

Campus Safety Quarterly

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**October
is Fire
Safety
Month.
Prepare
Now.**



Fire Season Declared Early in Southern California Fire Danger Expected to be High

On Monday, May 3, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF) placed San Diego, San Bernardino and Riverside Counties on fire season status a full three weeks earlier than last year. Fire officials announced that exceedingly hot and dry weather, below average spring rainfall, and six years of drought conditions have created increased fire risk. Fire season status denotes a heightened state of readiness that includes hiring seasonal firefighters, staffing facilities 24 hours per day, increasing dispatch capacity and possible suspension of burning permits.

Last fall's disastrous fires reminded everyone that protecting your family, home and property depends on pre-fire planning and preparation. Once you smell smoke, it's too late! The three steps of preparation include: creating a defensible space; maintaining a defensible home; and preparing to evacuate.

Creating a Defensible Space:

- Clear dry grass, brush and construction materials a minimum of 30 feet from around structures. In some areas, more clearance may be recommended or required.
- Trim tree branches at least 10 feet away from roofs or chimneys.
- Remove all flammables from roofs.
- Maintain a fire resistant landscape with regular watering, trimming and weeding. Limit use of junipers, conifers, palms and broadleaf evergreens like eucalyptus that contain highly flammable oils, waxes and resins. Consult local nurseries or the UC cooperative extension for recommendations of fire resistant plants.
- Locate propane tanks and woodpiles at least 30 feet away from all structures and maintain ten feet of clearance around them.

Maintaining a Defensible Home:

- Install a non-combustible roof that meets local building and fire code requirements. Airborne firebrands account for most homes burned by wildfire. The roof is the most vulnerable part of your home to firebrands.
- Use fire resistant building materials such as stucco or masonry for the exterior of your home.
- Enclose eaves, balconies, decks and other projections with fire-resistant materials to prevent trapping burning embers and flames.
- Install only dual-pane or tempered windows and skylights to reduce heat transmission. Radiated heat from wildfires can cause fires to ignite inside homes.

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Maintaining a Defensible Home (continued):

- Mark house numbers clearly at the street or driveway. Ensure that access roads and driveways are accessible to emergency vehicles. Clear combustible vegetation at least 10 feet from roads and remove overhanging tree branches. Fire trucks need at least 14 feet vertical clearance.
- Keep tools on hand to fight a fire such as rakes, axes, handsaws, chainsaws, buckets and shovels. Every home should have a garden hose long enough to reach any part of the home or other structures on the property. Only attempt to fight the fire if there is no imminent danger to human life.

Preparing to Evacuate:

- Prepare and practice an evacuation plan before fire threatens. Know at least two ways out of each room and two routes away from the house. Prearrange a meeting place with family members.
- Develop a list of important items to take with you and assemble an emergency supply kit.
- Lock doors and windows if there is time. Leave outside lights on so firefighters can find the house in smoke.
- Do not leave sprinklers on as this can reduce water pressure needed by firefighters to fight the fire.
- Remove any items that could block fire equipment access to your home.
- If ordered to evacuate or if you feel threatened, leave immediately. There may not be time for notification. Drive calmly with headlights on for visibility. Follow orders of law enforcement officers and firefighters and do not block access for emergency vehicles.
- Once you evacuate, do not attempt to reenter the area until officials declare it is safe.

Last year, wildfires killed 30 people and destroyed more than 4,000 homes nationwide, more than half of them in San Diego County. This fire season could be worse with hot temperatures and continuing drought conditions in the Southwest. Preparing for wildfire now may prevent death or serious injury and reduce property loss.

Only You Can Prevent Forest Fires!

For sixty years (1944 - 2004) Smokey Bear has spread this message as the official mascot of the USDA Forest Service and the National Association of State Foresters. With the threat of wildfires looming, his message is as important today as it was sixty years ago. While lightning can cause wildfires, many are caused by careless actions and are preventable. The devastating Cedar fire reportedly began as a signal fire that raged out of control.

Wildfires have always been a part of the natural environment and serve a vital purpose in controlling the growth of shrubs and brush that fuel wildfires. With development expanding into more rural areas, this natural cycle of burning has been interrupted. Dead trees, fallen branches and dry grass remain, ready to ignite with any spark. Burning leaves, campfires, cigarettes, fireworks, mechanical equipment, vehicle fires and arson have all been cited as causes of wildfires. Houses and other structures add fuel to the flames. In southern California, fire season reaches its peak in September and October when high Santa Ana winds are added to the equation.

To prevent another season of disastrous wildfires, we must all use caution and become more fire-wise. For information on fire prevention and the history of Smokey Bear, including activities for children, visit his official website at: <http://www.smokeybear.com>.

Fire Safety Resources on the Internet

The Burn Institute: www.burninstitute.org

CDF website: www.fire.ca.gov

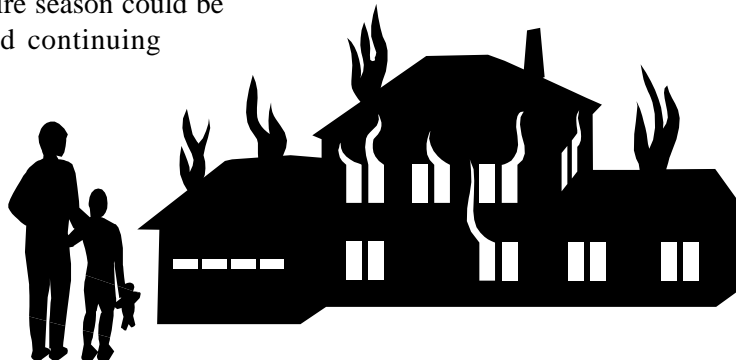
CDF checklist for homeowners:

<http://www.fire.ca.gov/php/education.php>

Firewise: <http://www.firewise.org/>

SDSU Emergency Preparedness Information:

<http://bfa.sdsu.edu/emergency/>



Trolley Station Security

By Dan Cruz, Marston and Marston, Inc.

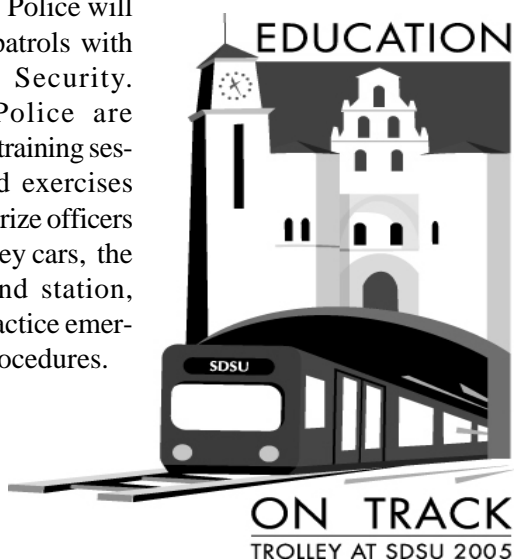
When the underground trolley station opens at SDSU in mid-2005, the responsibility for security will be shared. The SDSU Police Department and San Diego Trolley Security have already completed a plan to ensure the security of passengers, including students, faculty, staff and visitors to campus. Public safety is a high priority, and the new station will include several important security features.

The underground station will be the first and only San Diego trolley station to have an on-site security office. Security office staffing will include at least two 24-hour security officers as well as 20 surveillance cameras. The cameras will be located on elevators, outside the station, in the transit center above the station, in the mezzanine, and inside the tunnel. The cameras will be monitored around the clock. The interior and exterior of the station will be brightly illuminated and the station interior is designed to maximize visibility.

According to San Diego Trolley Security Director Bill Burke, anywhere from two to six guards will be on patrol in and around the station depending on the time and day. "We anticipate most riders getting on and off the trolley at SDSU will be students, staff, or people attending an event on campus," Burke said, "However, all officers are trained to identify suspicious persons and activity. The station at SDSU will include all updated security mechanisms including new federally mandated bomb resistant trashcans."

San Diego Trolley Security has already undergone training to make staff more aware of possible terrorism.

SDSU Police will overlap patrols with Trolley Security. SDSU Police are planning training sessions and exercises to familiarize officers with trolley cars, the tunnel and station, and to practice emergency procedures.



"We are obviously anticipating an increase in activity, and we are prepared to prevent incidents and deal with them as they occur" said SDSU Police Captain Steve Williams. "The SDSU Police Department is continually looking into additional security initiatives that aim to further reduce vulnerabilities of this transit station and make SDSU riders more secure. We believe the trolley station will be one of the safest areas on campus." For more information about the trolley project, visit <http://advancement/trolley/>.

Kristen Ross Joins EH&S as Occupational Safety Manager

Environmental Health and Safety is pleased to announce the appointment of our new Occupational Safety Manager, Kristen Ross. Kristen is no stranger to the campus having earned both her B.A. in Psychology and M.S. in Public Health with an emphasis in Industrial Hygiene at SDSU. As part of her course requirements in the Graduate School of Public Health, she completed an internship in the Department of Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S) where she worked closely with the Occupational Safety Manager. After she graduated, she returned to EH&S as a temporary staff member to manage the environmental compliance issues of the Chemistry/Geology building demolition. When that project was completed, she joined the staff of Scripps Green Hospital and Clinic in Torrey Pines as their Safety Officer. There she was responsible for coordinating and implementing health and safety programs including hazard awareness and communication, injury and illness prevention, and ergonomics, as well as conducting incident investigations.

One of Kristen's top priorities is providing safety training to the campus. She will work closely with Department Safety Coordinators to achieve this goal. She has conducted Injury and Illness Prevention Program training for Safety Coordinators and additional training will be scheduled for those who could not attend the initial session. She also trained participating departments on emergency evacuation procedures in preparation for the evacuation drill held on April 14. Other programs she will oversee include fire and life safety, industrial safety and OSHA compliance. Kristen is excited to be back at SDSU and looks forward to helping the campus provide a safe and healthy environment for working and learning.

Hazardous and Universal Waste Disposal at SDSU

The Department of Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S) is responsible for the disposal of all Hazardous Waste from the SDSU campus. The State of California defines hazardous waste as anything:

- Toxic (poisonous).
- Reactive (can explode).
- Ignitable (can catch fire).
- Corrosive (acidic or alkaline).

An extensive list of these substances appears in Title 22 of the California Code of Regulations. Call EH&S at 594-6778 if you have questions about disposal of hazardous waste or to request hazardous waste disposal.

New laws adopted since 2000 define many commonly used items as "Universal Waste" and provide guidelines on proper disposal. Because these items are common, pose a lower risk than hazardous waste and are generated by a wide variety of people, many are not aware that they cannot be disposed of as regular trash. Environmental Health and Safety has procedures for proper disposal of these items for the SDSU campus. Please call 594-6778 to dispose of any of these items. EH&S will collect them from you or provide instruction on the proper disposal method. Improper disposal or dumping of any of these items is illegal and may pose a serious environmental hazard.

- Aerosol cans that aren't empty.
- Batteries, almost all types including rechargeable nickel-cadmium, silver button, small sealed lead acid, alkaline, carbon-zinc and many others. (Automobile batteries are hazardous waste.)
- Cathode Ray Tubes (CRTs) such as those in televisions and computer monitors.
- Electronic items such as cell phones, game consoles and computers (CPUs).
- Fluorescent light ballasts, PCB and Non-PCB.
- Lamps: fluorescent, high intensity discharge (HID), and high pressure sodium.
- Mercury containing equipment such as thermostats, thermometers, switches, gauges, and certain medical equipment (blood pressure meters, etc.).

- Radioactive (tritium) self-luminescent exit signs.
- Refrigerants such as those in refrigerators and air conditioners.

The California Environmental Protection Agency Department of Toxic Substance Control publishes two valuable fact sheets that provide detailed information on proper handling, storage and disposal for hazardous materials and hazardous and universal waste. They can be viewed and printed from the Internet:

Fact Sheet/January 2002

Hazardous Waste Generator Requirements
http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/PublicationsForms/HWM_FS_Generator_Requirements.pdf

Fact Sheet/June 2003

Managing Universal Waste in California - Rules for Managing Some Common Wastes
http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/PublicationsForms/HWM_FS_UWR.pdf

Radiation Safety Program Inspection a Success

On August 31, the California Department of Health Services conducted its biannual inspection of the SDSU Radiation Safety Program. Two inspectors performed an intensive review of paperwork and visited 5 laboratories selected at random. Laboratory personnel were questioned at length regarding operations and safety procedures. Although the inspection was unannounced, the laboratories performed very well. The inspectors found no violations and made no recommendations for program improvement. It is rare that no recommendations are made. The previous inspection in February 2002 resulted in no violations and 10 minor recommendations.

The success of this inspection can be attributed to the hard work and diligence of Radiation Safety Officer (RSO) Mitch Lanahan and Assistant RSO Dave Palmer.