

September 13th Is Positive Thinking Day

September 13th is all about attitude... a positive attitude. "Positive thinking reaps a lot of benefits. Studies show that positive thinking is not just good for our emotional well-being, but also our mental health. It has the power to reduce the risk of heart diseases and alleviate stress and anxiety. Studies have also shown that positive thinking can increase a person's life span and keep them healthy for a longer period. In fact, positive thinking is so crucial to your body, that it can help build immunity and resistance towards minor illnesses such as the common cold."

Source: <https://nationaltoday.com/positive-thinking-day/>

September's quote: "It takes just a moment to change your attitude. And, in that quick moment, you can change your entire day." – Author Unknown.

LAW ENFORCEMENT AND CORRECTIONS

Todd Duncan, Law Enforcement and Safety Specialist

Avoiding Deer-Vehicle Collisions

Slow down and be aware—especially at dawn and dusk and in the fall.

When we think of fall in Nebraska we think of Husker football, cooler weather, and fall colors. Fall also marks the beginning of deer breeding season, hunting season, and shorter daylight hours. As a result, there will be a significant increase in deer activity as well as deer-vehicle collisions on Nebraska roadways.

Nationwide, about 1.5 million deer-vehicle collisions occur every year resulting in roughly 200 fatalities, 10,000 injuries, and \$1 billion in property damage¹. The Midwest is one of the highest risk areas for deer-vehicle collisions in the country, and Nebraska is no exception. According to the latest Nebraska Department of Transportation crash data there were 2,412 animal-vehicle collisions statewide in 2020, a vast majority involved deer, and three were fatal².

While fall is a peak season for deer-vehicle collisions, time of day is also a big factor. The most dangerous times for deer-vehicle collisions are dusk and dawn. These are the times when deer are most active, and drivers have less visibility due to reduced lighting. Deer-vehicle collisions can occur just about anywhere, but drivers should use extra caution when traveling near wooded areas, water, or where deer-crossing signs are posted.

Here are a few things you can do to avoid deer-vehicle collisions and minimize risk:

- **Slow down.** Watch for deer, especially around dawn and between the hours of 6 p.m. and 9 p.m. when they're most active and visibility is low. If you see an animal on the side of the road, slow down.
- **Stay alert.** Watch from side to side as you drive, especially in areas of low visibility or where shrubs or grasses are near the road. At night when traffic permits, use your high beams at night to see farther ahead and watch for the eye-shine of deer near road edges.

Avoiding Deer-Vehicle Collisions – *continued*

- **Be aware.** Look out for deer-crossing signs and wooded areas where animals are likely to travel. If you travel the same route to and from work every day, you may find deer consistently grazing in the same fields. Make a mental note of when and where you regularly see the animals.
- **Brake don't swerve.** Swerving to avoid an animal can put you at risk for hitting another vehicle or losing control of your car. It can also confuse the animal as to which way to go. Instead, just slow down as quickly and safely as you can. Your odds for surviving an accident are better when hitting an animal than when hitting another car.
- **Assume they have friends.** "Where there's one, there are usually more" often holds true. Deer travel in groups, so if you see one run across the road, expect others to follow.
- **Don't rely on deer whistles.** These are aftermarket devices that some drivers put on their front bumpers to scare off animals, but there is little scientific evidence that car-mounted deer whistles actually work.
- **Buckle up.** A seat belt is your best defense for minimizing your risk in a crash. An Insurance Institute for Highway Safety study found that most of the people killed in animal-vehicle collisions weren't wearing their seat belts. Motorcycle riders account for more than half the fatalities, and among that group, nearly half the riders who died were not wearing helmets.

Please contact Todd at 531-510-7446 or tduncan@nirma.info if you have any questions or to request training.

¹ Gary Wickert, "Subrogating the Deer in the Headlights," Claims Journal, October 4, 2018, <https://www.claimsjournal.com/news/national/2018/10/04/287048.htm>

² "Standard Summary of Nebraska Motor Vehicle Traffic Accidents," Nebraska Department of Transportation, 2020, <https://dot.nebraska.gov/media/115099/2020-statewide-summary.pdf>

NIRMA's Self Defense for County Officials Conference October 20-21, 2022 Younes Conference Center North, Kearney, NE

Our 2022 lineup features nearly 19 hours of educational sessions and other provoking content that will motivate and re-energize you to return to work with a stronger sense of purpose and positive mindset.

Something New this Year:

NIRMA IT Help Desk

Need some hands-on assistance with our members-only online tools? Stop by the registration desk on Wednesday afternoon. NIRMA staff members will be on hand with laptops, ready to help. They can answer questions about the Origami software or show you how to navigate the Interact Portal section of our website containing

GENERAL SAFETY

By Chad Engle, Loss Prevention and Safety Specialist Manager

ANSI Updates to First Aid Kit Standards

The American National Standard for Minimum Requirements for Workplace First Aid Kits and Supplies has been revised. The revised standard was approved on April 15, 2022 and will go into effect on October 15, 2022. The American National Standards Institute/International Safety Equipment Association standard Z308.1 – 2021 is the sixth revision of a voluntary industry consensus standard. Its objective is to standardize first aid kits to ensure that items needed to treat common types of workplace injuries and sudden illnesses are accessible and available.

The updates that you need to be aware of are:

- A foil blanket is now a mandatory item for both kit classes, A or B. The foil blanket shall be a metalized plastic sheet, minimum size of 52 x 84 in. and shall be single use.
- Tourniquets (arterial) shall be at least 1.5 in. wide and effective on limbs ranging from 7 to 33 in. The update specifies that tourniquets used for drawing blood are insufficient to meet the criteria in the standard. Common tourniquets that meet the standard utilize a ratchet or windlass to reach full occlusion.
- Expanded guidance via the index on a separately packaged bleeding control kit, such as “Stop the Bleed” kits. These kits should be uniquely packaged and designated containing more advanced supplies to immediately treat victims with life-threatening external bleeding.
- A more robust discussion to assist the employer in assessing risks and identifying potential hazards to determine what additional first aid supplies would be needed in a particular application or work environment.

Class A first aid kits are intended to provide a more basic range of products to deal with common injuries that occur in the workplace. Things like major wounds, minor wounds (cuts and abrasions), minor burns and eye injuries. This type of first aid kit would be appropriate for a courthouse or administrative environment.

Class B first aid kits are intended to provide a broader range and quantity of supplies to deal with injuries that may occur in a more populated, complex and/or high-risk environment. This type of first aid kit would be appropriate for a shop environment where employees are subjected to more severe hazards.

The standard also identifies four types of first aid kit containers. A Type I container is intended for basic indoor environments, mounted in a fixed location. A Type II container is intended for portable use in an indoor setting. Type III containers are intended for portable use indoors and sheltered use outdoors. A Type IV container is intended for outdoor use in settings where the environment could easily cause damage to the supplies.

It is also important to note that all work environments are different. The need for additional first aid supplies should be evaluated based on the specific hazards in your work environment, the number of employees in your work environment and your organization’s specific loss history.

Lastly, do not forget to inspect your first aid kits regularly and following any incident where it was used. Identify what items need to be restocked or replaced due to expiration so that the kit is always ready to serve your employees should an injury occur.

As always, I can be contacted at 1.800.642.6671 or chad@nirma.info should you have any questions or to request training.

HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

By K C Pawling, Road Safety and Loss Prevention Specialist

Your equipment might be ready, what about you?

September already. I really don't know if it is just me, but I certainly feel like Fall has arrived a little sooner than it typically does. Yes, I know that is not possible but again, it sure feels like it. With Fall sneaking in and my habit of forward thinking, I start thinking about all that needs to be done before the onset of, do I dare to say...winter.

So, with the first day of Fall being September 22, our focus as road departments is going to change with the season. We are going to start thinking about what we need to do to get our equipment ready for winter, but have we thought about ourselves as operators? I don't know if it is because I have been dealing with my own health struggles, but I have been thinking about how stressful winter and moving snow can be on the operators.

I wanted to talk about OUR physical winter readiness with enough time for some action to be made if that is what is desired. We are reminded typically with the first snow fall that the frequency of heart attacks increases, slips, trips, and falls generally increase due to ice that develops overnight. As a reminder, during the cold weather months the muscles in our bodies become more tense. When all your joints and muscles are tighter, they're less flexible, making them more susceptible to strains, sprains, and tears.

Our motor graders, loaders, and trucks are generally not designed with ease of entry and exit in mind. With the addition of ice into the mix, we can become very susceptible to the injuries listed above. What are we doing to avert injuries that can occur during a slip this winter? Along with wearing the proper PPE, and some extra situational awareness, consider adopting some department stretching exercises. I was at one time employed by a company that had a significant rise in muscle sprains and strains. The company safety department decided that we would, companywide, adopt some pre-shift stretches. I want you to understand that at first there was many of us that thought it was silly and a waste of time, but we soon figured out that it did help with the injuries. As time went on, we also figured out that it was a good time to discuss any pre-shift issues, and if nothing else, we told a few jokes.

If that does not seem like a possibility, consider doing some simple stretching exercises at home before reporting to work. If you're thinking, why is he bringing this up now, it is because it takes time for your body to change when you start stretching. You will need to start slow and give your body time to change. It sure seems like it does not take long for us to get out of shape and much longer to get back into shape.

I know this is a slippery slope (pun intended) that we can head down. There are so many different contributing factors to our physical well being in the winter. I don't want to say that there is any one precaution that is more important than another. I do believe that if you take the next couple months to find and implement a stretching routine, you will save yourself a little pain and agony. If you need any assistance, let us know what we can do to help. Let's make sure everyone makes it home every night.

Please contact KC at 402-310-4417 or kcpawling@nirma.info if you have any questions or to request training.

Hope to see you at the Conference – October 20 -21, 2022