



# News & Views

## VACoRP welcomes new members!

VACoRP would like to welcome the following new members into the Pool.



### Counties/Schools

- Isle of Wight County**
- Madison County Public Schools**
- Pulaski County**
- Richmond County**

### Authorities

- Carroll-Grayson-Galax SWA**
- Joint PSA of Wythe & Bland**
- Madison County Social Services**
- Rappahannock Regional Jail**

VACoRP now has 55 counties and 36 county-related agencies participating in the Pool (please see map on page 3). We encourage counties and county-related agencies to look at all the benefits VACoRP has to offer.

## Equipment maintenance program adds members

The Equipment Maintenance Insurance Program continues to add members because of the increased benefits and tremendous cost savings it provides. On average, members are saving 25% on their annual maintenance costs. We welcome these two new members:

- Franklin County**
- Greenville County**



Once again, we encourage all local governments to take a look at this program. We'll be more than happy to assist you in the process. If you have any questions or would like a detailed brochure please call us at 1-888-822-6772.

## Use of Parks and Recreation Facilities

Parks and recreation facilities present some of the most difficult risk management issues. It is difficult to balance the challenges of offering a wide range of activities with a sound risk management program. There are a number of issues to consider when developing policy and procedures for use of park facilities by outside parties.

Use of facilities by outside parties can be broken into two major classifications, 1) contracted use of facilities, and 2) use of facilities by an individual or group. Policies should be in place to address use of park facilities by each of these classifications.

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### Special points of interest:

- Make sure you have proper policies in place to address use of parks & recreation facilities.
- PERI's web-site, [www.riskinstitute.org](http://www.riskinstitute.org) provides numerous risk management resources

## Use of Parks and Recreation Facilities (continued)

### Contractual Use of Facilities

It is not uncommon for a local government to enter into a contract/agreement to share use of parks and recreation facilities. This is most common between counties and school systems but can involve other parties as well (ie. non-profit organizations).



It is important to enter into a “Use of Facilities Agreement” to ensure that both parties understand their responsibilities.

A “Use of Facilities Agreement” should contain, at a minimum, the following:

- The parties involved.
- The purpose of the agreement.
- Term of the agreement and termination rights of each party.
- Facilities involved, scheduling of activities, supervision/personnel, and maintenance.
- Development of facilities.
- Liability of parties (this section should be reviewed by your insurance provider prior to execution of the contract).

VACoRP can provide a sample “Use of Facilities Agreement” to address these circumstances.

### Use of Facilities by Outside Groups/Individuals

Local governments receive numerous requests for use of their facilities. Policies need to be in place to address the types of activities that will be permitted, insurance requirements and rules and regulations. The problem with developing policies in this area is that there are so many different types of activities that it is difficult to implement a “one size fits all” policy.

Some ideas for developing policies:

- Develop a list of permitted activities at each park. You need to determine the capacity of each park, and the types of activities it can handle.
- Break activities into high, moderate and low risk, and develop insurance requirements around these classifications. You do not need to require a \$1,000,000 limit for a Tupperware Party, but make sure you require higher limits for high risk activities such as pyrotechnics. Leave enough flexibility in the policy so that individual situations can be evaluated.
- Require applicants to complete an application for use of the facilities. This allows you to present the rules & regulations to the applicant and review the insurance requirements. This can also assist with proper scheduling of activities to ensure the proper use of the facility.



Taking these simple steps can help you avoid potentially troublesome situations if an accident does occur. Always remember, if a situation presents itself that you are unsure of, give us a call.

It is important to enter into a “Use of Facilities Agreement” to ensure that both parties understand their responsibilities.

## Preventing Hot Work Fires

Hot work is any operation that produces open flames, heat, or sparks. Cutting, grinding, welding, soldering, thawing pipe, and torching applied roofing are all examples. All hot work introduces potentially uncontrolled ignition sources into your facility. Lax precautions often lead to large and unfortunate losses. All hot work fires are preventable!

All hot work introduces potentially uncontrolled ignition sources into your facility...All hot work fires are preventable!

Hazards are inherent in hot work operations – a flame-tipped torch, white hot metal, a shower of sparks. The need to exercise caution may seem obvious, but the lack of formal controls leads to poor decisions and resulting fires.

### Control Strategy

- Appoint a Fire Safety Manager. The Fire Safety Manager will be responsible for regulating all hot work and ensuring that all the basic safeguards are in place.
- Consider alternate means other than hot work. For example, could a bolt be used to secure material instead of welding?
- Perform hot work in areas designed for that purpose or outside, away from combustibles.
- Ensure that outside contractors adhere to the basic safeguards outlined below. Up to 50% of all hot work fires are caused by outside contractors.

### Basic Safeguards

- Before initiating any hot work operations, make certain that the building sprinkler system (if equipped) is in service.
- Provide fire extinguishers or charged hose lines for use on small fires.
- Move work to a safe location. If it cannot be moved, clear the area of all combustibles for a distance of 35 feet.
- Over a radius of at least 35 feet from the location of the hot work, sweep all floors clean, wet any combustible floors, and cover cracks.
- Before doing hot work on metal partitions, walls, or pipes that pass through walls, check the opposite side for contact with combustibles.
- When job conditions are hazardous, assign a Fire Watch (an individual who is responsible for monitoring the operations to prevent a fire).
- Do not complete hot work within 50 feet of any room that contains flammable liquids.
- Do not cut or weld drums, tanks, or equipment that contains or has contained flammable liquids unless the containers have been cleaned.
- Ventilate confined areas.
- Allow only experienced, reliable welders to use portable equipment.
- Train new employees in areas that have been prepared for hot work.
- Always check equipment before using it, keep the equipment in good repair, and adhere to the manufacturer's maintenance recommendations.
- Never perform hot work operations, such as roofing, near or above occupied areas.

### Sources for Hot Work Permit Forms

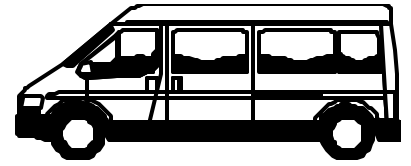
- Local safety/welding supply center
- Emed Co., Inc., 1-800-442-3633

If you would like a complete Hot Works policy, please call VACoRP at 1-888-822-6772.



## Use of Vans to Transport Children

A number of entities use 12-15 passenger vans, on a regular basis, to transport children. There are specific standards that must be met by public schools for the use of vans to transport children, but not for other public entities.



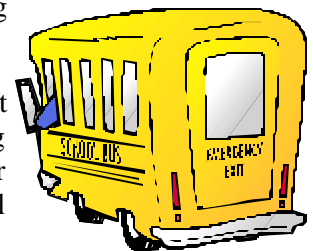
Under National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) regulations, a "bus" is any vehicle, including a van, that has a seating capacity of 11 persons or more. School buses are defined, by statute, as any bus which is likely to be "used significantly" to transport "preprimary, primary, and secondary" students to or from school or related events, (49 U.S.C. §30125). Based on the statute, a 12 to 15-passenger van that is likely to be used significantly to transport students is a school bus. Federal regulations do not prohibit the use of vans by schools, but require any van (with a capacity of more than 10) sold or leased for use as a school bus to meet the safety standards applicable to school buses.

If the new bus/van is sold or leased to transport students, it is a "school bus" and must meet NHTSA's school bus standards. Conventional 12 to 15-passenger vans are not certified as doing so, and thus cannot be sold or leased as new vehicles, to carry students on a regular basis. Whether the buses are "used significantly" to transport the students is an issue that the agency finds appropriate to resolve case-by-case, focusing on the intended use of the vehicle. In addition, NHTSA believes that school buses are one of the safest forms of transportation in this country, and therefore strongly recommends that all buses that are used to transport school children be certified as meeting NHTSA's school bus safety standards.

Trends are indicating more school bus drivers are at fault in school bus crashes. The construction of school buses affords students the highest level of safety, therefore limiting the serious injuries and fatalities in crashes. However, special education students quite possibly are the least able to tolerate crash forces. When they are in passenger vehicles, they are in vehicles that offer the least amount of crash protection. Every county or school division should be developing plans to transport all students in school buses.

You should review your existing fleet, its use and the nature of the people being transported in them. Long-range goals should be established to provide the safest vehicle possible. Special emphasis should be given where multiple passengers are being transported, such as students, disabled individuals or the elderly. The use of a cheaper van not meeting the safety standards afforded by school buses may increase a member's liability exposure.

Along the same line, driver training should be given careful consideration. Schools must meet certain driver selection and driver training requirements. All members transporting passengers in vans or buses should use similar controls to those established by the state for school bus drivers. If you would like more detailed information on this topic, please call us at 1-888-822-6772.



## PERI offers Risk Management Resources On-line

The Public Entity Risk Institute (PERI) has recently opened on its Web-site a new clearinghouse database which provides information and instant Internet connections to hundreds of risk management, safety, disaster management, and other resources.

PERI is collecting and providing the information in the database as a public service; there is no fee for using it, or having information listed on it. To use it, go to, [www.riskinstitute.org](http://www.riskinstitute.org) and click on Clearinghouse.





## VACO INSURANCE PROGRAMS

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VACo Insurance Programs

**“The one thing that unites all human beings, regardless of age, gender, religion, economic status or ethnic background, is that, deep down inside, we ALL believe that we are above average drivers.” -Dave Barry**

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