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# Safety Shorts

## General Safety, Highway, & Law Enforcement

February 2023 - Volume 11, Number 2

# February Is American Heart Month

The Division for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention is shining a light on hypertension (high blood pressure), a leading risk factor for heart disease and stroke. 1 in 5 Adults who died of cardiovascular disease in 2019 were under the age of 65. Uncontrolled high blood pressure (hypertension) is too common and dangerous. It puts people at risk for [heart disease](#), [stroke](#), heart failure, kidney failure, vision loss, [peripheral artery disease](#), sexual dysfunction, pregnancy complications, and cognitive decline. – Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - <https://www.cdc.gov>

### LAW ENFORCEMENT AND CORRECTIONS

#### Todd Duncan, Law Enforcement and Safety Specialist

#### Bringing Order to Chaos, Part 2- Special Event Planning and IAPs

In last month's Safety Short, we looked at the power of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and Incident Command System (ICS) in helping first responders bring order to chaotic situations. In this month's Safety Short, we discuss a key component of the ICS, the [Incident Action Plan](#) (IAP).

Except for the State Patrol, sheriff's deputies are typically the only full-time emergency responders within unincorporated, and in many cases incorporated areas of most Nebraska counties. As a result, the community relies on the sheriff's office to rise to the occasion when disaster strikes. As such, it is essential that law enforcement officers plan for security and worst-case scenarios when large public events are held in their county.

You have seen the news stories, "Community event ends in tragedy after car crashes into parade..." Most communities host public events throughout the year such as Fourth of July fireworks displays, air shows, county fairs, rodeos, farmers markets, and large athletic events to name just a few. Proper preparation for such events, including an IAP, is essential to ensure public safety and help with contingencies. Where the Incident Command System provides the framework or structure for organizing the different resources and personnel involved in a major event/incident, the IAP spells out the who, what, why, when, where, and how.

Incident action plans should be considered for any public event that is likely to draw a large crowd. The IAP is developed by involved stakeholders, including dispatch, law enforcement, fire, emergency medical services, and event organizers and should cover operational considerations to include traffic control, security, severe weather, medical emergencies, fire, staging areas, evacuation routes, and nearest hospital or trauma center. Incident action plans enable leadership to identify and clearly spell out the key elements of the event plan including the situation, plan objectives, chain of command, site map/sketch, communication plan, contingencies, etc.

## Special Event Planning - *continued*

Incident action plans should identify mutual aid resources that can be called up if an incident exceeds the capacity of the event team. Having [mutual aid agreements](#) in place prior to the event is important as is notifying neighboring jurisdictions and local hospitals of the event. It is not a matter of if but when there is an incident at a large public event being held in your county that will strain or exceed the capacity of local emergency resources. As the saying goes, fail to plan, plan to fail. Whether responding to a major incident or planning for a large public event, creating a basic incident action plan can go a long way to effectively organize and manage resources; build and maintain public trust; reduce risk and harm; and most importantly enhance safety for all involved.

Additional Resources:

[International Association of Chiefs of Police Model ICS Policy](#)

[Sample Special Event IAP](#)

[Federal Emergency Management Agency NIMS/ICS website](#)

Please contact Todd at 531-510-7446 or [tduncan@nirma.info](mailto:tduncan@nirma.info) if you have any questions.

## **HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT**

**By K C Pawling, Road Safety and Loss Prevention Specialist**

### **How is Everyone Going to React?**

I was once told by one of my former bosses/mentors, that when it comes to employees "you will always have the same personalities, just different names." Let's look at the definition of personality for just a minute. No, I am not going to turn this into English class, but it is worth a look for the sake of discussion and understanding. Personality (according to Google) is "the combination of characteristics or qualities that form an individual's distinctive character."

So, what influences the development of a person's personality? Would it be a person's environment that they live in? I would also like to think that life experiences play a big part in developing a personality. With the latter, I believe training is part of life's experiences that mold or develop who we are and how we respond to different situations. I believe that is why the military, law enforcement, and fire departments conduct training exercises. Training helps us achieve the desired outcome of any situation we might encounter.

When it comes to emergency situations, do we know how all our co-workers are going to respond to the immediate threats? Some might respond very well and take control of a situation and direct others in the immediate area of what needs to be done and who should do what. Another type may just freeze, and literally not move or act in any desirable manner. Those individuals that act in a manner that help us achieve a positive outcome, have probably had some training.

We do not know how everyone is going to react until a situation arises, and this is why we have emergency action plans. This is a plan that helps us all, *hopefully*, respond in a manner that will achieve a desirable outcome. An emergency action plan should address topics of fire, medical emergency, weather (tornado), violence in the workplace and hazardous material spills or exposure, for example. NIRMA has a template for a county emergency action plan in the Model Road Department Safety Manual for member counties to review and modify to fit their needs.

After the emergency action plan is modified to meet member needs, it should be reviewed annually and practiced so that some level of "muscle memory" can be developed. This will help our co-workers react without having to think too much. Hopefully they can just go into respond and react mode doing all the right actions appropriate for the situation being encountered.

I would like to stress this is NOT a document to just print off and hang on the wall without even filling in the county name in the document. Review it, modify it, adopt it, and use it! Develop the muscle memory needed to respond appropriately in emergency situations you may encounter.

I would also like to say that when you train for emergency situations, you really get to know your co-workers on a whole different level. If someone is not as strong as others, you are better able to manage around a situation like this until they are trained to the level you desire.

It's not that any individual is wrong in their response, but just that they had different life experiences. Our different personalities can be a challenge and more often than not, a blessing. Let's make sure we all make it home at night!



## **How is Everyone Going to React? – *continued***

If you have any questions about emergency action plans, do not hesitate to contact me. [kcpawling@nirma.info](mailto:kcpawling@nirma.info) or c: 402-310-4417.

## GENERAL SAFETY

**By Chad Engle, Loss Prevention and Safety Manager**  
Loss Prevention and Safety

### Money for Minutes Award Winners!!!

It's February in Nebraska and that means snow, below zero windchills and **Money for Minutes** awards! For those new county officials who may not be familiar with NIRMA's Money for Minutes program, let me explain. To be eligible for **Money for Minutes** NIRMA member safety committees must hold at least four quarterly committee meetings. During the quarterly committee meetings, they must discuss each claim or incident that occurred during the previous quarter and develop recommendations to prevent similar incidents from reoccurring. The members must then submit copies of their meeting minutes to NIRMA for review.

All NIRMA member safety committees that meet the requirements outlined above will then be eligible to win one of five \$500.00 awards. NIRMA recognizes how budgets are stretched and intends for these awards to be utilized by the winning member's safety committee to further their loss prevention and safety efforts.

Congratulations to calendar year 2022's **Money for Minutes** award winners!

**Cedar County    Dixon County    Hall County    Keith County    Rock County**

Thank you for your efforts to protect your counties from liability and your employees from injury, your work does not go unnoticed!

These five NIRMA member counties were randomly selected from the 35 counties that met the **Money for Minutes** eligibility requirements. Please remember to get your 2023 first quarter safety committee meeting on the calendar. I have found that putting all four safety committee meeting dates on the calendar early in the year significantly increases the chances that all four meetings are held. Also, there is nothing that states every safety committee member must be present, just that incidents are reviewed, prevention recommendations are made, and the minutes are submitted to NIRMA.

If you feel that your committee would benefit from a NIRMA Loss Prevention visit please give me a call and let's get the date on the calendar. I would be happy to come out and sit in on one of your meetings. I can always be reached at [chad@nirma.info](mailto:chad@nirma.info) or 1.800.642.6671.

Again, thank you to all the counties that took the time to hold four meetings in 2022 and congratulations the those that were chosen to receive one of the five \$500.00 awards.

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