

NIRMA's Safety Shorts

Agenda Item # 259.

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February Is International Boost Self-Esteem Month

It's common to struggle with **self-esteem** at some point in **our** lives.

4 Ways to Boost Self-Esteem this Month

1. Avoid negative **self-talk**. ...
2. Stop comparing **yourself** to others. ...
3. Exercise. ...
4. Celebrate **your** strengths.



GENERAL SAFETY

By Chad Engle, Loss Prevention and Safety Specialist

Money for Minutes Results

The deadline to submit 2019's safety committee minutes was January 31st. The minutes are in and the winners have been determined.

Unfortunately, this year's numbers were not as good as last years. NIRMA received at least 4 sets of minutes from 37 members, 29 of which qualified for one of the two \$500 drawings. Last year NIRMA received minutes from 50 members and 44 of them qualified for the drawings. I know that this year was incredibly hectic for our members due to the state-wide flooding issues that we dealt with, at least that is what I am blaming for the low numbers.

I am really hoping that during the 2020 calendar year NIRMA members will do their part to maintain an active and effective safety committee. Let's surpass the numbers from 2018!

The 2019 Money for Minutes winners are Garfield County and Howard County! I'll be in touch with both safety committees to set up a time to drop off their check and take advantage of the photo opportunity! Thanks again for your efforts and keep up the good work.

NIRMA Training Resources

I am a big fan of safety committees using their first quarterly meeting to put together a training plan for the upcoming year. NIRMA recommends regular training for all employees, including supervisors. NIRMA provides several resources to help our members provide this training. Below are a few of those options:

- In-person training provided by Tim Baxter, Terry Baxter or me. If you can get everyone together, we can provide training in your location on your schedule. Give us a call and we can discuss your training needs and get something on the calendar.
- Members of NIRMA also receive a membership to the Nebraska Safety Council. Please copy and paste this link into your browser for a short webinar describing the resources the Nebraska Safety County provides. http://bit.ly/NE_safety_orientation
- NIRMA provides each member with access to NIRMA's Online University. You can access this on the NIRMA website homepage via the link located on the left side of the screen. The Online University provides you with the ability to train your employees at their computer, anytime, and at no cost.

Loss Prevention and Safety

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Ensure employees are performing walk around inspections prior to starting equipment each day and repairing any deficiencies found during the walk around.



NIRMA Training Resources *continued*

- NIRMA provides an online video streaming service as well. Again, there is a link on NIRMA's homepage located on the left side of the screen. These videos are a great option when you can put multiple people in front of a screen for a group training. Again, there is no cost to stream the videos.

Feel free to contact me at 1.800.642.6671 or chad@nirma.info if you would like to set up some training.

HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

By Tim Baxter, Road Safety and Loss Prevention Specialist

Construction Season

Contract Project Plans, Specifications, and Contracts Signing and Barricades

State-wide Internal Road Department Assessments were conducted in all 82-member county road departments during the years of 2017 and 2018. This was done to determine where assistance was needed to improve road department safety and reduce liability. One of the many deficiencies found was the lack of good contracts for armor coat, crack seal, asphalt, and other construction and maintenance projects. Many counties either had no contract or signing requirements with the contractor or were missing in the most important aspects of contracts such as contractor liability insurance, responsibilities' for signing, performance, completion dates, etc.

As a result of the internal assessments, it was determined that 41 of the 82 NIRMA member counties, or 50%, had substandard contracts or no contracts whatsoever.

Simple comprehensive armor coat and crack sealing contracts have been developed for use by our member counties. Most larger projects in counties, such as asphalt resurfacing, bridges, etc. are hopefully designed by engineers who provide the proper contracts. These include liability insurance, contractor required construction signing, plans, specifications, etc. The internal road department assessments showed that a large number of counties do not have contracts related to armor coat and crack sealing.

Even if the county does not let a project to bid, due to estimate being lower than state bidding law requirements, a contract needs to be entered into between the county and contractor for liability insurance, performance bonds, construction signing, completion date, specifications, etc. and to hold the contractor to their quoted price. Without a proper written agreement outlining the respective party's duties and responsibilities the county and its taxpayers might be opening itself up to unnecessary liability that should properly be the responsibility of the contractor who is actually doing the work. Counties should NEVER pay a contractor before the work is completed. Sadly, this has happened and then the county is out those funds and the project is not completed.

Please contact me should you have questions related to construction projects, contracts, liability insurance, etc.

Loss Prevention
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We're on the Web

www.nirma.info

It is essential for officers to receive training to protect themselves, those in their care, and the security of the institution as a whole.



**Construction Season
Contract Project Plans, Specifications, and Contracts
Signing and Barricades** *continued*

As counties prepare for a busy construction season, now is a good time to have safety meetings on the hazards of construction work as well as proper construction signing. Remind employees of the dangers of trench collapses, traffic through construction work zones, equipment operation, etc. Make sure plenty of the proper hearing and eye protection, safety vests, and other necessary personal protective equipment is available. Ensure first aid kits and fire extinguishers are in all vehicles to provide the proper first aid should it be needed. Ensure employees are performing walk around inspections prior to starting equipment each day and repairing any deficiencies found during the walk around.

Please be safe this construction season and contact me at tim@nirma.info or 402-310-4417 for additional training or if you have any questions.

LAW ENFORCEMENT AND CORRECTIONS

By Terry Baxter, Law Enforcement and Safety Specialist

Policy and Procedure Training

When employees receive thorough policy training, they are prepared to successfully complete their assigned job task. Using your adopted policies as part of your employee training will help ensure that there is consistency in your operations and reinforces expectations. Each month a critical task of your agencies operation should be addressed through training and policy review. Just think if you take one topic a month, you will have covered (12) critical tasks by the end of the year.

Everyone knows policies and procedures are an essential component of any agency. Policies are crucial, as they address foreseeability as well as provide a guideline for pertinent areas of operations and constitutes what is expected. Utilizing adopted procedures during decision making, ensures that the vision of the sheriff office is followed, but good decision can only be made if policy is communicated and known.

Attacking policy during litigation is easy, either you followed the established protocols, or you didn't, so how do you ensure staff are doing what is written? Policy failure begins with administration, simply adopting and implementing procedures is only one step of the process. Training and ensuring continuous education on written protocols should be provided. Policy fails because it is assumed employees read the procedures and will follow the way the sequence of guidelines were established. The true fact is, most read the policy or scan it once over and if no other training mechanism is put into place, policy will not be reviewed unless the employee is concerned their actions on a certain job task was called into question.

Policy and procedures are rendered useless without trainings, if administration neglects continuous education, policy failure will eventually happen. Risk management starts with administration and to ensure that exposures are limited, policy training is critical, not only for administration, but for the county and of course for the employee.

Policy and Procedure Training *continued*

In the event litigation occurs documented policy training can provide affirmative defense as long as efforts were taken to train and educate employees. Effective procedure training is largely a matter of explaining, refining and repeating.

Remember policies and procedures will fail if employees and administration don't follow them.

"Emerging Jail Liability Trends"

February 12, 2020 – Western Community College – Sidney

February 13, 2020 – Mid-Plains Community College – Ogallala

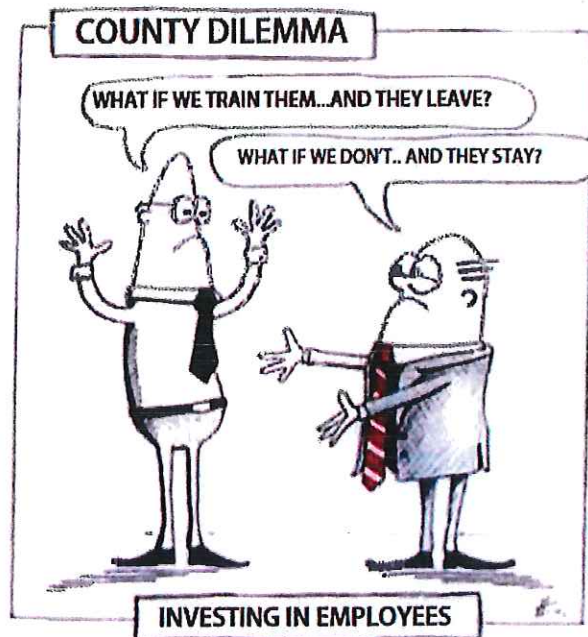
February 14, 2020 – Central Community College – Grand Island

February 18, 2020 – Southeast Community College – Lincoln

February 20, 2020 – Northeast Community College - Norfolk

Law Enforcement and Safety Specialist Terry Baxter and Attorney Brandy Johnson of Governmental Law, LLC, will be discussing the emerging trends in jail liability and best practices for reducing exposures and preventing claims.

Contract requirements between Counties to house prisoners



All Officials, Supervisor and Employees are Welcome
Use this opportunity as a training session for employees

Loss Prevention
and Safety
8040 Eiger Drive
Lincoln, NE 68516

Register Now
for the
Jail Liability Training
through
the NIRMA website:
www.nirma.info

Law Enforcement
and correctional
personnel will receive
6.33
in-service hours.

Attorneys will receive
6.33 CLE hours.

Don't Miss these
One-Day
Seminars
Coming
to Your Area