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Welcome to the New Year; best wishes for a year of Safety

We Are the World: International Staff Screening. A recent issue of [Risk Management Essentials](#) from the Nonprofit Risk Management Center ([NRMC](#)) discusses things to consider when selecting international staff for your organization. The goal of recruiting capable staff members who bring different perspectives and diverse backgrounds to your mission may lead you to seek and consider applicants who have worked, lived, or even studied in a country on the other side of the globe. A recent survey by HireRight indicated that more than half of employers are considering applicants who have studied or worked overseas. While the staffing needs of nonprofit organizations vary to a great degree, there is ample evidence that the commitment to appropriate, consistent screening of prospective employees and volunteers is deepening within mission-driven organizations. As discussed in the Center's book, [Staff Screening Notebook: 10 Steps to Quality Staffing](#), "The advent of the Internet heralded a giant step in the amount of easily available information concerning applicants for paid and volunteer positions." How might traditional screening mechanisms be made more relevant to organizations considering international applicants? Read more [HERE](#).

It's time to learn more about sports related concussions. Many program leaders are aware of the occurrence of concussions in sports such as football, soccer and basketball. Recent media and incidents suggest that swimmers may have something to be aware of also. Read more from the [Chicago Tribune](#) and [Swimming World](#). All swimmers should be aware of the risk of concussions while practicing the sport. These injuries can occur through impact with a pool wall or with another swimmer. Synchronized swimmers do have a particularly high rate of occurrence for this injury; however, it is important for all athletes, coaches, and family members to be informed and proactive when it comes to swimming concussions. US Swimming has prepared a [Concussion Information Sheet for Parents & Swimmers](#). Additional information is available from the Centers of Disease Control Prevention at their [Heads Up](#) webpage.

Wireless Pool Alarm off the market. RJE Technologies reports that the Aquatic Incident Alert System ([AIA](#)) is no longer available. Based on the popular Safety Turtle system AIA has been used in YMCA and other pools for several years as a means to initiate emergency procedures. Organizations are encouraged to utilize a "push-button" type system to activate their aquatic emergency action plan (EAP). The push-button style system allows guards to move quickly to a distressed swimmer without waiting for other staff to answer a radio or phone; this is particularly important in single-guard situations. Alarms may be "hard-wired" systems or wireless systems that can be installed (retrofitted) by local electrician or during construction of new facilities. RJE will still produce the [Safety Turtle](#) system. While Safety Turtle is designed for residential applications it may be adaptable to commercial pools in some instances.

Safety Pays! Annual workplace injuries, illnesses and deaths cost over \$170 billion in the US. That's money that businesses can save and pain workers can avoid. The Occupational and Health Administration ([OSHA](#)) reports that a good safety and health program can save \$4 to \$6 for every \$1 invested. That's because injuries and illnesses decline. Workers' compensation costs go down. Medical costs decrease. There are other, less quantifiable benefits as well - reduced absenteeism, lower turnover, higher productivity and increased morale. There are direct and indirect costs related to all accidents. Direct costs include medical and indemnity payments. Indirect costs include production time lost by the injured employee, fellow workers and supervisors; spoiled product, unhappy customers; cleanup time; schedule delays; training new employees; overhead costs; legal fees and an increase in insurance costs. OSHA has a [computer program](#) that is free of charge to all employers which can assist in determining what your cost of accidents may be.

Did you see this in the last E-news:

Follow these 10 steps to prevent workplace violence. With there being thousands of incidents of violence in American workplaces each year, the threat of violence in the workplace is a very real possibility. The Occupational Health and Safety Administration ([OSHA](#)) estimates that there are about 2 million cases of workplace violence a year. Workplace violence is a rare situation and can easily be prevented by taking certain measures that ensure your workplace will be non-violent. The ALICE Training Institute suggests these ten ways to prevent workplace violence: create a policy that prevents harassment; create effective lines of communication; training sessions are a key factor in helping to prevent violence; establish a "Zero-tolerance" code of conduct; encourage your employees to accept individual differences; prevent conflicts from turning into harassment or violence; show that the quality of the relationships on a team are important; communicate the consequences for unacceptable behavior; encourage everyone to report any and all violent incidents; reduce the risk involved in handling the assets of your organization. Read more [HERE](#).

National Electrical Code Updated with Language for Pool Lifts. The recent updates to the National Electrical Code (NEC) include language for ADA compliant pool lifts. This is the first time the NEC has carried specifications specifically for electrically powered pool and spa lifts. The NEC is updated every three years and now states that electrically operated pool and spa lifts must be bonded (some exceptions listed in the code). Electrically operated pool and spa lifts also must have a nameplate that lists certain specific electrical information in addition to name and model. The code also now clarifies requirements for certain electrical components that are buried in corrosive environments. Grounding and bonding terminals used with pools and spas should be identified by the manufacturer for use in wet and corrosive environments, and listed and labeled for direct-burial use. They also must be made of copper, copper alloy or stainless steel. Read More [HERE](#).