

# Make A Difference.



Department Safety Day Idea Book  
April 5, 2000.

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**How should you observe Department Safety Day? There are many answers to this question. In fact, when it was recently posed to employees throughout Department of the Interior, the answers received were as diverse as the group of respondents.**

**This book contains a representative sample of ideas collected. While all of them do not apply to all work sites, we have tried to include something for everyone. Use this book as a guide in deciding what will work best in your environment, or look for inspiration that will help define what Safety Day means to you.**

**Whatever you decide, be a leader in promoting safe practices—not just on Safety Day, but every day. When you take the initiative and set an example, others will follow.**



Safety  
Is The  
Key To  
A Job  
Well  
Done.

**William Phillips  
Park Ranger  
National Park Service**



Department Safety Day April 5, 2000.



## There's Safety In Numbers.

There's a lot you can do to promote safety on your own. But the more you and your colleagues work together on accident prevention, the higher the safety awareness on your work site. That's why an overwhelming number of Department employees suggested having a staff meeting to review safe practices and discuss improvements.

The meeting could take place during normal work hours, or it could be a special lunch or after-work cookout. To make the event fun, give it a risk-free theme, serving items like "Safe Soda," "Ergonomically Correct Chips" and "O.S.H.A. Sandwiches."

You might begin by reviewing the most common accidents on

*Thoughts for the office:  
Safety is just as important  
at your desk as it is in the  
field. Meeting discussions  
for office environments  
can focus on hazards like  
unbalanced file cabinets,  
overloaded storage shelves,  
blocked exits and unsafe  
appliances. Safety Day  
would also be a good time  
to review emergency escape  
routes and run through a  
fire drill.*

your work site, then brainstorm as a group to identify means of prevention. If most employees at your location work in the field, discuss physical safety topics like back injury prevention; road safety demonstrations of snow chains, jumper cables, and 4 x 4 gear selection; or a review of safety devices and procedures like the emergency phone extension and safety drills.

While holding a safety meeting is an effective activity for groups of all sizes, locations with a larger number of employees might consider asking work groups to prepare skits emphasizing the importance of safety, then perform them at the meeting. Or, assign each employee a different safety topic on which to do a ten-minute presentation.

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## Watch What You Are Doing.

When you get busy, it's easy to put safety aside in the interest of time and efficiency. But this is when it matters the most.

To illustrate the importance of consistent adherence to safe practices, consider holding a Safety Day Inspection.

If you are working in a field environment, assign inspectors to roam your work site and award certificates to employees found observing safe behavior. Or, ask employees to partner up and inspect your work site, developing a list of apparent hazards and proposed solutions.

Your Safety Day Inspection would also be a good time to review proper maintenance of buildings and safety supplies. Take the opportunity to discard outdated medical supplies,

### *Thoughts for the office:*

*Safety Day Inspections are a great idea for office environments, too. Look for indoor hazards like poorly placed furniture, over-stuffed storage closets and frayed electrical cords. You might also take the opportunity to inspect individual offices and work stations for ergonomically correct placement of chairs, keyboards and computer monitors, then make any necessary adjustments.*



replenish missing items, repair tools, and clean and organize hazardous materials.

## **Stop And Think.**

One way to get serious about safety is to visualize the potential consequences of risky behavior. Observe a moment of silence on Safety Day, taking time to reflect on those who have been killed or injured. Recognize the hazards of shortcuts, and commit to thinking twice about safety on every job, every time.

Also think about the impact your unsafe actions could have on others. Ask employees' family members to submit reasons why their loved ones should be safe at work. Then post the submissions as a reminder that risk-taking jeopardizes more than one's personal well-being.

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### *Thoughts for large groups:*

*For larger groups, organize a Safety Day Rally. Determine beneficial subjects, then arrange for speakers to address the group on these topics. You can find qualified speakers within your Bureau, as well as at Police and Fire Departments and local businesses. Have one-hour sessions run concurrently, giving employees a variety of topics to choose from at any given time.*

## **Always Be Prepared.**

Training raises safety awareness and reduces accident frequency. To prepare you and your colleagues for any situation, organize a Safety Day training session on topics pertinent to your work site. Here are some suggestions that apply to a variety of work environments:

- Personal security measures
- Proper fire extinguisher usage and alarm response procedures
- First Aid and CPR training
- Managing disruptive customers
- Self-defense techniques
- Safe motor vehicle operation

Additional suggestions specific to the field include:

- Protecting against blood borne pathogens
- Recognizing dangerous situations and knowing when to report suspicious circumstances
- Bicycle safety
- Personal protective equipment and other safety clothing
- Safety demonstrations for hand and power tools



- Maintenance and safety for vehicles and road equipment
- Marine safety
- Proper radio communications operation

## Be Body Conscious.

Good health, fitness and an ergonomic environment contribute to productivity, can prevent injury, and help achieve a quality of life that extends far beyond the workplace.

On Safety Day, devote time to your physical well-being. Take a walk, do stretches during break time, or engage in your favorite form of exercise.

Larger locations might even want to host a seminar with a nutritionist. Or, invite an ergonomic specialist to demonstrate proper seating, computer set-up, and desk arrangements, as well as ways to avoid carpal tunnel syndrome and mitigate eyestrain.

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# Have Fun With It.

You can create an exciting learning environment by organizing a themed Safety Day event or activity.

This section contains several suggestions that can be duplicated exactly or used as a guideline for creating your own version of Safety Day fun and games.

## Safety Jeopardy

Get together a game of “Safety Jeopardy” in which you and your colleagues test your knowledge in a variety of areas. You can tailor game categories to suit your work environment, whether it’s an office or a field station.

Here are some examples of possible categories and questions:

**Category:** *Fire Fighting*

A. Lying face down, holding tool away from your body.

Q. What’s the proper body position during retardant drop?

**Category:** *Motor Vehicles*

A. Defensive Driving Training needs to be completed this often.

Q. What is every three years?

**Category:** *Heavy Equipment*

A. This generates explosive hydrogen gas.

Q. What is recharging a battery?

To play, you will need five categories of five questions and at least three participants—two “contestants” and a “host.” If you have a large number of employees, you



can organize play into teams. Also consider having a panel of judges with a high level of safety knowledge to make the call on correct/incorrect answers.

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## Safety Word Scramble

Here's a fun idea that can work at any location, large or small. Distribute the attached scrambled safety words and phrases, and ask employees to unscramble them to reveal pertinent safety terms and tips. You can also make up your own scramble, based on words that apply to your specific work site. When the scramble is finished, used it as a discussion guide for the topics revealed.

- |                         |                       |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Spisl Nad Lallfs     | 9. Sparepenerds       |
| 2. Fase Gintilif        | 10. Neverpinto        |
| 3. Saresawne            | 11. Actionuvea        |
| 4. Bjo zdraha lylasian  | 12. Kawl Tnod Nur     |
| 5. Tacsencid            | 13. Afes Inronmentenv |
| 6. Realeng Labltyiii    | 14. Enfunsa Tanioc    |
| 7. Skerrow Nominatescop | 15. Fastey            |
| 8. Razhad               | 16. Sellnews          |

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**Answers:**  
1. Slips and Falls  
2. Safe Lifting  
3. Awareness  
4. Job Hazard Analysis  
5. Accident  
6. General Liability  
7. Workers Compensation  
8. Hazard  
9. Preparedness  
10. Prevention  
11. Evacuation Routes  
12. Walk Don't Run  
13. Safe Environment  
14. Unsafe Action  
15. Safety  
16. Wellness



## Safety Day Olympics

For a large group of employees, consider developing a Safety Day Olympics that addresses hazards specific to your work site. Appoint a panel of judges, then station them at each event to monitor and score participants. The top finishers in each event will be awarded gold, silver and bronze medals. While events will vary by type of work environment, here are some examples to get you started:

**Hammer Throw:** On a table, lay out pairs of tools or personal protective equipment (i.e., hammer and nail, electric drill and bit, eye protection and gloves), then mix them up. The object of the event will be to pair the objects in the least amount of time. Afterwards, take the opportunity to demonstrate the equipment and discuss proper use of the tools.

**Dead Lift:** After a brief review of recommended lifting techniques, ask each participant to demonstrate his or her “dead lift” technique with a light box or object. Participants will be scored based on their adherence to proper lifting procedures.

**Obstacle Course:** Set up an office with several misplaced items (i.e., wrist pad above the keyboard,

extremely low chair, dimmed computer monitor). Each participant will enter the office and have one minute to arrange everything correctly. Each employee will be scored on the number of obstacles they can identify. Follow up the event with a discussion about office ergonomics.

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## **Safety Fair**

Work sites with larger groups of employees could also organize a day-long safety fair. Set up booths or tables in a central locations with different displays and demonstrations, some serious and some fun. Then invite employees to stop by and experience the wide variety of activities. Your Safety Fair can incorporate whatever topics are pertinent to your work environment, but here are a few initial suggestions:

- Show safe lifting videos
- Demonstrate lifting and stretching procedures
- Show proper use of ergonomic devices (chairs, wrist pads, keyboards)
- Discuss ways to exercise at your desk
- Demonstrate fire extinguisher usage
- Discuss personal safety
- Review defensive driving techniques
- Review first aid procedures for chemical spills



### *Thoughts for everyone:*

*A Safety Day fitness review applies to everyone. For field environments, emphasize the importance practicing proper lifting techniques and performing stretching exercises before starting physical activity. Around the office, focus on physical activities that can be incorporated into the regular work day, like break-time walking and taking stairs instead of the elevator.*

- Demonstrate proper use of helicopter survival gear
- Practice using tire chains/changing a tire
- Set up a vehicle inspection station

As you plan your fair, brainstorm as a group to come up with ideas that fit your work environment, as well ways to make the experience informative and entertaining for everyone who attends. Consider ideas like interactive games, or a safety quiz in which one question is asked at each booth, and a prize awarded to those with the most correct answers.

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**Whether your Safety Day is simple or elaborate, an all-day event or a five-minute tailgate safety talk, it will help you put safety first every day. As you prepare for this important event, choose from the ideas provided, or come up with your own way to personalize activities for your location.**

**Whatever you decide to do, make Safety Day count. Use it to renew your commitment to working safely in the field or around the office. Take the opportunity to learn, and to teach. Observe with conviction, celebrate with a light heart, and remember that your actions will make the Safety Day message memorable for everyone.**

**And from Safety Day forward, approach your job in a new frame of mind, with a new focus on what matters most—the safety of yourself and others.**

## Still Need More Ideas?

Try surfing the World Wide Web. It provides an almost limitless source of additional ideas for Safety Day. A great place to start is Interior's *SafetyNet* (<http://safetynet.smis.doi.gov>), the Department-wide source for safety information.

*Safety Talks On-Line* is also available on *SafetyNet*. It contains short talks and discussion guides on over 400 topics that are ideal for supervisors and team leaders. There are links to many other organizations that have Web sites with handy information on subjects such as safe driving, fire safety, health, and wellness.

Several bureaus also have their own safety and health Web sites with information on how to obtain useful safety materials and videos from the bureau Safety Offices.

