

Wise Words

State of Alabama · Department of Finance · Division of Risk Management

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**FIRE
SAFETY**

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Fire Loss

Loss control specialists from DORM travel regularly throughout the state to survey properties which are covered under the State Insurance Fund (SIF). While performing these surveys, the specialists make recommendations to prevent the loss of life and property, including steps which may be taken to reduce the risk of loss due to fires.

Over the past decade, 309 fire losses have been reported to the SIF. These events resulted in more than **\$30 million** in costs to the SIF. Fires cause severe damage to equipment, materials, and structures. To help reduce your chance of fire and smoke damage, DORM would like to emphasize some common recommendations:

1. Fire extinguishers must be properly mounted and serviced by a certified company .
2. Flammable substances and equipment must be stored properly .
3. Electrical rooms must be clear of all flammable materials.
4. Exits must be clear of clutter, properly marked, and have proper locking mechanisms.
5. Cooking areas must have UL approved fire suppression systems which are inspected annually.

Fire suppression systems can yield substantial rate credit if: automatic sprinkler systems are properly installed throughout the building; the structure is under contract for inspection and certification annually by a certified sprinkler service company; AND the building is properly reported to DORM. A copy of the maintenance contract and the inspection reports on each building should be sent to DORM before June 30th each year.

For questions about fire prevention/safety or questions about rate credits, please contact DORM's office at (334) 223-6120.

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Ann Jackson Retires



Ann Jackson served as a Claims Representative for the State Employee Injury Program since March of 2002.

Throughout her years with DORM, Ann said she enjoyed most helping people who needed assistance. Realizing that work-related injuries are traumatic, she always strove to be patient and to explain procedures to claimants as clearly as possible. Ann made a significant contribution to our subrogation efforts, and she worked hard to save the state money.

Ann expressed her appreciation to various state agencies that worked with her, especially the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. She also acknowledged her co-workers at DORM who are very dear to her. She says, “they have been my rock through many trials and struggles. I will forever cherish them.”

Ann looks forward to retirement and being able to dedicate more of her time to her “passion hobby” she loves so much —custom window treatments and bedding.

Ann says she has met wonderful people within the State workforce over the years, and they have become lifelong friends. She says, “state workers work hard for their money and they deserve all the praise I can give them. It has truly been my honor to have known them.”

Ann, you will truly be missed. Congratulations!

Time to Certify

State Insurance Fund Certifications will be mailed in May, 2016. Check your listing of items to ensure your values and coverages are up-to-date. If you have questions, contact the Underwriting Department: (334) 223-6120.

Note: Changes can be made at any time during the year! Don't wait—call Underwriting as soon as changes occur (i.e. construction, vacancy, adding or removing property).

Rate Credits for Automatic Sprinkler Systems:

Don't forget... have your fire suppression sprinkler systems inspected and certified annually AND send the report to DORM's Underwriting Department by *June 30th*. Credit can only be applied IF we receive a copy of the maintenance contract and inspection report.

Bleacher Safety 101

One of DORM's primary concerns regarding the State Insurance Fund is to promote safe practices in order to protect life and property. In school environments, our primary goal is to ensure that employees and students have a safe place to learn, work and play.

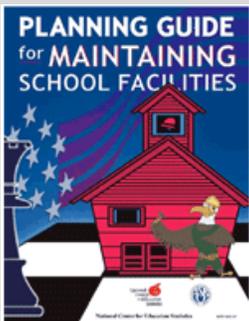
As both indoor and outdoor bleachers are frequently sources of safety issues, we present the following list of 10 common bleacher safety concerns. Keep in mind that this is only a partial list. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) has standards for grandstands, folding and telescopic seating and tents and membrane structures. That information can be found at www.nfpa.org.



- All bleachers must be inspected annually (every other year by a third party licensed structural engineer or professional).
- Bleachers must be properly anchored in place (inside to wall and floor; outside to ground or slab).
- Bleachers over 30 inches above grade must have side and back rails.
- The perimeter railing or fencing must be at least 42 inches above any walking surface (includes seat planks).
- Bleachers can't have any gaps greater than four inches (includes the spacing between rungs on railings and between the footboard and seats).
- Cracks in concrete bleachers and/or support walls must be inspected by a structural engineer, and if required, repaired immediately.
- Broken or damaged parts of all bleachers must be repaired using genuine replacements parts (inside and outside bleachers).
- Bleachers must have an access row/aisle between every nine seats for inside bleachers and every 20 seats for outside bleachers.
- All aisles must be 48 inches wide for inside bleachers and 36 inches wide for outside bleachers.
- The space underneath a grandstand must be kept free of flammable or combustible materials, unless protected by an automatic sprinkler system.

For questions regarding bleacher safety and the reduction of risk, please contact our Loss Control Department at (334) 223-6120.

Planning Guide For Maintaining School Facilities



The "Planning Guide For Maintaining School Facilities" is a valuable resource available to school district staff members who plan, manage and carry out facility maintenance. *The Planning Guide* was developed to help readers better understand why and how to develop, implement, and evaluate a facilities maintenance plan.

It focuses on areas including the needs of an education audience, strategies and procedures for planning, implementing, and evaluating effective maintenance programs, and recommendations based on "best practices," rather than mandates.

The Planning Guide is the product of the National Cooperative Education Statistics System and the collaboration of the National Forum on Education Statistics and the Association of School Business Officials International (ASBO®).

This document is available at the following link: <http://nces.ed.gov/forum/publications.asp>.

EAP Training Schedule in April for State Employees

The State Employee Assistance Program (EAP) will provide seminars in April discussing “Improving Communication Skills and Workplace Professionalism” which benefit all employees of participating state agencies. The training is designed to improve employee performance and management of their job responsibilities and life-related issues. This one-hour seminar will be presented throughout the state at various locations, and it is open to employees of agencies which participate in our State EAP services.

Locations for April training seminars include:

April 6– Birmingham

April 7 - Tuscaloosa

April 13 - Montgomery

April 14 - Mobile

April 21 - Huntsville

April 28 - Dothan

Please register early! Space is limited at each location above.

Supervisors are encouraged to allow as many employees as possible to attend the seminar held near your location. The number of requested slots that we confirm for each session will be based on a first come, first served basis.

For questions regarding EAP seminars, please contact the State EAP office by phone at (334) 223-6153 *or by email at* EAP.information@finance.alabama.gov.

Registrations should be submitted by email through your agency's training coordinator.

The Role of the Supervisor for EAP Referrals

A supervisory referral is a resource that helps supervisors assist employees who may be having personal or professional problems that are affecting their work. The employee may exhibit an unacceptable deterioration of productivity, serious conflicts with co-workers, observable signs and symptoms of substance abuse or other mental health issues that affect their performance on the job.

Steps in a Supervisory Referral:

1. Download the “Supervisor’s Referral Form” from www.riskmgt.alabama.gov; select “Employee Assistance Program” to access the form.
2. Contact Behavioral Health Systems (BHS) at 800-245-1150 to discuss the referral with a Care Coordinator.
3. Fill out the form.
4. Schedule a meeting with your employee to discuss the referral.
5. Explain the reason for the referral.
6. Have your employee read the acknowledgement section and sign it.
7. Confirm that the employee understands that they have 5 business days to call BHS to comply with this referral request.
8. Discuss the importance of complying with the referral and encourage your employee to use this opportunity to make positive changes.
9. Contact the BHS Care Coordinator to notify them that you are faxing the completed form with a copy of the employee job description and all supporting documents for the reason for the referral. Forms should be faxed to (205) 879-1178.

What to Expect Following a Referral

Upon completion of the initial assessment, a verbal report will be given and a written report will follow to the supervisor. The report will include any recommendations made by the provider to remedy the situation. Because each employee situation is different, no timeframe for completion of the supervisory referral process can be determined; however, ongoing monitoring and communication occurs between BHS and the supervisor throughout the course of the referral.