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A nationwide ban on driver use of portable electronic devices has recently been recommended by the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB). The Board issued a recommendation to ban driver use of all portable electronic devices in a vehicle, including hands-free devices. NTSB's chairman Deborah Hersman said that this recommendation would also apply to communications technologies such as Bluetooth, but that the NTSB is not providing a list of "acceptable" devices for use in vehicles by drivers. The organization is leaving development of actual laws, and enforcement, up to the individual states. Hersman called on companies to help enforce distracted driving rules as well and said that NTSB research had found that bans on driver use of electronic devices while the vehicle is moving had improved their safety records. Read more [HERE](#). Information on developing a [Distracted Driver Statement](#) for your organization is available in the [Online Resource Library](#).

Nearly 2 million US workers report having been victims of workplace violence each year according to The Occupational Safety and Health Administration ([OSHA](#)). Workplace violence is defined as "any act or threat of physical violence, harassment, intimidation, or other threatening disruptive behavior that occurs at the work site." Violence can affect and involve employees, clients, customers, and visitors; it can strike anywhere, anytime, and no one is immune. The first step in preventing violence is to identify common risk factors related to your organization's activities. Following this, OSHA suggests that a zero-tolerance policy toward workplace violence be established. This policy should cover all employees, volunteers, members, clients, guests, contractors, and anyone else that may interact with your organization. A well-written and properly implemented violence prevention program, combined with engineering controls, administrative controls, and training, can reduce the incidence of workplace violence. Additional information is available in the [Online Resource Library](#) including a [Workplace Violence Fact Sheet](#) and a link to the [Workplace Safety Toolkit](#) from the [Nonprofit Risk Management Center](#).

The American Red Cross is launching an updated lifeguard training program. Changes include how the content was developed and how proficiency is measured. Most notably, the new program places greater emphasis on physical capability, said Stephanie Shook, aquatics channel manager at the American Red Cross, who helped develop the updated program. A new prerequisite requires prospective guards to demonstrate the ability to tread water (using legs only) for two minutes, and a new timed scenario must be completed in the final session. Read more [HERE](#). For additional information about aquatic safety practices please visit the [Online Resource Library](#).

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. 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](#).

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration has revised its Webpage on the [OSHA Job Safety and Health: It's the Law](#) poster (OSHA poster), to make it easier to use. Employers are required to display this free poster prominently in their workplaces. The revised Web page provides instructions on how employers can get free copies, and links to information about other Department of Labor posters. The OSHA poster, which informs workers of their rights under the Occupational Safety and Health Act, is available in English, Spanish, and Polish (online only). Call 1-800-321-OSHA or 202-693-1999 to order the poster or visit OSHA's [Publications page](#). Additional staff safety information is available in the [Online Resource Library](#).

YMCA of the USA will offer a series of five Lifeguard Webinars in January focusing on Ys that are currently using lifeguard training providers other than the YMCA and are considering a change. The webinars will emphasize the key points of distinction in the new Y Lifeguarding program as well as provide information on how to crossover to the new Y program. Please visit YMCA Exchange or contact Kay Smiley at kay.smiley@ymca.net if you have questions regarding the lifeguard webinars.

This Month's Topics:

Cell Phone Ban for Drivers
Workplace Violence
New Red Cross Lifeguard Program
Emergency Drills
OSHA Posters
YUSA Lifeguard Webinars