

July 1999

Message from the Information Manager

Jon Pulling, CBCP

Now that we are in the midst of summer vacations, I hope it's not too late to think about personal contingency planning. An accident or illness during a summer vacation can really mess things up, not only for ourselves but for other members of the family as well. Below are some tips to consider when planning that family vacation.

The risk of accidents or sunburn are often more dangerous to the traveler than food related illnesses. The sensible traveler will never put aside the notion of common sense where health and safety are concerned – a foreign country is not the place to find yourself in need of emergency medical attention, especially through your own neglect or misadventure. Always take care, and enjoy a safe, healthy holiday.

General Tips.

Take as much ID on your person as possible.
Do not carry ID for family members or traveling associates. Make them carry their own.
Do not share baggage.
Be sure that someone of strong character has full knowledge of who are your doctors and dentists, and where you may have identifying marks such as birthmarks, tattoos, and scars.
Consult a travel health specialist rather than a regular General Practitioner to be more certain of getting up-to-date advice and treatments for your trip.
Immunization against potential diseases should be considered several weeks before you leave home.
Some vaccinations may not be taken at the same time as others, so discuss travel health issues with a doctor several weeks before leaving home.
Travelers should consider adequate insurance coverage for foreign travel. Emergency medical evacuation coverage to a nearby country (such as Australia or Singapore for example) should also be considered.
Wear a hat and sunscreen for protection from sunburn.
The subject of food and what is safe to eat will always generate discussion among travelers. Each person can react differently to a changed diet, time-zone, living conditions etc. so what is perfectly OK for one person may cause someone else to feel sick for days.

Use the information provided by others you meet by all means, but always apply your own common sense when it comes to a decision about where and what to eat.

An accident, perhaps a fall, a traffic accident or even a cut or scratch pose the biggest risk to any traveler embarking on an adventure holiday. Take care to avoid accidents, but be prepared if they do happen.

Always carry a first-aid kit, and consider traveler's insurance just in case. Your first aid kit should contain the following items:

- Antibiotic ointment (for cuts/abrasions).
- Antibiotic tablets (for severe bacterial forms of diarrhea).
- Antifungal cream/powder (for tinea).
- Antiseptic ointment (for cleaning wounds).
- Aspirin.
- Band-Aids.
- Calamine lotion.
- Gauze bandage.
- Electrolyte replacement tablets (to replace body salts lost through sweating or diarrhea).
- Imodium (for symptomatic relief of diarrhea).
- Insect repellent (containing DEET).
- Personal items.
- Personal medications (always carry prescriptions).
- Safety pins.
- Scissors.
- Soap.
- Sterile syringe and needle (for emergency use).
- Sunscreen.
- Thermometer (non-mercury type).
- Ti-tree oil (an excellent general antiseptic).
- Toilet paper/facial tissues.
- Tweezers.

People on holidays often exhibit a carefree, even careless attitude, which greatly increases the possibility of accidental injury, and unfortunately for tens of unsuspecting tourists each year--the result is death.

Report of June Meeting

June's speaker was Todd Running from the Houston-Galveston Area Council. He described in

general terms WHO the H-GAC was, and then more specifically, the work they are doing in conjunction with FEMA and Project Impact.

The H-GAC is a voluntary association of local governments and local elected officials in the 13-county Gulf Coast Planning Region. The consists of 148 local government entities – 13 counties, 106 cities, 18 school districts, and 11 soil and water conservation districts. H-GAC's primary mission is to serve as the instrument of local government cooperation, promoting the region's orderly development and the safety and welfare of its citizens.

H-GAC gives highest priority to serving local government needs. It promotes voluntary approaches in region-wide purchasing, solid waste management, air and water quality, job training and re-employment assistance, criminal justice system improvements and law-enforcement officer training, and other significant areas of concern to local government.

About 500 people from all parts of the 13-county region serve on committees which advise the H-GAC Board on a wide range of programs. A professional staff of recognized competence assists the organization in fact-finding and problem solving and carries out policies of the Board.

H-GAC administers State and Federal programs when those programs, in the opinion of its elected Board, are beneficial to the region and consistent with H-GAC's mission. Such is the case with Project Impact. H-GAC is administering \$390,000 provided by FEMA, specifically for Project Impact activities. (Locally, \$500,000 was granted, however the city of Houston has elected to administer their own projects.)

Three projects are currently underway. The city of Bellaire is seeking to identify "hot spots" which might cause flooding problems. The city of Webster is replacing all the glass at municipal shelters with hurricane safety glass. Harris County activities include flood control buyout of 80 structures, development of a flood mitigation plan for the county and purchasing public information scanners to be placed in areas schools.

For further information regarding H-GAC programs, refer to their web page at www.hgac.cog.tx.us.

Subject:

Speaker: HAL-PC

Place: IBM, 2 Riverway, Room 1501

Lunch and networking: 11:30 – 12:00

Presentation: 12:00 - 12:30

The South Texas Chapter of the Association of Contingency Planners meets regularly on the Second Tuesday of each month at 11:30 a.m. in RM 1501 of the IBM Building at Two Riverway, Houston, TX.

Upcoming Conferences

September 12-15, 1999

**DRJ Disaster Symposium and Exhibition
Orlando, FL**

For Info: (314) 894-0276; www.drj.com

If you know of any conferences or meetings , national or local, that should be included, please let me know by the end of each month. I will be happy to include them in the list.

Miscellany

Our Secretary, Connie Scales, is updating the information on the membership roles. She is missing a number of e-mail addresses. Could you please send her a note with you e-mail address so she can update her records. Her address is cs2001@txmail.sbc.com or call her at 713-567-8675.

Report of the Treasury

Previous Balance	\$4,313.60
Deposits	\$108.00
Payments	\$141.25
Current Balance	\$4,280.35

July Meeting

Tuesday, July 13, 1999