

New Year's Resolution

If your New Year's resolutions from last year have gone unresolved and your resolutions for this year are in serious jeopardy, you're not alone. For many people, a new year's resolution is a highly personal goal that, if fulfilled, becomes a "private victory." But whether you keep things quiet by accident or by design, you are giving yourself an out: You can fall off track, and no one will be the wiser.

On the other hand, you are more likely to follow through with your resolutions if you share them with the significant people in your life.

Now a new year offers another opportunity to achieve your goals, and these five tips should help you keep to your New Year's resolutions.

1. Make your resolutions public

Share them with one or more people so they can help you stay on track. If you let your friends and family in on your dream, you can use their support to help you make it a reality.

2. Write down your resolution

But don't stop there: Also include the steps you will take to keep it. According to Laura Hess, a Nevada-based personal and business coach, having a clearly articulated goal and a plan of action is vital for success.

3. Keep things simple

Break a big goal into a series of smaller goals. Want to lose 50 pounds? Shoot for losing 5 percent of your body weight first, or set five 10-pound incremental weight-loss goals.

4. Mark your achievements



Each time you make a small lifestyle change aimed at reaching your goal — adding five minutes to your daily walk, for instance — put a star on your calendar so you can see your progress.

5. Make small changes

If weight loss or a healthier lifestyle is your goal, put a bowl of fruit or vegetable pieces front and center in the fridge, and hide the cookie jar behind the oatmeal. Each week, try a new low-fat cereal or an exotic fruit or a vegetable you haven't tasted before. Stash away your car keys for a weekend and challenge yourself to walk wherever you need to go. Lose the deep-fat fryer, too, and steam, bake or microwave your food.

Making a New Year's resolution is a great way to make a positive change in your life, whether it's going to the gym, waking up earlier, or saving your money.

But, it's very rare you'll keep your resolutions for the whole year. According to U.S. News, approximately 80% of resolutions fail by the second week of February, so now is the time to double down and push through.

(www.weightwatchers.com)

Tool Belts: Avoid the Strain

(source: www.safetyandhealthmagazine.com)

Using tool belts can be helpful for carting a large number of tools around a jobsite. But when fully loaded, tool belts can weigh upward of 50 pounds, according to OSHA. This puts significant strain on the lower back and hips. Wearing tool belts for an extended period of time can cause fatigue, discomfort and pain, the agency

warns.

To prevent pain and strain with tool belts, OSHA suggests the following:

- Use a mobile tool box or bucket-style tool bag in place of a tool belt.
- Wear padded belts and suspenders to evenly distribute weight between the shoulders and waist to reduce con-



tact stress.

- Arrange tools in the belt or bag so the weight is evenly distributed.
- Whenever possible, reduce the weight of the belt by removing tools that are not necessary for the task at hand.

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Smoke Detectors DO Save Lives!

One minute or less...is all the time you may have to escape a fire in your home. Do you have a smoke alarm? It can double your chances of escaping death. Home smoke detectors have cut fire fatalities in half since they came on the market in the early 1970s. Nevertheless, fires kill about 3,000 people a year in the U.S. Forty percent of these deaths occur in homes that lack working smoke alarms (40 percent!)

If you don't have a smoke alarm, get one or as many as you need — today.

Never deactivate them while cooking.

Did you know that most fire deaths are from smoke inhalation, rather than being burned? An escape route can be blocked by thick, dangerous smoke, not plumes of fire. A smoke detector can get you responding sooner and thus avoid fatal smoke inhalation.

-Exit the building when the alarm

sounds.

-Then stay out. (Have a post-escape family meeting place pre-determined.)

-From a neighbor's house call 9-1-1.

Smoke alarms can also signal a flashing light for the hearing impaired. Alarms are also available that trigger a vibration under your sleeping pillow.

Plan an escape route, then run fire drills. If possible, figure out two ways to exit every room, even if that means out a window. Make sure everyone in the household understands and can run through the escape route. The practice should include the post-exit meeting place outside.

Consider conducting practice drills during less-than-desirable times: in the middle of the night, in very cold weather, etc., as well as under more ideal circumstances.



Tweak the plan as necessary. Who may be capable of actually sleeping through the alarm? This should be addressed. Make sure that an escape plan is in place for physically disabled occupants, babies and pets.

-Every month (or at least every 6), clean dust from the alarms and push the test button.

-Never paint the alarm.

-Change the batteries every time you change your clocks.

(Robert Siciliano, www.huffingtonpost.com)

OSHA Reminders

A new year is a good time to review a couple OSHA issues that can fall through the cracks.

Employers with 11 or more employees:

- Annually, post at your workplace, OSHA's 300A Injury Summary Form from the previous year from February 1 thru April 30
- Retain recordkeeping forms for five years following the covered

year.

All employers:

- Required to notify OSHA when an employee is killed on the job, suffers a work related hospitalization, amputation, or loss of an eye.
- Fatality must be reported within 8 hours
- In-patient hospitalization, eye loss, or amputation must be reported within 24 hours.

- OSHA's 24-hour notification number is **800-321-6742**
- As referenced in our last issue, fines have significantly increased for non-reporting.

(www.osha.gov)

Interesting Claims: Uninvited Ride-Along (Lee Moran, Huffington Post ,

www.claimcrazy.com)

A cop in Louisiana lost control of his cruiser and crashed into a ditch after an owl flew inside the vehicle and pecked his head. Covington Police Department Officer Lance Benjamin was on patrol in the city early one Thursday morning when he felt something fly in and hit his face, according to The Times-Picayune. He initially thought it was a football. "And then I felt some scratching on the back of my head and some pecking," he told WVUE. "I tried to keep control of my car, went into a ditch, avoided some trees. Finally was able to stop the car, put it in park, get out. And there he was, just chilling out in the car," Benjamin

told CNN. Luckily, the officer was only traveling at 10 mph and avoided serious injury. The owl was also unharmed.

Benjamin opened the passenger-side window after getting out of the cruiser. The bird eventually flew out 45 minutes later, according to Sky News. Covington Police Chief Tim Lentz posted a snap of the owl inside the cruiser, and footage from Benjamin's body cam during the incident to the department's Facebook page. "Officer Benjamin suffered minor scratches and will probably need a new uniform shirt (and maybe pants)," he said in the post.

"After being checked out by medical personnel he returned to work to finish his shift with an amazing story to tell, and proof it happened," he added.



Be Healthy: Winter Skin Worries

Weighing in at 6 to 9 pounds with a surface area of about 2 square yards, the skin is the body's largest organ and its first line of defense. It helps the body fight infection and injuries as well as maintain the body's temperature. The skin also makes vitamin D, which is crucial to calcium absorption and strong bones. In short, keeping your skin healthy is crucial to your overall health. As the winter season moves forward, cold or dry weather can present special challenges for keeping skin healthy. Here's what you can do:

- Take short showers or baths; a long time in hot water can strip skin of moisture.
- Use bath oils and soaps with oils.
- Pat dry after baths and showers,

and apply body moisturizers with oils.

- Use sunscreen even in winter.
- Use lip balm with sunscreen.
- Wear gloves.
- Wear a scarf around the neck and face on very cold, windy days to avoid windburn and chapping.
- Use humidifiers in rooms where you spend a lot of time, like family rooms and bedrooms. You can purchase small, inexpensive humidifiers in drug or department stores.

(safety.blr.com)



OSHA's Final Rule on Recordkeeping

On May 12, 2016, OSHA published the new injury and illness reporting rule, known as "Improved Tracking of Workplace Injuries and Illnesses." This rule does not change the core requirements of the existing recordkeeping rule. However the new rule, **effective January 1, 2017**, requires that the OSHA 300, 300A, or 301 forms be submitted to OSHA on an annual basis. The forms required are dependent on the size (number of employees) of each establishment covered. OSHA will make the data available online in a searchable database with all personal information removed.

Establishments with 250 or more employees in industries covered by the recordkeeping regulation must submit:

- 300A forms covering calendar year (CY) 2016 by July 1, 2017
- 300A, 300 and 301 forms covering CY 2017 by July 1, 2018

Beginning in 2019 and every year thereafter, the information must be submitted by March 2.

Establishments with 20-249 employees in certain high-risk industries

must submit:

- 300A forms covering CY 2016 by July 1, 2017
- 300A forms covering CY 2017 July 1, 2018

Beginning in 2019 and every year thereafter, the 300A forms must be submitted by March 2. (www.osha.gov)

New Recordkeeping Rule: Anti-Retaliation Provisions

OSHA's regulations took effect on December 1. Since that date, OSHA can investigate complaints by employees that suffered retaliation for reporting an injury by virtue of an employer's policies, such as post-accident drug testing, incentive programs (where employees as individuals or as a group lose, or do not receive, certain pay), or late reporting of an injury by the employee.

OSHA will be able to issue citations and penalties and require abatement, including reinstatement and financial compensation to terminated employees, order payment of revoked incentives and other remedies to make the employ-

ee whole for violations of the anti-retaliation provisions of the final rule. Employers are also required to provide information to employees regarding injury reporting and the requirements that prevent employers from retaliating against employees. There may also be regulatory changes following the recent change of the presidential administration. But for now, these regulations are the law, and employers should therefore review their policies immediately.

(www.natlawreview.com)



Winter Dehydration

(source: www.visitingangels.com)

Winter is lingering and most of us are spending time in a heated environment, leading to dry skin, chapped lips, headaches, etc...all caused by dehydration. Usually we think of dehydration as more of a problem in the summer, but actually in the winter moisture can be drained from the body more easily and leave you dehydrated.

Check out these winter dehydration facts:

- Cold weather can actually increase your risk of dehydration.

- In cold weather more moisture is lost through respiratory evaporation. Humans lose 1 pint of water a day through breathing alone, and this increases in winter.

- The hormone that triggers our sense of thirst reacts differently when we are exposed to cold weather. So in general people don't drink as much as they should in the winter.

- In order to feel thirsty, your body has a mechanism that is often triggered by sweating, leading to your body demanding more fluid by feeling thirsty. However in cold weather our body reacts differently and you don't feel as thirsty.

- When wrapped up in multiple layers of clothing it is normally more difficult to tell how much you're sweating and how dehydrated you are becoming.

One thing you can do to avoid winter dehydration is to make a daily water drinking goal. Everyone has heard the "drink eight 8-ounce glasses of water daily" recommendation.

One way to accomplish a hydration goal is with a good 1 liter reusable water bottle...maybe two. Fill it up before you head out for the day and plan on filling it again at lunchtime. This could help keep you on track.

Slips, Trips, and Falls– Winter Safety Tips

Winter is the prime season for slips, trips and falls. It is the number 1 reason for an industrial injury in the United States. What should we do when walking outside when it's cold and snowy or icy?

•Plan ahead and give yourself sufficient time.

•When walking on steps, always use the hand railings and plant your feet firmly on each step.

•When walking on an icy or snow-covered walkway, take short steps and walk at a slower pace so you can react quickly to a change in traction.

•Bending your knees a little and taking slower and shorter steps increases traction and can greatly reduce your

chances of falling. It also helps to stop occasionally to break momentum.

•Streets and sidewalks that have been cleared of snow and ice should still be approached with caution. Look out for "black ice." Dew, fog or water vapor can freeze on cold surfaces and form an extra-thin, nearly invisible layer of ice that can look like a wet spot on the pavement. It often shows up early in the morning or in areas that are shaded from the sun.

•Carrying heavy items can challenge your sense of balance. Try not to carry too much--you need to leave your hands and arms free to better balance yourself.

•Be prepared to fall and try to avoid using your arms to

break your fall. If you fall backward, make a conscious effort to tuck your chin so your head doesn't strike the ground with a full force.

•When entering a building, remove as much snow and water from your boots as you can. Take notice that floors and stairs may be wet and slippery--walk carefully.

•Use special care when entering and exiting vehicles--use the vehicle for support.

(safetytoolboxtopics.com)



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