained from the CDC website [<http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/factsheets/adultfalls.htm>] indicates that the danger of falls to the elderly are serious. Of the 20% to 30% people who suffer a fall, will suffer moderate to severe injuries including bruises, broken hips, and head trauma. In 2000, traumatic brain injuries accounted for 46% of fatal falls among older adults. Most fractures in older adults are the result of falls. Severe fall injuries can result in long term hospital stays and post hospital physical therapy. In 2000, the direct medical costs attributed to fatal falls was approximately \$179 million and was \$19 billion for non-fatal falls.

With the growth of the elderly population, falls have become a concern to the well being of this age group. However, much of this generation can limit the risk by exercising regularly and focusing on exercises that promote balance and strength. People taking prescription and non-prescription medications should work with their doctor to evaluate their medications to reduce side effects and interactions. Visits to the eye doctor to maintain good vision, improving the lighting in the home, and reducing the slip and trip hazards in the home are also good things to do on a regular basis.

The following tips provided by the National Safety Council to help reduce the risk of falls in the home:

- Reduce clutter, keep phone and electrical cords out of walkways, and keep floors clear of toys, clothes, and other items.
- Keep the floors clean, clean up spilled liquids, and don't wax floors.
- Use non-skid rugs on linoleum and ceramic tile floors to limit the risk of slipping.
- Install handrails along stairways and grab bars in bathrooms near toilets and bathtubs/showers.
- Make sure the house is well lit at night and use nightlights in areas that might be used at night.
- Climbing and reaching high places can present a fall hazard. Use sturdy step stools, with handles, that won't slide when in use.
- Follow medications appropriately as some can have side effects including dizziness and weakness that can result in a fall.

Although seniors have the greatest risk for fatal and nonfatal injuries as a result of falls, children can also receive severe injury as a result of falls. Never leave infants unattended on changing tables, beds, or sofas and always strap children into highchairs and strollers. Use safety gates along stairways for toddlers and early walkers. Keep the stairways clear for children who are capable of walking on stairs. Falls from windows can be prevented by keeping windows closed and locked and keeping furniture away from windows so the children can't climb up to look out the window. These types of dangers may be obvious to most adults, but are not that apparent to children.

Being aware of the slip, trip, and fall hazards in the home, as well as the workplace, is the first step in reducing the risk of falls. Visit [www.nsc.org](http://www.nsc.org) and [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) for more information to help keep you and your family safe.

## Child Safety Updates

### COLD & FLU SEASON

It's that time of year again - time for coughing and running noses and flu shots. If you have children in your household, the Safety Council suggests that you talk to your pediatrician before seeking any medical advice for your children's illnesses this winter. However, the Safety Council does have some tips to keep your children safe when the colds start to arrive.

- Never give children medicine labeled for adult use.
- Always talk to your healthcare provider if there is any question or concern regarding choosing the proper medicine and administering the proper dosage to your child.
- Read all labels before choosing the medicine and look for the proper dosage for your child's age and/or weight.
- Read the "Active Ingredient" portion and use caution if using more than one medicine for your child. Again, seek the guidance of your healthcare professional to avoid an overdose or poisoning.
- Carefully follow the instructions on the label, or given to you by your healthcare professional, and only use the measuring devices provided with the medicine. Do NOT use household spoons as they are not meant for measuring proper dosages of medicines.
- Understand that cough and cold medicines do not treat the illness, they only attempt to alleviate the symptoms. These medicines also do not reduce the length of time that your child might be sick.

Manufacturers of over the counter (OTC) medicines are voluntarily changing instructions on many medicines you might seek this winter. According to the Consumer Healthcare Products Association, new labels on cold and cough medicines will soon include a "Do Not Use" warning for children under 4 years old. This transitional labeling will occur during the 2008-2009 cough and cold season.

The Federal Drug Administration does not currently have clear guidance on children's cold medicines, but has said the drugs should not be given to children younger than 2. Last year, an FDA advisory committee warned against using antihistamines and decongestants for children 2-6 years old because their effectiveness and possible danger had not been thoroughly studied. As always, check with your healthcare professional before administering any medicine to your child.

### CHILD SAFETY SEATS

Earlier this spring, Governor Jennifer Granholm signed into legislation HB 82 which requires the use of booster seats for children between ages 4 and 8 and are less than 4'9" tall. This legislation went into effect on July 1, 2008.

Partners for Child Passenger Safety (PCPS) reports that the risk of injury for a child between age 4 and 8 is reduced by 59 percent when using a car seat or booster seat. Children in seat belts alone are four times more likely to suffer head/brain injuries as compared to those in booster seats. PCPS also indicates that other states that have passed similar laws also have determined that child restraint use increases dramatically when required by law.

There are many different styles and sizes of booster seats and stores may give a consumer an opportunity to fit the booster seat in the car that it will be used in to check for correct fit. The shoulder belt should always sit mid-shoulder, away from the neck, and the lap belt should sit on the child's upper thighs, not the abdomen.

The Safe Kids Michigan Coalition sponsor periodic child safety seat inspections. To find an inspection near you, go to [www.michigansafekids.org](http://www.michigansafekids.org).

## Annual Meeting

The Safety Council held its Annual Meeting on September 24, 2008 at its office in Bloomfield Hills. Discussion included a change from the fiscal year of July 1 through June 30 to a calendar year. This change will help streamline the accounting and various internal processes and will not be a detriment to our membership.

During this last fiscal year, the Safety Council has seen a slight increase in membership, conducted training sessions at a similar rate as the year before, and has voted in several new board members. The golf outing was a success again this year and enjoyed by those who participated. Another success is the new website. The new format was developed by a private contractor, Mania Interactive, and is being updated by Safety Council staff.

Jack Mihalko, President/CEO has been in contact with the National Safety Council and attended their Annual Conference to learn about the new programs being released. Relying on NSC and using many of the functions and programs that NSC has put in place will streamline the services offered by the Safety Council.

For more information regarding the Annual Meeting, please contact the Safety Council office at 248-858-8830.

## Our Mission

The Safety Council for Southeast Michigan is a not-for-profit, public service organization. As the primary leader, our purpose is to provide the highest quality health and safety information, education, and training programs for our members and the community.

The Council's goal is to prevent injuries and illnesses, and property loss concerning every aspect of a person's life. This will be accomplished through open communication and networking by our organization with Council members and the community.

## Board of Directors

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