

# Promoting Safety

*Do you care?*

*By Chum Cleverly, Director of Public Works, Town of Bow*

As I traveled around the state teaching work zone safety for the UNH T<sup>2</sup> Center, the most frequent complaints I heard, "they won't provide us with the right equipment," or, "they won't give us the time to set up the work zone properly." If "they" is you then you should think about the message you are sending your employees. Not providing safety equipment or the time to use it gives the impression that you don't care about them and their safety.

When employees don't feel that their leaders give a hoot about them, they won't be motivated to do their best when asked to perform assigned tasks. Safety should be the main concern of supervisors, administrators and elected officials. Keeping your employees safe is good business and shows your staff that you care.

Town employees tied up in court or in labor hearings, because of the town's negligence, are not doing what they were hired to do. This results in increased cost for worker's compensation, or liability insurance, and is not a wise investment for the taxpayer.

People who attend training would like to use the skills and knowledge they gain during the training. If not allowed to, then everyone loses. The cost for training and safety equipment costs less than a preventable accident. Employees know that safety equipment is relatively inexpensive and how little time is needed to do a job safely. It is important to provide the equipment they need to ensure safety and the time to use it.

There are dozens of safety courses available from several organizations promoting safety. OSHA, the New Hampshire Department of Labor, and the municipality's insurance companies want safe working conditions for employees. These companies would be happy to let community leaders know that safety is more cost effective than cutting safety equipment from their budgets. The potential loss in time and human suffering should be enough incentive to promote safety at any expense.

Mayors, Selectmen, Managers, and specifically public works supervisors should not need to be reminded how important safety is but they do. The people on the road, at the transfer station, working around the lagoon, and pushing lawn mowers know what they need to be safe. If they do not know, then you should, and you should share that information. The safety seminars offered by the UNH T<sup>2</sup> Center, New Hampshire Municipal Association and Compensation Funds are not just for "hands on" folks. They are for everyone. Why not attend on or two safety courses?

Keep your employees safe because it's good for them, it's good for morale, and it's good for the community.

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form compile a complete listing of equipment and personnel available to call upon. Accurate completion of the form is necessary to ensure the program is successful. Each municipality that participates will receive a complete listing of all equipment and personnel available in the other participating municipalities.

The UNH T<sup>2</sup> Center will conduct orientation in the fall for the mutual aid program. For further information, contact the UNH T<sup>2</sup> Center.