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Emergency drills are an effective technique for preparing for stressful situations and ensuring that crises are handled effectively. Many organizations have reduced the injuries and chaos that can accompany an emergency because they have been prepared through their drill program. January is a great time to review emergency procedures with staff. Drills should be run at least every quarter, including a full evacuation drill at least twice a year. The best times to run an evacuation drill are when the weather permits, but allows enough time to pass where people will need the training; every October and April works well. In some areas, such as child care, the department is required by the local jurisdiction to run evacuation drills every month. Winter months are better times for conducting scenario-based drills and reviewing emergency procedures at departmental meetings. More information on conducting drills is available [HERE](#).

Violent intruder response should be part of your Emergency Procedures. Active shooter and other violent intruder situations, fortunately, do not happen frequently. Never-the-less all organizations should review and update their emergency plan to incorporate current strategies for reacting to these situations. Safe-Wise Consulting has worked with organizations to developed a [sample plan](#) based on the US Department of Homeland Security's "[Run, Hide, Fight](#)" program. The sample plan and more emergency planning information can be found in the [Online Resource Library](#). Organizations are encouraged to contact their local law enforcement officials to determine if other local resources and strategies are available for use in developing emergency response procedures. Visit [HERE](#) to learn more about the "Run, Hide, Fight" program.

Your Safety Culture is dependent on your people. A simple way of building and sustaining an effective safety culture is by taking a human approach and focusing on the people of the organization. Scott Falkowitz and Grace Herrera discuss this human approach in a recent article from [EHS Today magazine](#). They write: "A common goal of most companies is to improve the safety culture within the organization. While this sounds fairly straightforward, the path to success often is riddled with misunderstanding and met with great difficulty. Many companies tend to ignore a weak safety culture for years for a variety of reasons, and then decide some action needs to be taken as a result of an unplanned or unexpected event. Often, some attempt is made to improve the culture by arbitrarily directing funds and resources into training, staff and equipment. By doing this, companies expect a reduction in the frequency and severity of incidents and an overall increase in commitment from their employees." The article goes forward to discuss how organizations can effectively improve the culture over the long-term and achieve optimum results. Read more [HERE](#).

Oh baby its cold outside! Winter weather creates a variety of hazards that can significantly impact everyday tasks and work activities. These hazards include slippery roads/surfaces, strong winds and environmental cold. Learning how to prepare for work during the winter, protect workers from the cold and other hazards that can cause illnesses, injuries, or fatalities, is essential to maintaining a safe work environment and completing tasks successfully. Although the Occupational Safety and Health Administration ([OSHA](#)) does not have a specific standard that covers working in the cold, under the [Occupational Safety and Health Act \(OSH Act\) of 1970](#), employers have a duty to protect workers from recognized hazards, including cold stress hazards, that are causing or likely to cause death or serious physical harm in the workplace. Visit OSHA's cold weather resource page [HERE](#) to find information for helping employees protect themselves from the negative effects of winter weather.

Did you see this in the last E-news:

Room setup makes a difference in Violent Intruder situations. The folks at the ALICE Training Institute ([ATI](#)) suggest that one of the most basic ways to increase safety in schools is to set up classrooms in a safer way. Classroom safety becomes an utmost priority for an ALICE Certified teacher. ATI offers training and tips on how to maximize safety and support ALICE strategies through specific environmental changes to the standard classroom layout. Keep in mind that the application of these suggestions depends on the physical layout of your classroom, the resources that you have available, and the level of authority that you have to make changes in your classroom. So as you get your classroom ready and prepare for the upcoming school year, keep these important ALICE school security tips in mind: Know the layout of your school and the nearest exit to your classroom; Place your natural teaching position as far from the door as possible; Consider arranging a low bookshelf to create a path into the class; Pre-plan how you will barricade your room in case of a violent intruder; Observe the type of door on your classroom; Know how to utilize your classroom windows; and Consider keeping your door locked at all times you have students in your room. Download the full text of these tips [HERE](#).

What are the risks of chemical interaction? In a recent article from Aquatics International ([AI](#)) magazine, Harold Evans the possibility of potentially hazardous chemical issues in aquatic venues. Evans writes: "As an industry, do we comprehend the risks and contradictions that we may be creating and allowing our customers to swim in? If you depend on product labeling, SDS sheets, EPA registration or NSF listings for this information, think again. There are some potentially hazardous chemical combinations you might not be aware of. It is highly likely that, without warning labels or proper education, professionals are creating combinations that are unsafe, harmful, or at a minimum contradictive. The EPA, NSF, and current labeling laws do not mandate disclosure of interactive risk with other known additives in pool water. But if you combine certain chemicals, the byproduct reactions become your professional responsibility." Read more [HERE](#).