

# 'MAKE SAFETY A HABIT'

DEP's Safety Series  
Volume 3, Issue 5



## Northeast District Safety News

The Deputy NED award for April went to Rita Felton-Smith for bringing a potentially dangerous situation to the attention of the Safety Committee. Rita attended a meeting at which the conference room tables were unstable and nearly collapsed from just a small amount of weight. Thanks to Rita, the proper way to move and set up the tables was discussed during an All Staff meeting. Rita gave thanks to Leslie Maybin who was also in the meeting where the problem was first noticed. Thank you Leslie and Rita!



The Spring 2009 Vehicle Rodeo was held on April 21. Once again, the fleet was inspected for everything from coolant and wiper fluid to bug spray and fire extinguishers. All in just about one hour! Thank you to all of the staff members that helped to make this a success!



## THE STATE OF FLORIDA OPENS TOLL FREE SERVICE FOR RESIDENTS TO RECEIVE INFORMATION ON SWINE FLU

The State of Florida has opened a toll-free telephone service where residents can call to receive health information about swine flu.

**The number for Florida residents to call is 1-800-342-3557.**

The line will be staffed from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily until further notice. After hours calls will be handled by an automated service.

As Florida responds to swine flu, the Florida Department of Health offers the following recommendations:

- People with respiratory illness or fever should stay home from work or school to avoid spreading infections, including influenza, to others in the community.
- Avoid close contact with people who are coughing or otherwise appear ill.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Wash hands frequently to lessen the spread of respiratory illness.
- Symptoms of swine flu are rapid onset fever, cough fatigue and in some cases vomiting and diarrhea.

If you think you have the flu, please call your health care provider and discuss whether you need to be seen in their office or an emergency department or stay home.

Swine flu is not transmitted by food and you cannot get swine flu from eating pork products.

The State of Florida is receiving frequent updates from the CDC, and working with local health departments to monitor the situation and immediately follow up on suspected cases. [The Florida Department of Health has created a webpage with information at www.doh.state.fl.us](http://www.doh.state.fl.us), and the CDC has a web page at [www.cdc.gov/swineflu](http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu).

## Swine Influenza Information

The Florida Department of Health is actively monitoring the current swine influenza situation in California and Texas. Currently there are no known cases in Florida due to this novel H1N1 strain. For more information about this rapidly evolving event please visit \* <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/swine/index.htm>. \*

The Florida Department of Health is proactively responding to this event by enhancing our surveillance and monitoring efforts for influenza across the state. The Florida Department of Health, in partnership with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, has the capability needed to detect novel influenza viruses.



## Skin Diving Training and Certification in the South District

On March 19<sup>th</sup> staff from the South District Integrated Water Resource Monitoring Network Program, the Division of Environmental Assessment and Restoration, and the Submerged Lands and Environmental Resources Program participated in skin diving (snorkeling) certification as part of the District Safety Program. All staff that skin dive as part of their job duties are required to meet minimum training guidelines. The certification includes class work and pool work. Megan Fairbent, Heidi Hoffman, Michael LeBlanc, Nwankaku Onwunli, Benjamin Paswater, Arielle Poulos, Jesse Reade, Tim Schwan, Ryan Snyder, James Standiford, Lori Vogt and Ford Walton all participated.

The class work training includes use and care of equipment, basic safety information, how to plan a skin dive, how to complete the dive plan form, completion of necessary forms, and a review of the Skin Diving Directive. The pool work requires a 200 yard swim – no swim aids, swim 15 yards underwater in one breath – no swim aids, tread water for 5 minutes, dive 10 feet to retrieve an item from the bottom, flood/clear a mask, remove/replace weight belt, and a 200 yard snorkel with at least 8 submersions and snorkel clearings.



## Tips For Safe Diving Practices

Diving is a safe sport as long as divers practice scuba diving safety and learn how to anticipate and solve problems. This is all part of becoming an accomplished and safe diver. To reduce the likelihood of problems occurring divers should never dive without proper preparation. Part of this preparation is to understand safe diving practices. Professional Association of Diving Instructors sums these scuba diving safety tips up in their Safe Diving Practices Statement of Understanding.

1. Maintain good mental and physical health for diving.
2. Be familiar with dive sites or dive with a dive guide.
3. Use complete, well maintained, reliable equipment that is familiar.
4. Listen carefully to dive briefings and directions by the dive staff.
5. Always follow the buddy system. Plan dives and dive with a buddy.
6. Know how to use dive tables. Make all dives no-decompression dives. Be a safe diver. **Slowly Ascend From Every Dive.**
7. Maintain proper buoyancy. Neutral buoyancy underwater, positive buoyancy at the surface.
8. Never breath-hold or skip-breath while breathing compressed air.
9. Use a boat, float or other surface support device whenever possible.
10. Know and obey local dive laws and regulations.

Divers Alert Network (DAN) has a similar scuba diving safety list. They call their list **S.A.F.E.D.I.V.E.**

- Self-reliance
- Attitude
- Fitness
- Experience
- Diving skills
- Involvement
- Variety
- Equipment

To find out how DAN defines each of these points, you can visit their [website](#). DAN is a great resource for scuba diving safety.

DAN also list recommendations by American Association of Underwater Sciences (AAUS). Some of their general recommendations are:

- Ascent rates shall not exceed 60 feet / 18 meters per minute.
- A stop at 10 to 30 ft / 3 to 9 m for three to five minutes is recommended on every dive.
- Repetitive and multilevel diving should start with the deepest dive or depth first.
- Multiple deep dives should be avoided.

The AAUS also has safety recommendations on the use of diving computers. You can find out more about the AAUS and their recommendations for scuba diving safety on their website.