



SAFETY CANADA

The member newsletter of the Canada Safety Council

Aggressive Dogs Threaten Public Safety

The phrase “dog bite epidemic” appears on several US-based Web sites. Statistics show dog bites are on the rise in that country. In 1986, there were 585,000 dog bites requiring medical attention. By 1994 the number had jumped to 800,000.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, about 4.7 million Americans — almost two per cent of the population — were bitten by dogs in 1998. One out of six required medical treatment. The American Humane Association calls dog bites the number one public health problem for children in the US, surpassing measles, mumps, and whooping cough combined, and points to data showing 47 per cent of all dog-bite victims were school-aged children.

The Insurance Information Institute reported that claims related to dog bites have quadrupled in the past five years, from \$250 million US in 1996 to about \$1 billion in 2000. This increase has prompted some American insurers to take into account whether certain breeds of dogs have been spayed or neutered, or have passed an obedience class in deciding whether to write a homeowner’s policy.

Canadian Data Lacking

Canada has no national data on canine population, dog-related deaths and

injuries, or which breeds cause the most harm. In Canada, much of the insurance-related liability is borne by our health care system. Dog bites are a common reason for emergency room visits. Yet there is no mandatory reporting of these bites — not to mention the dogs’ ownership, breed, spay/neuter status or history of aggression.

The coroner’s report on a six-year old girl killed by dogs in 1999 found that 117,000 Quebecers claimed to have been bitten by a dog between 1997 and 1998. Of these, 75 per cent were under the age of 10 and half were bitten by their own dogs. Extrapolating these numbers, the Canada Safety Council estimates that dogs bite 460,000 Canadians annually. Our problem is likely almost as serious as that of our southern neighbor.

All too often, the news carries reports of unprovoked attacks by dogs. Some kill smaller pets. Others attack people. Injuries can be severe,



sometimes requiring extensive surgery. Consider a few incidents this year:

- In January, murder charges were dropped against a Kingston, Ontario mother accused of killing her seven-year-old daughter. Forensic evidence showed the 80 wounds on the child’s body were inflicted by a pit bull staying in the house.
- Also in January, a 16-year-old Toronto, Ontario girl was mauled by two Akita cross terriers in a vicious attack while delivering newspapers. She underwent three hours of plastic surgery.
- In February, an elderly Coquitlam, British Columbia woman was attacked by a collie-shepherd-Rottweiler cross which had jumped over a fence. She required stitches after suffering deep puncture wounds to both arms.
- In March, an attack by an unlicensed pit bull in Calgary, Alberta left a schnauzer badly injured and its owner bitten. A passer-by had to repeatedly strike the larger dog with a hockey stick to make it let go.
- In July, a five-year-old girl in Owen Sound, Ontario received 39 cuts and a large area of flesh was torn from a buttock when a Rottweiler attacked her in her grandparents’ home. The girl was admitted into intensive care, and her mother was also injured while fighting off the animal. *To page 6...*

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Planning a Staff Party?

The law is well settled that employers may be liable for harm caused when employees drink at the workplace or in connection with work. But what about social activities?

Earlier this year an Ontario Superior Court judge ordered a company to pay an employee over \$300,000 after she drank too much at a Christmas party held at the workplace during business hours. The woman suffered severe physical and brain injuries when she crashed into another vehicle while driving home. The employer has appealed the verdict.

There was an open, unsupervised bar at the company party. A manager, worried that the woman was drunk, said he would call her husband if she continued to drink. Despite this, the woman took the wheel to drive home alone with a BAC twice the legal limit. She then had two more drinks at a pub. *To page 2...*

President's Perspective

Occasionally, an advertisement will disturb the safety conscious consumer. Perhaps it grabs attention by glamorizing a risky activity or depicting a dangerous location. It might show people biking, snowboarding or driving without the proper protection.

Advertising has tremendous power, not only to sell products but to sell attitudes. It is important for advertisers to send a responsible safety message to the public.

The Canada Safety Council has challenged a number of lifestyle advertisements, including some that featured people walking on railway tracks, reckless driving, and lack of a helmet or vehicle restraint.

What can you do if you see a commercial or print ad that seems to promote unsafe behavior? First, contact the advertiser with the details of your concern. Names and addresses of companies and their CEOs are available on web sites and in business directories.

If you're not satisfied with the advertiser's response, complain to Advertising Standards Canada, the self-regulating body for the industry. ASC administers the Canadian Code of Advertising Standards, which has a clause on safety:

"Advertisements must not without reason, justifiable on educational or social grounds, display a disregard for safety or depict situations that might encourage unsafe or dangerous practices or acts."

In its 2000 Ad Complaints Report, ASC describes three sanctioned television commercials: a laundry detergent ad where a teenager was buried by dirt from a dump truck, then emerged unharmed; a bakery ad with workers inside a grain silo looking up as grain poured into the silo from the top; and a financial ad that showed a lantern intended only for outdoor use being used in an enclosed space.

If you have safety concerns about an ad campaign, provide the Canada Safety Council with a full description. We may support your request that the advertising be changed or withdrawn.



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Liberty Mutual Brings Child Safety to the Masses

Elmer the Safety Elephant first appeared over 50 years ago, but he is as relevant today as ever. Young children learn very effectively when a "character" catches their attention and motivates them. Elmer's safety message has expanded, but his original traffic safety rules still apply.

In the 1980s and 90s Elmer programming was limited due to a lack of resources. The Canada Safety Council's vision was to make Elmer the base for strong national programs to reduce child deaths and injuries across Canada. However, this would require a major financial investment — and a lot of networking.

Enter Liberty Mutual. The company had decided to identify itself with child safety. It was seeking a program that would really make a difference, and that would involve its agents actively in the community. The president had fond memories of Elmer and saw the character's potential to reach millions of Canadians.

CSC's vision for Elmer was a fit with what Liberty Mutual wanted to do. The partnership was officially launched in October 1999, with safety posters, booklets and pamphlets, and a new Elmer mascot.

Company agents were excited about the program from day one. The mascots were fully booked. (There are now 12, and they're still fully booked!) Schools, police and fire departments across Canada scooped up the much-needed safety materials.

In the past two years, Elmer's safety messages have reached millions of children through activity booklets, games, posters, contests, a kids' club, the school flag program, community events and an animated Web site. Twelve thousand kids entered the *Wheels in My Life* poster contest, a new fire safety booklet has just been published, and the 2002 Elmer calendar is now in production.

The partnership combines the expertise of the Canada Safety Council to develop quality safety programming, with the financial and human resources of Liberty Mutual. In addition, many local partners — including schools, police and fire departments — bring the program to children.

Don't expect Elmer to slow down any time soon. Liberty Mutual has a long-term commitment to child safety. Δ



Party Planning, from page 1.

From a legal standpoint, this case confirms that:

- employers have a duty to safeguard their employees from harm, beyond the time the employee is on the premises;
- employers must ensure, by taking positive steps, that employees do not get drunk and then drive home; and
- positive steps include monitoring alcohol consumption.

Offering free taxi rides is not enough. An employer who suspects impairment must insist the individual take a cab and not drive. Δ

Intersection

Kids Put Their Lives on the Line

A poll of Canadian teens shows that a majority put themselves at risk by walking on railway tracks, even though they know the danger posed by moving trains.

First, the good news. Most of the youths (94 per cent) know it's dangerous to walk or play on railway tracks.

The bad news is that despite this, half admit to doing just that, and one in five say it's okay to do as long as no train is coming. One-quarter of those who have engaged in risky behaviour do so for the "danger and excitement"; and 72 per cent would take a shortcut across railway tracks if it meant saving 20 minutes.

Many young people underestimate the speed of a train when they see it. One in five think they will be able to hear a train coming for at least five minutes before it passes, and a third believe that if a train is nearby, they will hear the whistle.

The findings are disturbing, because almost 60 per cent of Canadian children live or go to school within a 20-minute walk of railway tracks. Earlier this year, for example, the small community of Casselman, near Ottawa, was alarmed by a rash of incidents. Young people were "playing chicken" with trains and taking shortcuts through railway property and equipment. Police and community officials put on a safety blitz, with support from Operation Lifesaver staff, the railways and the Canada Safety Council.



The Canada Safety Council is a partner in Operation Lifesaver, a government-industry-community public education and safety program. Every year almost half a million elementary school children learn about railway safety through OL, which is co-sponsored by the Railway Association of Canada and Transport Canada. One of the children's resources is CSC's activity booklet *Tracks are for Trains*, which features Elmer the Safety Elephant.

OL has successfully helped reduce highway-railway crossing collisions and trespasser incidents by 60 per cent over the past two decades. Direction 2006 is a special initiative to achieve a further 50 per cent reduction by the end of the year 2006.

This year, Direction 2006 produced the "kids on a trestle" television public service announcement. The survey used streaming video to obtain reactions. When shown the PSA, 84 per cent said it was effective in discouraging people from walking on railway tracks.

The Ipsos-Reid poll, commissioned by the Railway Association of Canada, was conducted March 8 to 26, 2001 among 1,043 Canadians aged 12 to 18 who are Internet-enabled. Δ
Operation Lifesaver



Kwiz Korner

True or False? How much do you know about snowmobiling?

1. In most areas, snowmobiles are not subject to enforceable laws when operated off public roads. **T/F**
2. Cornering can be impeded by loose and worn out steering parts. **T/F**
3. You should always layer your footwear when snowmobiling for safe winter driving. **T/F**
4. Operating a snowmobile while under the influence of alcohol is a major factor in most snowmobile crashes. **T/F**
5. If skis on a snowmobile tend to hunt back and forth aggressively, it probably means that they are out of alignment. **T/F**
6. Fewer snowmobile collisions occur when snowmobilers are riding off trail. **T/F**
7. Frostbite usually affects snowmobilers most seriously on the nose, cheeks and neck. **T/F**

Answers on page 4.

The Canada Safety Council offers a training course called SnowPro which emphasizes safety while operating snowmobiles. Those interested in the course and experienced snowmobile operators interested in becoming certified instructors should contact CSC.

Stats on Drivers and Cell Phones

About three per cent of the drivers on US roads at any time of day are talking on hand-held wireless phones. A recent survey by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) found most of these 500,000 talkers are drivers of sport-utility vehicles and minivans on the road during non-rush hours. User rates were higher during the week than on weekends, and more suburban drivers than rural ones used phones. Data collectors, who



also checked seat-belt use, observed more than 12,000 vehicles daily for two months during October-November 2000 at over 2,600 sites across the US.

Based on a telephone survey conducted from November 2000 to January 2001, NHTSA estimates that 54 per cent of drivers "usually" have some type of wireless phone in their vehicle. Fifty-five per cent of these drivers report that their phone is on during "all" or "most" of their trips, and 73 per cent reported using their phone while driving.

While these surveys quantify cell phone use, they do not address safety. Data from other NHTSA sources show that during 1999, American police officers cited wireless phones as a factor in 93 motor vehicle collisions. In comparison, driver distractions such as eating or tuning the car radio contributed to 11 per cent of the fatal crashes during 1999, resulting in almost 5,000 fatalities. Δ

US Department of Transportation, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, July 2001

Impaired by Age?

In July, an 85-year-old Toronto woman was convicted of criminal negligence causing death for striking a pedestrian and dragging her nearly a kilometre to her death. The victim pounded on the hood to draw attention. The car, moving at about 10 km/h, swerved back and forth as the elderly driver continued to drive home, where the mangled body was found near her driveway.

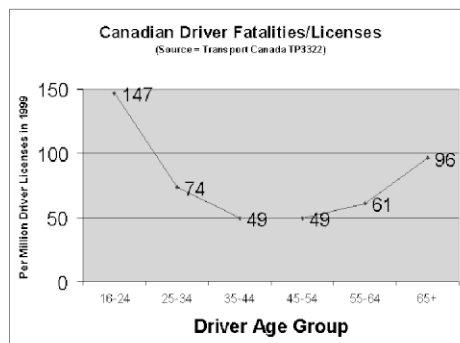
In passing his verdict, the judge suggested that the driver's actions might have been "impaired...perhaps by age." These words raised a red flag. While some critics said the judge's words showed bias against the old, the incident prompted questions about older drivers.

If aging impairs a person's ability to drive safely, Canada faces a challenge over the next two decades. The fastest growing segment of licensed drivers expanding is the age group 65 and older. This is only the beginning — in the next five years the first baby boomers will become 65.

Based on fatalities per million licensed drivers, the second highest rate is among older drivers, where statistics show driver fatalities increase significantly after age 65.

Canadian jurisdictions are looking seriously at how to deal with the aging driver population. One alternative is a system similar to (or rather, opposite to) graduated licensing. For example, a person might be restricted to driving only in the daylight hours, or might be licensed for city streets but not highways.

CSC's 55 Alive Mature Driver Program is a refresher course for older drivers. It helps them compensate for deterioration in hearing, vision, flexibility and reaction time, with the goal of enabling them to drive safely for as long as possible. The course is available across Canada. For details contact CSC. Δ



National Police Award for Traffic Safety

Lieutenant Louise Bonneau of the Montréal Urban Community Police Service (Montréal, Québec) received the National Police Award for Traffic Safety during a ceremony at the 2001 Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police Conference. Lieutenant Bonneau was honoured for her contribution to traffic safety through the leadership and delivery of the community based school safety patrol management system.



Honourable Mention Awards were presented to the following three recipients:

- Members of the Winnipeg Police Service, Traffic Division for their participation in implementing road and waterway safety campaigns;
- Members of the Halton Regional Police Service for their continued work with the Road Closure Action Plan (RCAP), launched in 2000; and
- Members of the Chatham-Kent Police Service for the launch of and progressing work with the "B" Helmet Safe Campaign.

The award, now in its tenth year, is a combined effort of the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, the Canada Safety Council and Transport Canada. Its aim is to recognize initiative and dedication by enforcement personnel and the implementation of innovative traffic safety programs. Δ

Truckers the Safest Ontario Road Users

The most recent Road Safety Annual Report released by the Ontario Ministry of Transportation (MTO) shows that tractor-trailers and their drivers are the safest road users in that province.

The 1999 statistics show that even though over 20 per cent of all vehicles on the road are tractor-trailers:

- Tractor-trailers represent only 1.6 per cent of the vehicles involved in all reportable collisions.
- Tractor-trailers were involved in 13 per cent of all fatalities that took place on Ontario roadways.

The major cause of truck collisions appears to be car drivers. Class A licenced tractor-trailer drivers were found to be driving properly in 2/3 of all fatal collisions according to police reports. Mechanical defects were a factor in only two per cent of fatal collisions.

Alcohol use by truck drivers was found to be a contributing factor in only one per cent of fatalities where tractor-trailers were involved. Overall, alcohol was a contributing factor in fatal collisions involving motorcycle riders 16 per cent of the time. For pick-up truck drivers it was 17.5 per cent. Δ

Ontario Trucking Association, July 6, 2001



Answers to Kwiz Korner

1. **False.** Laws pertaining to snowmobiles fall under both provincial and federal legislation *wherever* they are operated. Municipalities also often have bylaws regulating snowmobile travel.
2. **True.** Snowmobiles should not be operated when excessive "free play" is encountered while turning the handlebars back and forth. This condition can cause serious loss of steering control.
3. **True.** Layering footwear along with clothing ensures that your feet stay warm and dry, and also helps to wick away perspiration.
4. **True.** About three-quarters of snowmobile mishaps involve alcohol consumption, and 73 percent of these occur between 6:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m.
5. **True.** Ski misalignment is the most likely cause of this condition, although other possible causes should also be considered and checked.
6. **False.** Over 85 percent of snowmobile fatalities occur off marked trails.
7. **True.** The helmet protects head, ears and neck while the vehicle itself usually serves to shield the hands and feet. Therefore, the nose, cheek and neck are the most exposed parts.

Public Platform

Snowboarding

Snowboarding is one of the fastest growing winter sports. According to the Canadian Ski Council, skiing decreased by four per cent during the 2000 season while there was a 21 per cent increase in snowboarding.

More than four per cent of Canadians over the age of 12 now snowboard. As the sport continues to gather enthusiasts, its increasing popularity is leading to more injuries.

Although a diverse range of people enjoy the sport, two-thirds of snowboarders are male and between the ages of 10 and 20. The appeal of the sport is often the risk associated with it. Younger people who enjoy “living on the edge” like the freedom that comes with the speed, the jumps and the daring board tricks.

Preventing Injuries

While the number of snowboarding injuries has not surpassed those related to skiing (three to four injuries per 1,000 exposure days for both), boarding injuries are usually more severe. Thirty-eight per cent of snowboarding injuries are fractures, as opposed to 15 per cent for skiing.

The Canadian Hospitals Injury Reporting and Prevention Program (CHIRRP) collects data for children seen at the emergency rooms of 16 hospitals. Snowboarding cases per 10,000 injuries rose from less than one in 1990, to over 111 in 2000. Eighty-eight per cent of the children injured while snowboarding were between the ages of 10 and 19, and 80 per cent of those injured were boys. Half of the injuries were fractures, of which over 40 per cent were to the arm.

Jumps are the most exciting part of snowboarding. Not surprisingly, they also result in the most injuries — the higher the jump, the more severe the possible injury. Poorly performed jumps are the most frequent cause of concussions and broken wrists.

The most common injuries are to the arms, ankles and wrists, followed by the head and knees. The injuries can be very serious, causing long-term physical (and sometimes mental) disability. Head injuries are usually a result of falling backwards onto hard snow. Safety experts advocate wearing a ski helmet to protect the head. Arms, wrists and hands are often hurt when boarders use them to break falls. It's safer to break a fall using the fists.

Learning how to fall properly is fundamental. Snowboarders should take lessons to learn techniques that will reduce their chances of injury.

Helmets

In the US, the debate about wearing helmets on the slopes got going in 1997. That winter, Michael, son of the late Senator Robert Kennedy, died when he hit a tree while skiing in Colorado. Less than a week later, singer and Congressman Sonny Bono was killed in a similar incident in Lake Tahoe.

In 1999, the US Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) released a report showing that helmet use by skiers and snowboarders could prevent or reduce the severity of 44 percent of head injuries to adults, and 53 percent of head injuries to children under the age of 15. From 1993 to 1997, the number of American snowboarders rose 55 per cent. During the same period, snowboarding injuries nearly tripled and the number of head injuries from snowboarding increased five-fold.

The CPSC findings are consistent with a 1986 Swedish study which found that head injuries among skiers wearing helmets were 50 per cent lower than for skiers not wearing helmets.

CSA is in the process of finalizing details of a testing and certification program for recreational ski and snowboard helmets. The program, which will be introduced shortly, will feature the familiar CSA mark on the helmets, assuring consumers that the products have met the applicable standard. For more information contact Greg Makowiecki, Certification Division, CSA International: telephone (416) 747-4264; fax (416) 747-4149; or e-mail greg.makowiecki@csa-international.org

Jumps

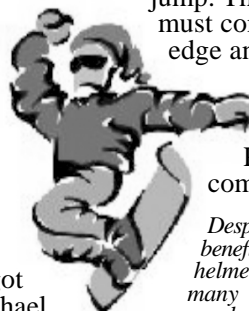
You need intense control to jump and land safely. However, by practising again and again, you can significantly lower your chance of injury. Start by perfecting your jumping technique.

Learning how to fall properly is fundamental.

Then, you can learn, practise and perform more difficult tricks.

If you are a beginner, learn to “ollie” on flat snow. Jump up on the board without going over an actual jump. The front edge of the board must come up higher than the back edge and you should land on a downward slope. A flat landing can hurt the ankles, knees and back.

Practice ollies until you're comfortable and then move to a sloped groomed run no higher than about half a metre (one to two feet). Always check out landings before jumping and approach with a flat board, not your edge.



Despite the benefits of helmet use, many snowboarders maintain a cavalier attitude about using them.

When you jump, do an ollie to give yourself a boost. In the air, keep your body upright and immediately look for a spot to land. Land flat on the board and bend your knees to absorb the shock. Once you master the smaller jumps, you can move to bigger ones, but always pace yourself. Δ

Safety for Snowboarders

- Get proper training, and don't try manoeuvres beyond your ability.
- Always wear protective equipment, including a helmet specifically designed for skiing and snowboarding, wrist supports and kneepads.
- Keep fit during the preseason and warm up before going on the slopes.
- Dress in layers, to control how hot or cold you get. Wear warm, close-fitting, waterproof clothing; loose clothing can become entangled.
- Never go on the slopes alone. Make sure someone is there to help you if you get hurt.
- If you are a beginner, take lessons. The right techniques make the sport more enjoyable and safer.
- Progress slowly. Don't overestimate your ability — remember, practice makes perfect.
- Don't exert yourself. Over-exhaustion is often a factor in injuries; fatigue causes loss of concentration and weakened muscles.
- Never drink alcohol. Even one or two drinks is enough to impair your skill, judgement and coordination.

Dogs, from page 1.

- Also in July, a pit bull chased terrified residents through the streets of St-Romuald, Quebec, injured a cyclist and chased a woman into her home, forcing her to slam the front door on its head. It took five police bullets to kill the dog.

Responsible Ownership

The right dog, well cared for, is a safe, reliable companion. However, dogs must be properly socialized and trained. They become a threat if they are abused, or deliberately bred or trained to attack people or animals.

Any dog may bite if it is threatened, angry, afraid or

in pain. Dogs have an instinct to defend their territory, whether that is space, food or a toy.

Most dog bite victims are children. In many cases, teasing or unintentionally provoking an aggressive reaction from a dog leads to a bite, but occasionally an attack is unprovoked. That is why small children should never be left alone with a dog. Whether or not there is a dog in the family, parents need to teach their children how to behave around dogs.

Dogs trained or bred to be vicious are often owned by drug dealers, criminal groups, and violent or irresponsible individuals who wish to intimidate others. These dogs — and their owners — present a serious threat to community safety.

In the past few years, fear of crime has led more people to acquire a dog for protection. But if they cannot control the animal, they endanger themselves and the community. For those who feel vulnerable, security devices available today offer much safer options.

Lifestyle is another factor. Owning a dog demands a major time commitment, as they need a lot of attention. Any owner who keeps a dog locked up (or chained outside) for 12 hours a day should not have a dog.

Municipal Animal Control

In Canada, animal control is largely a municipal responsibility. Breeders fall under provincial jurisdiction as a business. Import of animals, medical costs of treating bite injuries and collection of national injury data are federal matters.

Good animal control by-laws, well enforced, are part of the solution.

In some areas, less than 20 per cent of dogs are licenced as required. Unlicenced animals are less likely to be spayed or neutered, a critical factor in preventing aggression. Ensuring the resources are in place to enforce animal control regulations will help a community protect its residents from aggressive dogs.

The National Companion Animal Coalition has a position paper which offers guidelines for animal control by-laws, including a sample by-law. The Coalition urges municipalities to adopt legislation to prevent harmful situations, bearing in mind that dangerous dogs are generally the result of irresponsible ownership, and that owners should be held responsible for their dog's behaviour. The document is on the Canadian Federation of Humane Societies Web site.

Suggested criteria to identify dangerous dogs include:

- a dog that has killed a person or domestic animal, regardless of the circumstances.
- a dog that has bitten or injured a person or domestic animal. Exceptions may be made if the dog was teased, abused, assaulted or if the dog was reacting to a person trespassing on the property owned by the dog's owner.
- a dog that has shown the disposition or tendency to be threatening or aggressive.
- an attack trained dog.

In the interest of public safety, municipalities should either euthanise dangerous dogs, or demand their owners meet specific requirements for their care. They should enforce strict penalties against owners who do not comply.

By-laws should require dangerous dogs to be sterilized. This helps reduce aggressive tendencies, and prevents owners from profiting by selling offspring that are also likely to be dangerous. They should also require these dogs to be muzzled and leashed when off the owner's property and strictly confined when on the owner's property. If an owner is unwilling or unable to meet these requirements, euthanasia should be imposed.



Dangerous Breeds

Statistics show that some breeds are more likely to be involved in vicious attacks. European countries have banned or outlawed the import and breeding of breeds deemed dangerous. A few Canadian municipalities have taken this approach, often in the wake of a serious incident.

Authorities should beware that breed bans may provoke people who want aggressive dogs to seek out other breeds and breed or train them to become vicious. After France passed legislation against certain breeds, Barbary apes were smuggled into the country to act as watchdogs. The apes have strong limbs, sharp teeth and short tempers; they attack humans on the head.

Breed bans should not be used as a quick fix. The solution lies in a combination of effective animal control measures, reputable breeders, responsible owners, public education, backed up with enforcement and based on reliable data. Δ

FROM OUR MAILBOX

Last year, in the wake of several dog attacks including the deaths of two children, CSC publicized its concern about an apparent increase in dog bites. Since then, numerous victims have sent us stories such as these.

Five years ago, my elderly mother was mauled by a dog. Our family went through months of agony, owing to her injuries, the lack of responsibility on the part of the dog owner, an indifferent legal system, and ineffective animal control response. The dog in question was an inappropriate breed for negligent people to purchase with the intention of breeding. The humans involved in the breeding of dogs, in my opinion, are the problem, and measures to ensure their responsibility for their dogs would be far more to the point than banning particular dog breeds. I wish you success in addressing this neglected and devastating public health and safety issue.

M.C., Saskatchewan

My three-year-old daughter was in the yard when our neighbor's red/brown lab came into the yard. She saw the dog and said Hi to him. He proceeded to walk up to her and bite her in the mouth, requiring five stitches to sew her lip together. Right away the neighbors stated they would put the dog to sleep. But as my daughter's lip healed, it didn't look so bad and the neighbor's kids begged to keep him and make sure he didn't get loose again. Therefore the dog lives, he has gotten in our yard again, my daughter was out and she ran in scared. When I was contacted by animal control they informed me I would have to go to court to put this dog to sleep. I now had all the onus on me to fix this situation, which was not my fault.

K.D., Ontario

On the Job

First Aid Training

If there is an injury or medical emergency in your workplace, will someone be able to respond promptly?

The more employees know first aid, the more likely the response to an incident will be fast enough to save a life, reduce the severity of an injury and promote speedy recovery.

All Employees Need Life Saving Skills

Workplace regulations require employers to have some employees certified in first aid. However, it makes good business sense to exceed the legislative requirements by giving all employees basic first aid training.

The obvious advantage is that it ensures people can respond properly if an incident occurs. If only one person in the office or the shift can apply CPR or first aid, what happens in an emergency when that worker is not available?

Another benefit is that employees become more safety conscious. Research shows that workplaces where all employees know first aid have a lower incidence of injuries. This may be because they become more aware of injury-causing situations.



St. John Ambulance photo

Moreover, critical life saving skills and awareness transfer off the job. From the employer's perspective, it should not matter where the emergency occurs. When a family member suffers a fall or heart attack at home, a worker's attendance and performance can be affected.

Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation

Every employee can benefit from at least introductory CPR training. It puts them in a position to help in life threatening situations such as choking or heart attack, which require swift, effective response.

New international CPR guidelines were released in 2000. Two distinct groups have been identified: lay rescuers (basically, the general public); and targeted responders (people with a duty to respond, including first aiders in the workplace).

Basic Training

Only certain employees are classified as targeted responders. However, an organization benefits when a large part of its workforce is trained in first aid and CPR. With training, more employees gain the skills to manage an emergency effectively, without panic or confusion.

In Canada, St. John Ambulance and the Canadian Red Cross offer first aid and CPR training, and the Heart and Stroke Foundation offers CPR. Both St. John and the Red Cross offer training courses which focus on time-sensitive, life threatening situations that could occur in the workplace or at home and how to prevent injuries.

St. John Ambulance Emergency Level First Aid course provides the basic skills needed to reduce shock, treat injuries and in many cases, save lives; the St. John starter CPR training (Level A) covers one-rescuer CPR, artificial respiration and choking manoeuvres for adults.

The Canadian Red Cross Emergency First Aid course introduces choking skills, rescue breathing and CPR for adults, infants and children, how to treat severe bleeding and shock, how to perform a secondary assessment, and information about automated external defibrillation (AED). Δ



Trashed Computers Raise Health Questions

Electronic trash is the only "waste stream" on the rise in Canada, according to an October 2000 Environment Canada report, Information Technology and Telecommunications Waste in Canada. In 2000 alone, Canadians threw out over 40,000 tons of this equipment.

Discarded computers in landfills not only add to the ever-increasing waste disposal problem, they also contain substances that pose health and environmental risks. Computers and related technology including printers, scanners and fax machines are increasingly used in the home as well as the workplace. This machinery is tossed out every two to five years as it becomes obsolete. Unfortunately, manufacturers have designed products that are much cheaper to throw out than to repair or upgrade.

Materials in this equipment, such as lead, cadmium and mercury, pose no threat to health while the machinery is in use. The potential health risk occurs if they turn into forms that can be released into the environment after being dumped in landfills or incinerated. The European Union is passing legislation to phase out the use of potentially toxic materials in electronic devices.

Lead from CRTs

Conventional computer monitors run on cathode ray tubes (CRTs), a technology invented back in 1897. Each monitor has two to four kilograms of lead shielding, which is inert. However, in certain conditions, lead can turn into a soluble form which makes it a possible health risk.

Even low levels of lead in the blood can have adverse effects on the nervous system, posing the greatest risk to younger children and the unborn fetus. When a problem is suspected, young children and pregnant women may be tested for lead levels in the blood, but abnormal levels of lead in blood often go unreported in Canada.

Slimmed-down flat-panel monitors that use liquid crystal display (LCD) technology do not require lead shielding and need less electricity to run. The CRT models will be phased out over the next few years in favour of this

Did you know?

Statistics Canada reported that over half (51 per cent) of the women murdered in 1999 were killed by a person with whom they had intimate relations. Of those, 38 were murdered by a current male spouse (married or common-law) and 20 by a separated or divorced male spouse. Another two women were killed by their same-sex spouses. More than three-quarters (77 per cent) of those suffering criminal harassment were women. *Prevention Magazine, National Crime Prevention Centre, Summer 2001*

A new type of weapon is being seized in Europe. The phone gun looks like a normal mobile phone, but is much heavier. Inside the dummy phone is a .22 calibre firearm which can fire four rounds in quick succession by pressing buttons on the key pad. *Gazette, Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Vol. 63, No. 3, 2001*

Ontario's road safety record for 1999 was the best in Canada and second only to Massachusetts in all of North America. There were 868 road fatalities, which represents a rate of 1.10 per 10,000 drivers. Drinking and driving was a factor in almost one-quarter of these deaths. The worst year on record was 1972, when 1,934 people (5.24 per 10,000 drivers) were killed on Ontario roads. *1999 Ontario Road Safety Annual Report*

A 53-year-old Ontario woman was awarded almost \$6 million after a court ruled the province should have cleared ice from a Highway 401 bridge where the woman suffered devastating head injuries in a crash which occurred in October 1988. *The Toronto Star, May 25, 2001*

The 1999 Uniform Crime Reporting Survey showed an overall crime rate decrease of five per cent, including reported violent and property offences. However, the Criminal Intelligence Service Canada 2000 Annual Report, which monitors organized crime activities, described exponential growth of criminal organizations, including drug trafficking, credit card fraud and telemarketing scams. The discrepancy may be because most victims of organized crime do not report offences. *Gazette, Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Vol. 63, No. 1, 2001*

Police charged 69,192 persons with impaired driving in 2000, a five per cent drop from 1999. The impaired driving rate had stabilized during 1998 and 1999 after 15 years of steady decline. Some of this decline could be attributed to a growing tendency by police to issue a road-side suspension, rather than charge some drivers tested to be slightly over the legal alcohol limit. *Statistics Canada, Crime statistics 2000, July, 2001*

Nurses miss more work due to illness or disability than other shift workers. They are also away longer, an average 15.4 days per year compared with 6.7 for all Canadian workers. Back injuries from lifting patients, stress and burnout are major problems. Unlike other workers, there are no limits on weights they can lift; and cutbacks mean they must often lift alone. Another factor is age — only one in 10 nurses is under 30. *Health Care in Canada 2001, Canadian Institute for Health Information*

Air, marine and rail travel in Canada is getting safer, with 209 fatalities in 2000, compared to a five year average of 291. Marine accidents fell to a 25-year low. Both train and airplane accidents dropped six per cent from 1999. *National Post, July 24, 2001*

American men live an average of 76 years, but male truck drivers only live an average of 61 years. This may be due to lifestyle factors. More truck drivers smoke — 54 per cent, compared to only 20 per cent of the adult male population. Other factors are diet, stress, sleep and exercise. *Newsbriefs, Private Motor Truck Council of Canada, March 2001*

Computer Waste, from page 7.

more environmentally friendly LCD technology. In the meantime, about 3,000 tons of lead from CRT computers could be in our dumps by 2005.

Solutions

Proper landfill conditions help prevent substances such as lead and mercury from converting to more toxic forms. For example, a dump should not be located near the water table; and chemicals which could react should not be together. Landfills fall under provincial jurisdiction.

Recycling produces yet another health hazard. Beryllium dust, released when computers are recycled, has been linked to lung disease. One major company that recycles this technology reported 23 cases of its workers developing an allergy to the dust, along with 10 cases of berylliosis.

Japan and Western European countries force manufacturers to accept trade-ins. No such legislation exists in Canada, but the technology industry has initiated a voluntary plan to reduce waste and encourage recycling. A growing number of firms re-use and

recycle equipment, although the computer recycling industry is still quite new and operates without regulation or standards. There is also a push to design products that are easier to take apart so that components can be re-used, and easier to upgrade so they are operational for longer.

Open source operating systems, such as Linux, provide free software which can run on older computer models. Typically, computers in third-world countries run on this software. Although slower and less flexible than proprietary software, it is functional and reliable. Yet despite the availability of open source systems, Canadian consumers prefer proprietary software. As software is upgraded, they buy new hardware and dump their old computers.

Businesses and individuals who want to get rid of old equipment should try to keep it out of landfills. Reselling or donating it to friends, family or charities is one approach (although you can't control how they eventually dispose of it); an Industry Canada program gives refurbished computers to schools. Find out whether the

manufacturer accepts old models to reuse or recycle parts. Can you upgrade your computer instead of throwing it out? Ask your computer supplier or municipality about disposal and recycling options. Δ

Fall 2001 Campaigns

National School Safety Week, October 17 to 23: No More Bullies (in partnership with the National Film Board and the National Strategy on Community Safety and Crime Prevention)

National Seniors' Safety Week, November 6 to 12: Make Your Home a Safer Place (financial support from Health Canada and Veterans Affairs Canada Falls Prevention Initiative)

National Community Safety and Crime Prevention Campaign, November: Aggressive Dogs

National Home Fire Safety Week, November 24 to 30: Elmer's Fire Safety activity book for children

National Safe Driving Week, December 1 to 7: Impaired Driving - Impact of Recent Changes to the Criminal Code