

Distributed on May 1, 2020



## A Message from the Safety Director

The COVID-19 outbreak across New Jersey has impacted the way municipal services have been provided over the past month. Many utility departments and authorities have been operating with reduced or rotating staff, reduced hours, and reduced contact with the residents. Some personnel has been able to work from home. This presents a new set of challenges and risks for public employers. The MEL and the Safety Director are offering several guidance and training resources to help our members during this difficult period and into the recovery phase.

Visit our new MSI NOW library of streaming safety videos. About 130 titles are available in the MSI NOW Online Training College after logging into the LMS at <https://firstnetcampus.com/MELJIF2/entities/MEL/logon.htm>.

The MEL Safety Institute, MSI, offers a variety of online classes and Video Briefings of interest for utility and authority personnel. Online classes include *Avoid Back Pain*, *Bloodborne Pathogens*, *Crush Zone*, *Cyber Security*, *Fire Safety*, *Hazard Communication*, *New Employee Safety Orientation Parts 1 & 2*, *Practicing Hand Hygiene*, *Smart Moves to Avoid Falling Down*.

Video Briefings include *Asbestos Safety Overview*, *Confined Space Awareness*, *Fire Extinguisher Monthly Inspections*, *GHS Pictogram Review*, *Investigating Slip and Trip Injuries*, *OSHA Record Keeping*, *Role of a Right-to-Know Coordinator*, *Safely Backing Work Vehicles*, and *Voluntary Use of Respirators*.

*Every utility and authority employee should receive training on employee conduct and protecting children from sexual abuse. Visit the Protecting Children resource page at <https://njmel.org/mel-safety-institute/model-policies/protecting-children/> for training resources and information.*

Since the start of the COVID-19 outbreak, the Safety Director released informational Bulletins on the CDC guidance for *Cleaning Surfaces*, the *Families First Coronavirus Response Act*, and the FBI warning concerning *Protecting Children From Online Predators During the Outbreak*. A new Bulletin which discusses the considerations for lifting manhole covers is attached.

The Safety Director also has created a series of five 10-minute lesson plans, called Shift Briefings, for supervisors to deliver to staff during morning meetings. Short blasts of timely information are the most effective means to convey information in a way that is easy for the listener to grasp and utilize. Shift Briefings include *HazCom and COVID-19*, *Home Office Ergonomics*, *Social Distancing at Work*, and *Stress*

*Management.* A new Briefing is attached for your consideration. Additional Bulletins and Briefings are available on the MEL page, <https://njmel.org/mel-safety-institute/bulletins/>.

If you have training needs beyond those currently available, please contact the Safety Director or your Risk Control Consultant.