STATE ROLLS OUT NEW TEMPLATE FOR EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLANS

By Carol Sneyd, Regional Safety Technician

After Sandy Hook, New York State re-formed the taskforce charged with improving the safety of our schools. Task force members interviewed representatives from schools and reviewed building-level emergency response plans from across the state.

Although all school district and building plans are based on the same state regulation, task force members found that there was no uniformity of message or format. Some districts had hired independent contractors with no ties to the state Education Department to write plans for them, others had done the bare minimum of planning and some had developed exceptional plans.

In order to standardize the plans and ensure an adequate level of preparedness, Safe Schools New York worked with the governor’s office, the state Education Department, state police, New York Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Services and the state Division of Criminal Justice Services to develop a template for building-level emergency response plans for all school districts. The new format ensures that the plans mesh seamlessly with state, county and local level plans. This template was rolled out at regional meetings from February through the beginning of April.

There are some portions of your current plans that will fall easily into the new template, others may need slight adjustments and still others will need to be completely reconsidered. We are firmly committed to making the update process as painless as possible. Our department has prepared several options to assist you in making the changes.

On April 14th, at 10:00 a.m. on our BOCES main campus, we will be moderating a discussion among representatives of component

DID YOU KNOW?

Our department has developed a program for graduating seniors that addresses some of the safety challenges that they will be facing.

This presentation is delivered to either large or small group sessions in your district. It can be scheduled either during the day or in the evening so parents can attend.

The topics covered, which include but are not limited to, drugs and alcohol, situational awareness, and dorm safety.

This program is offered on a limited basis due to time constraints. Please contact Mike Sellet at 914-248-2457 for more information.
districts on the new template. We will be recommending a process by which we can assist you in using this template to improve upon the hard and dedicated work that you have already completed under the original SAVE Legislation.

Please RSVP via e-mail to dmaro@pnwboces.org. If you would like to schedule an onsite visit, please call Dorothy Maro at 914-248-2456 or Carol Sneyd at 914-248-3854.

**CHEMICAL SAFETY: IT IS YOUR BUSINESS**

By Carol Sneyd, Regional Safety Technician

It was reported in the OSHA newsletter that a receptionist at a Bronx hair salon was fired from her job after making her co-workers aware of the health hazards associated with hair products containing formaldehyde. The federal Department of Labor is now suing the salon and its owner for discrimination and seeking redress and compensation for the worker.

So, what does this have to do with schools?

The answer is that like the salon, school districts are responsible for addressing employee concerns about chemical products in a timely manner. It is the district’s responsibility to provide employees with material safety data sheets for any hazardous chemicals in the workplace and to provide protective equipment listed in the (M)SDS. It may even be necessary to change to a more environmentally friendly product.

The Department of Risk & Safety at PNW BOCES is available to address your Right-to-Know and Chemical Hygiene needs. We have templates that can be used to write chemical safety programs and we offer training to staff who are exposed to chemicals as part of their jobs.

**Fire Safety**

Our department is available to do preliminary fire inspections in your schools this spring in order to assist you in making necessary changes and repairs over the summer. Contact us at csneyd@pnwboces.org or msellet@pnwboces.org to schedule a visit.

**Playground Safety**

We can help you keep your students safe on the playgrounds. Our department is available to perform playground safety inspections and observations of your playground monitors. Contact us at csneyd@pnwboces.org or msellet@pnwboces.org to schedule a visit.