



# City Safe

A Guide To Assist In Training  
Employees About:

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## Proper Use of a Safety Committee

Number 30

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## Energy Drinks Not Good for Working Safely?

Here's a warning for your employees, especially those performing safety-sensitive tasks; high sugar, low-caffeine energy drinks may make them sleepier.

That's the result of a study at the Sleep Research Centre in the UK (so it seems there is some truth to the so-called "sugar crash").

Participants consumed either a high or low-sugar drink after getting only five hours of sleep the night before. The low amount of caffeine in both drinks was the same.

Task performance for both groups was the same for the first 30 minutes. But by 50 minutes, the performance of those who had the high-sugar drink started to slip, and they became significantly sleepier.

However, other recent research by the Sleep Medicine and Research Center in St. Louis shows that drinking a high-caffeine drink followed by a short nap will boost concentration.

So the remedy for employees who experience drowsiness after an occasional sleep-deprived night is caffeine and not sugar.

And a better remedy may be a caffeinated drink followed by a 20-minute nap, if possible.

Of course, if a person is literally falling asleep at a safety-sensitive job, they should clock out so they don't injure themselves and their co-workers.

INFO: [snipurl.com/sleep\\_nap](http://snipurl.com/sleep_nap)

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# New Study: Pesticide Exposure: Bigger Danger for Workers

A new study shows it's more important than ever to warn outdoor workers about the dangers of exposure to pesticides.

Workers exposed to pesticides are 70% more likely to develop Parkinson's Disease 10 to 20 years later, a new study in *Annals of Neurology* reports.

Parkinson's is typically diagnosed late in life, but rodent studies at Emory University show brain deterioration starts early.

And pesticides make brain cells more vulnerable to a Parkinson's inducing toxin.

Highest risk groups? Farmers, ranchers, or fishermen are 14 times more likely to be exposed.

But anyone working outdoors is at risk. Pesticides drift from where they're applied. And while many pesticides are banned today, chemicals can stay in the soil for decades.

In order to protect workers from pesticides, ask them to:

- Wash hands and face before eating, drinking, chewing gum, or tobacco and before using the toilet
- Wear protective work clothes
- If pesticide is sprayed on you, wash it off with clean water right away
- After work, shower with soap and water, and shampoo hair ASAP
- Wash your work clothes separately before wearing them again

Cite: [snipurl.com/PesticideProtection](http://snipurl.com/PesticideProtection)

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# GOING FOR THE GOLD IN ANDOVER

Each month in the CompControl, we list member cities that are designated Safe Cities. The Safety Certification Program is a partnership between the member city, KMIT, and IMA to assist in the proactive prevention of accidents and claims. The highest level of achievement is the gold. Andover, a KMIT member city since 1995, has recently acquired the gold designation. City Safe contacted Andover Management Assistant Sasha Stiles to talk about the Andover experience.

Sasha explained that there were three key activities that had lead to their success.

- **Using the IMA on-site visit as an opportunity for improved safety**

Each KMIT city is visited by the IMA staff each year for an inspection and review of the city's current facilities and potential areas or practices that might lead to claims. Andover used IMA staff member Renee Rhodes' visit to meet with her and take a tour of city buildings and see Andover from her perspective. When the tour was completed, the staff met with Renee and reviewed her list of suggestions. This list became a guide and checklist for improvements and changes.

- **Reinstituting the Safety Committee**

In order for safety to become a conscious part of the organization there must be participation at all levels. Andover reformed their safety committee with members from all of the departments, Wastewater, Parks, Fire, Police, Administration, and Streets. The checklist mentioned above became the starting point for the committee's agenda. Each department was actively involved in making the changes or corrections that were suggested.

The monthly meetings have an agenda and minutes are taken and distributed so everyone has a clear idea of the actions to be taken before the next meeting. Sasha explained that the meetings are not long and drawn out, some months only 10 minutes are required to update the checklist and discuss new ideas.

Perhaps the most important part of the safety committee's work has been the building of awareness of safety in the organization. This awareness has lead to the third key point for Andover.

- **Training**

The Andover Fire Department conducted CPR training for 76 employees. This allowed the Fire Department to show their expertise to other city employees and significantly increased the number of CPR trained individuals. Employees are a great place to start a CPR effort. Not only do they increase their skills for any emergency situations at work, they carry those into the community and are a resource for family, friends, neighbors, and strangers in need.

The Andover Parks and Street crews conduct a "tool-box" safety meeting each month. These presentations may only last five minutes, but they keep safe practices on the minds of all crew members. They also watch safety videos from the IMA library occasionally for a new perspective on a safety topic.

- **Next Steps**

The next step for Andover's safety committee is the review of any accident and claims to look for ways to avoid repeating that type of injury. It is important to remember that the purpose of accident review is fact-finding, not fault-finding. Reviewing safety equipment use, equipment needs, and procedures can go a long way to prevent future claims.

Andover has done a great job with embracing the safety message and concept. These efforts really pay off in premium savings with your experience ratings. Andover enjoys the second lowest experience modification of all 140 KMIT cities at 0.77. In 2000, their experience modification was 1.04. That is amazing in just five years. Safety is a combination of awareness, prevention, and training as well as a bit of good luck.

If your city would like to save money, here are the lessons from Andover.

1. Use the IMA on-site visit as an opportunity to improve your city's safety practices and procedures.
2. Form a safety committee with interested and enthusiastic representatives who will look for opportunities to make safety a part of all city operations.
3. Consider both one-time training for a wide array of employees, such as CPR, and on-going training for those positions that face the greatest exposure to accidents.

KMIT and IMA hope your city goes for the gold.

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## **The Importance of Communicating Safety Rules with Bilingual Workers**

As our workforces become more diverse, we can't assume that everyone's first language is English. More bilingual workers are being hired and that creates new challenges for safety training.

Here are some tips for the effective training of bilingual workers:

- Make sure the safety message is understood. Don't assume that a nod of the head means that the message was received.
- If possible, or if in doubt, offer the training in the worker's native language. Make sure immigrants can read and write in their own language. Signed copies of safety procedures won't mean much if the worker cannot read or understand English.

## **REMINDER: THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN PURCHASING OFFICE FURNITURE**

When your city is considering replacing office furniture there are a couple of things to consider.

1. Remember most office furniture will be used for many years and likely by several employees. Don't assume the employee that will initially use the furniture is the only person it must fit.
2. Because employees come in all shapes and sizes, it is important to buy furniture that allows for maximum adjustments. This does not only mean the chair, but the work surfaces as well. Raising or lowering the chair and workstation to fit the employee will help avoid strains and claims.
3. Consider the nature of the work that is done at that location and purchase furniture that is designed specifically for that type of task. Although most use computers at desks that may not have been designed for them, it is very important for those positions that are spending hours each day on the computer that they have a workstation designed for long-term computer usage.



If you have questions about this subject, please contact Renee Rhodes at IMA for suggestions on how to measure and adjust workstations to help avoid common repetitive motion injuries.

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