



From our Division Chief

Punxsutawney Phil saw his shadow Sunday morning on Ground Hog's Day, forecasting six more weeks of winter. We could definitely use six more weeks of winter. But, as we begin the shortest month of the year we need to continue to make safety our top priority as we go about our daily activities both at work and at home. Here at DWR, we're committed to the safety of our employees, partners, and the public. Safety begins with each of us and our goal is ZERO work-related injuries and illnesses. An important part of that effort is recognizing where you can help improve safety in our Division. We can all contribute to an increased awareness of safety by doing our part to understand that a safe and healthy workplace benefits workers, families, our businesses and our community, and by addressing specific workplace hazards. If you observe an unsafe working conditions or have concerns about a safety related issue, ask questions about workplace safety and health. By doing so you are helping DES achieve its goal of putting safety first in the workplace and minimizing risk to all involved.

Dean Messer, Chief
Division of Environmental Services

Safety Moment

Slips, trips, and falls are the number one reason for workplace accidents resulting in thousands of injuries and even deaths that occur in the United States each year. In the United States approximately 8.9 million visits to the emergency room in 2011 were for slip, trip, or fall related injuries. These accidents occur from heights, on stairs, and even on level ground. But you can minimize the risk by:

- Using good housekeeping practices to prevent slips, trips, and falls – by cleaning up spills, keeping work areas orderly and walkways clear, close drawers and cabinets, and cover or tape down electrical cords and computer cables.
- Paying attention to your surroundings - focus on where you are going and what you are doing. Walk, don't run on stairs and use the handrails. Avoid using the stairs when you're carrying something in both hands and don't carry loads that obstruct your view.
- Walking slowly on slippery surfaces, especially ice! Wipe your feet when coming in from the rain or snow, look out for debris and obstacles when walking especially in low-light conditions.

By being more observant and thinking ahead, you can avoid most causes of slips, trips, and falls. For more information visit:

[National Safety Council's web site for their "Slips, Trips, and Falls" fact sheet.](#)

Do you have a Safety Suggestion?

- A new Safety Suggestion Box is located by the mail boxes for your convenience
 - Several people have mention that on cold days at 3500 Industrial Boulevard run-off from the sprinklers freezes on the north side of the building creating a slip hazard. A request was made to have sprinklers in the back of the building replaced with a drip system. The issue has been discussed with facilities and the owner of the building.
- A new Safety Suggestion Email has also been established. Send Suggestions to: dessafety@water.ca.gov

Safety Warning – brought to a Safety Committee member's attention through a safety suggestion

When disposing of 9 V batteries in the disposal container located in Supply Area 1 please cover all 9volt battery terminals with electrical tape. Uncovered 9 V battery terminals touching each other may cause the batteries to get warm which is a **Potential Fire Hazard**. The electrical tape is attached to the disposal container for your convenience.

The safety suggestion also brought to our attention the fact that the battery disposal container should not be filled more than half full because of the potential lifting hazard of a heavy bucket upon disposal, but that there are now instructions posted above the disposal bucket. The DES Safety Committee members appreciate this safety suggestion and encourage staff to keep them coming.