

# COMP CONTROL<sup>©</sup>

## *The Official KMIT Member Resource*

### Four-Step Process to Create a Strong Safety Committee and Improve Your Safety Program

This article is the first in a two part series dealing with the importance of a safety committee and its role in the success of a safety program.

For many organizations, the safety committee is at the heart of an effective safety program. Strong committee members are enthusiastic about safety, and they transfer that enthusiasm to the entire organization.

Even if you have nothing resembling a safety committee, developing a good one is not as hard as you might think. Starting from scratch should not be intimidating. Rather, it should be viewed as a wonderful opportunity to get your safety program off the ground.

#### Step 1 Lay the Groundwork

One of the biggest reasons that safety committees fail is because they are not well thought out. Instead, they are hastily put together to satisfy a regulatory requirement or to appease insurance company underwriters. It stands to reason that committees are sometimes not up to par.

That is why the most important step you can take in designing a safety committee is to lay the groundwork. This should begin at the top. Upper management should be fully supportive of the safety committee concept, and the president or CEO should make it known that the committee is a top priority.

To foster this kind of support, supervisors need to identify and communicate with management personnel who will be involved with or affected by the safety



committee. To do this, you must emphasize some of the key components of the committee including:

- the committee's purpose;
- when the committee will start;
- why the committee is necessary; and
- the type of support needed from management for the committee to succeed.

After you have gained management's support, the next step is to begin to educate employees. You can invite employee participation in the safety committee through group meetings, newsletters, one-on-one discussions, memos, or postings.

It is important that you do not let your instructional efforts be a one-time thing. You can continue to use the same information tools to keep employees informed about safety committee results, decisions, and progress.

#### Step 2 Select Enthusiastic Members

As you start to educate employees about the safety committee, the natural question many employees may ask is whether they will be chosen as a committee member. Do not be surprised if some employees embrace the idea of being part of the committee more than others.

It is important to give careful thought to whom you select. A safety committee member should exhibit most of these qualities:

- Dedication to the prevention of injuries and illnesses
- Interest in serving
- Good people skills
- Good communication skills
- Ability to accept divergent viewpoints
- Credibility
- Ability to get things done

Be sure to give careful consideration to the makeup of the committee. Too many members from one department or management level may result in a distorted view of the organization. Since safety affects everyone, it is wise to tailor membership to include as many divisions or authority levels as possible. You may even elect to give employees the responsibility of selecting their own representatives to lead the committee.

Once membership has been settled, committee members, as well as management, should be informed. Supervisors need to know if one of their subordinates is on the committee so they are aware of the time needs and possible compensation requirements.

Initial training for safety committee members should include a set of rules on how the committee will function. A copy of the rules, bylaws, operating procedures, and other infrastructure materials should be given to each member.

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## Letter from the Pool Administrator

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CompControl is a publication of the League of Kansas Municipalities and the Kansas Municipal Insurance Trust distributed for the purpose of educating and informing cities about loss control methods and risk management. If you have any questions concerning KMIT workers' compensation or risk management that you would like to see answered in this newsletter, please direct those inquiries to:

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Dear KMIT Member:

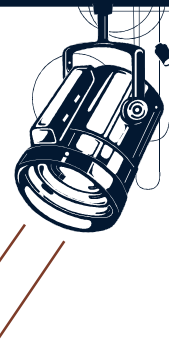
Happy St. Patrick's Day! We know that the first part of the year is always busy for KMIT members with payroll audits and safety inspections. We sincerely appreciate your cooperation and willingness to participate in these activities. We are always looking for input. If you have any ideas on how to make these processes smoother, please share them with us.

One of the services KMIT provides on a regular basis is to monitor the activities of the Kansas Legislature as it relates to workers' compensation. As many of you have heard, there are some members of the legislature that are considering the elimination of the "exclusive remedy" provision which is currently part of the workers' compensation statutes. This provision holds employers harmless from additional litigation if an employee accepts work comp benefits. Eliminating this provision could result in increased lawsuits and higher rates. There are also discussions being held regarding the increase of benefits paid to employees who have been injured. We would all like our employees to receive more, but we have to closely monitor the affect that increased benefits would have on your rates—i.e. how much you pay for workers' compensation coverage. We will be monitoring these issues closely and will let you know if we need your assistance.

Thank you for your continued participation in the pool. We enjoy having your city as a member.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Findley  
Senior Program Manager



# "Safe City" Spotlight on Concordia

The City of Concordia, located in the north central part of Kansas in Cloud County, was incorporated in August of 1872. It is home to the Brown Grand Theatre, Cloud County Museum, Nazareth Motherhouse, Frank Carlson Memorial Library, Camp Concordia, and Cloud County Community College. Concordia is a city of the second class with a manager/commission form of government and a population of 5,594. There are 50 full-time, 1 part-time, 61 seasonal, and 18 volunteer employees. KMIT has been proud to serve the City since it joined the pool in January of 1996.

The City of Concordia has both a safety officer and a safety committee. City Manager Stan Smith has been designated as the safety officer. In this role, Stan is responsible for implementing the City's injury and illness prevention program. Stan is also instrumental in establishing workplace objectives, assisting in accident investigations and safety inspections, maintaining safety training records, encouraging the reporting of unsafe conditions, and promoting a safe workplace.

The safety committee is made up of city employees. This committee is responsible for the following:

- Periodically inspecting work areas, machinery, equipment, appliances, and working conditions;
- Reviewing safety programs and practices;
- Developing an annual safety training program that will offer a variety of topics for all employees;
- Investigating accidents and their causes, seeking preventive measures, and making recommendations for improving safety;
- Encouraging and reviewing employee safety suggestions;
- Initiating investigations of hazardous conditions or unsafe workplace practices; and

- Verifying abatement action taken in reaction to health and safety citations at the request of OSHA.

The City has incorporated a comprehensive safety program for all city employees to ensure a safe working environment free of unnecessary hazards. Safety training is offered throughout the year on the following topics: CPR; first aid; trenching and shoring; fire extinguisher operation; confined space entry; bloodborne pathogens; hazard communication; and personal protective equipment. Supplying personal protective equipment for all employees is another preventive step that has been taken to help ensure the safety of the City's employees.

The prevention of accidents is an objective important to all levels of the City's operations. It is a basic requirement that each supervisor make the safety of employees an integral part of his/her regular functions. It is equally the duty of each employee to accept and follow established safety regulations and procedures. Employees are encouraged to assist in accident prevention activities and report unsafe conditions.

The City has a designated physician which provides benefits because the city only deals with one medical office and its staff. At the same time, this allows the doctor to become familiar with and understand the needs and expectations of the City.

A policy allowing injured employees to return to work in a restricted capacity that will not jeopardize the healing process or the health and safety of the employee, coworkers, or the general public, has also been incorporated into Concordia's safety program.

A safe and accident free workplace is the City of Concordia's number one goal. KMIT is pleased to spotlight the City's efforts as a shining example for other KMIT member cities.

# 1999 Results *Member Services Survey*

The following is a summary of the results for the 1999 Member Services Survey. This survey is essential to the administrative staff of the Kansas Municipal Insurance Trust. It provides them with valuable insight into the pool's areas of strengths, as well as its areas that may need improvement. Your KMIT Board of Trustees and the pool's administrative staff wish to provide you with the best services available. Our appreciation goes to the 24 KMIT member cities that responded to the survey.



## Member Services Survey 1999

Workers' Compensation Insurance for Kansas Cities

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Paul Davis, Risk Control, has been courteous and helpful?	9	9	1	
Safety visits from IMA staff were productive and provided relevant information?	8	12	1	
KMIT's CompControl newsletter contained pertinent and useful information?	7	15		
Teach Tools contained pertinent and useful information?	8	12	1	
IMA provided accurate and timely claims processing?	13	7		
IMA was courteous and helpful when called upon to answer questions?	15	6		
League staff handles KMIT requests quickly and efficiently?	15	5		
Overall, the city is pleased with the effectiveness of the pool?	12	9		

# Claims

## 2000 Frequency and Cost Analysis—Top 5 1/1/00 through 12/31/00

### By Job Classification

Classification	Frequency	Claim Costs
Police Officers & Drivers	2	\$ 8,200
Waterworks Operators/Drivers	4	\$ 1,600
Hospital: Veterinary & Drivers	3	\$ 800
Clerical Office	2	\$ 800
Electric/Light/Power	4	\$ 800

### By Accident Type

Type	Frequency	Claim Costs
Fall or slip from same or different level	5	\$ 9,000
Strain or injury by lifting, pushing, or pulling	5	\$ 1,875
Fall or slip on ice or from liquid/grease spills	3	\$ 800
Cut/puncture/scrape	3	\$ 800
Struck or injured by falling or flying object	2	\$ 400

### By Part of Body

Part of Body	Frequency	Claim Costs
Upper Arm/Shoulder	5	\$ 1,875
Knee	5	\$ 800
Hand/Finger(s)	5	\$ 800
Lower Back Area	3	\$ 1,200
Eye(s)	2	\$ 400

## Number of Claims Reported

**Monthly** December 1, 1999 to December 31, 1999 — 32 claims reported  
January 1, 2000 to January 31, 2000 — 33 claims reported

**Year-to-Date** January 1, 2000 to January 31, 2000 — 33 claims reported

Note—The above figures are based on claims reported as of 1/31/00. The figures are based on actual accident dates, not date reported. Amounts listed for claim costs are amounts incurred to date.

Your Pool in Action

# Member Notes

## Safety *success*



The following cities have not reported any claims in 2000 as of 1/31/00.

Andale	Fort Scott	Kinsley	Paola
Basehor	Fowler	Lenora	Park City
Bel Aire	Galena	Lucas	Princeton
Beverly	Gasco	Maize	Ransom
Bird City	Glen Elder	Marysville	Rose Hill
Bison	Greeley	McFarland	Sedan
Brewster	Grenola	Melvern	Sedgwick
Centralia	Hiawatha	Minneapolis	Tescott
Chautauqua	Hill City	Moline	Tonganoxie
Cheney	Hillsboro	Montezuma	Treece
Cherryvale	Hoisington	Mound City	Turon
Concordia	Holcomb	Neodesha	Valley Center
Conway Springs	Hoxie	Oberlin	Wakefield
Council Grove	Independence	Olpe	Walton
DeSoto	Jetmore	Osage City	Wellington
Elkhart	Johnson City	Oskaloosa	
Esbon	Kingman	Ozawkie	

### Calendar of Events

#### March

- Workplace Eye Health and Safety Month

5-11 Save Your Vision Week

#### April

- Alcohol Awareness Month
- Occupational Therapy Month

3-9 National Public Health Week  
 7 KMIT Board Meeting, Topeka  
 7 World Health Day  
 7-9 Alcohol-Free Weekend

#### May

- National Electrical Safety Month

5 Kansas PRIMA, Emporia  
 6-13 National SAFE KIDS Week  
 14-20 National Running/Fitness Week  
 14-2 National Emergency Medical Service Week  
 17 National Employee Health/Fitness Day

#### June

- National Safety Month
- National Fireworks Safety Month

TBA KMIT Board Meeting

## K M I T

Balance Sheet  
 February 29, 2000

Assets	
Cash in Bank	229,351
Investments	2,309,438
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>2,538,789</b>
Liabilities & Equity	
Claims Payable	(196,555)
Reserved for Losses	491,521
Incurred But Not Reported (IBNR)	1,761,623
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>2,056,589</b>
KMIT Equity	482,200
<b>Total Liabilities and Equity</b>	<b>2,538,789</b>

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