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Agency Secretary

Air Resources Board

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MEMORANDUM

TO: All Managers and Supervisors

FROM: Cindy Francisco
Safety Coordinator

DATE: July 3, 2003

SUBJECT: SAFETY MEETING IDEAS – JULY 2003

Suggested issues to discuss during your next meeting are:

1. Heart Attack Warning Signs

The American Heart Association state that heart disease is the number one cause of death and annually kills more Americans than all other leading causes of death combined. They list the following warning signs for a heart attack. They state that not all of these warning signs occur in every heart attack, but if some start to occur, don't wait, get help immediately:

- Uncomfortable pressure, fullness, squeezing, or pain in the center of the chest that lasts more than a few minutes, or goes away and comes back.
- Pain that spreads to the shoulders, neck or arms.
- Chest discomfort with lightheadedness, fainting, sweating nausea or shortness of breath.

2. Insect & Spider Bites - More Information from Last Month

Nancy L. C. Steele, MSCD, sent a note to me to clarify and correct some information that appeared in last month's Safety Meeting Ideas regarding insect and spider bites. She provides this information since she is married to a beekeeper and has been involved with bees for over 20 years. Her M.S. thesis was on honey bee behavior. Rod Hill, SSD, who's father is a bee keeper and he himself was in the bee business for 20 years also contributed to this updated information. Thank you both for ensuring that we have the correct information.

First, with bee stings it is most important to remove the stinger quickly. Tweezers are not useful, as by the time you went and got the tweezers, if you could find them, all of the poison would have been pumped into your body. Just scrape the

stinger off with your fingernail. And don't worry about being "gentle." Just be quick. Rubbing the stinger against your clothing, hand, or anything with a little roughness to the surface works fine to remove a stinger. The rubbing pulls off the poison sack and usually the barb with it. But, the fingernail is still necessary for those stings that go in so deep that the barb is left in your skin.

As for yellowjackets - they don't bite, they sting, so there is no way one could get blood poisoning from their sting. They do not leave their stinger behind, but they are stinging, not biting.

The way one gets blood poisoning from the sting of any insect is because you scratch it, introducing bacteria into the wound. So the best advice is to avoid scratching any bite or sting. Take benedryl (over-the-counter) if the itching is unbearable. Avoiding scratching also will reduce the amount of time the sting hurts.

Finally, people should know what constitutes an allergic reaction. Localized swelling and itching alone are not the problem. An allergic reaction manifests by generalized itching all over, shortness of breath, and can progress to a loss of consciousness as the tissues of the lungs swell and blood pressure falls.

3. Employee Assistance Program

Employees and their dependents are eligible to receive free, confidential employee assistance and counseling through a contracted provider, Medical Behavioral Care (MBA). From time-to-time, everyone needs help in dealing with stress, family concerns, money worries, or other problems. MBA provides Air Resources Board employees with a more objective viewpoint, or a professional perspective about concerns. The MBA counselors are experts in providing support, understanding and guidance for a broad range of situations. Assistance is provided for six categories: alcohol and drug abuse; marital and family issues; emotional, personal, and stress concerns; legal matters; financial and credit problems; and dependent care. Assistance is available 24 hours a day by self referral at 1-800-632-7422. Joy Antell is ARB's Employee Assistance Coordinator, she can be reached at (916) 324-8893 or at jantell@arb.ca.gov.

Document your meeting by using Form HS-1 "Safety Meeting Report" which I have attached for your convenience. This can also be used, if you choose, to route the information to each employee. This record should be kept in your files for one year.

If you have any questions, I can be reached at (916) 323-1158 or cfrancis@arb.ca.gov.