

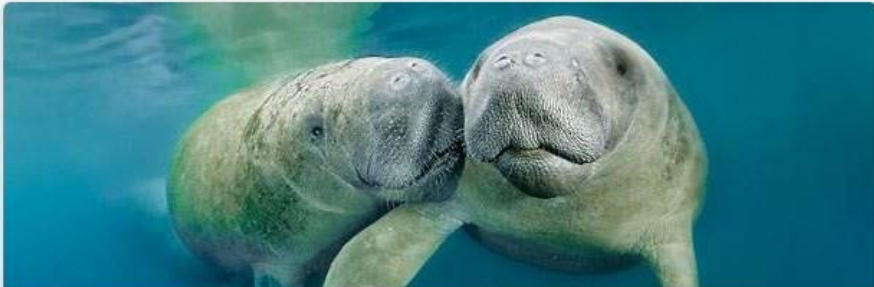


Happy Holidays 2020 - 2021



Featured on Bing Share

November 6, 2020



Life in the slow lane

In observance of Manatee Awareness Month, we're swimming through clear, aquifer-fed spring waters in Florida with two friendly 'sea cows.' Generally solitary animals, manatees are also known to be curious and will approach boats. That's why Florida enforces special speed zones for watercraft, particularly as the manatees are on the move to warmer areas to spend the winter. While manatees have no known natural predators, they remain a vulnerable species due to loss of habitat and collisions with boats. These two have arrived in Three Sisters Springs, a natural freshwater spring system in the Crystal River National Wildlife Refuge on the west coast of the Florida Peninsula. The refuge protects critical habitat for the hundreds of manatees that migrate here each winter.

Most West Indian manatees off the coast of Florida live in shallow and marshy areas where they feed on sea grass, mangrove leaves, and algae. The ocean's largest herbivore, sea cows nosh on greenery for almost half the day. And what could be better than a nap after all that munching? Manatees will often sleep underwater for the other half of the day, coming to the surface for air in 15-to-20-minute intervals and grazing for food again in shallow waters.

1 - <https://rb.gy/mcbyuu>

Copy & paste link in search engine and be redirected to "Bing" to learn more about these peaceful mammals and their relationship to "mermaids"!



In this Issue:

- Feature - Peaceful Mammals - Bing article
- "Shout-out" to EH&S Leaders- Hyacinthe Lafontant
- Holiday Safety/Fire Safety - submitted by Sandra Kanner
- New Partnerships - "Johnson Controls" - submitted by Energy Conservation & Utility Mgmt. Team
- Ergonomics Matters - submitted by Stephanie Alami
- Holiday Cooking - Sandra Kanner
- Easy, Fun, and Kid Friendly Recipe - submitted by Hyacinthe Lafontant
- News: Environmental Stewardship, Health & Safety, Community Out-Reach

Kudos

Environmental Health & Safety, aka EH&S, is one of those District's departments whose functions are obscure or little known by most. District Leadership, of course, knows that we generate lots of revenue saving with Utility Management and Energy Conservation; and Directors/Administrators find us when: there are IAQ concerns, owls decide to make a home on school's athletic fields, or there is an AED issue. However, we are soooooo... much more. We don't have students or interface directly with them, so Kudos aren't something we get often. So, during this season of "good wishes", I would like to take this opportunity to give a big "SHOUT OUT", to my colleagues here at EH&S.

There are lots of District personnel that have worked tirelessly, since this world of Covid 19 became our reality. Beginning March 2020, EH&S has been there from the "get-go". However, when the Governor's mandate demanded that schools be reopened, EH&S leaders (Alison Witoshynsky, Coordinator, Environmental Compliance, Bailey McDonald, Coordinator, Health & Safety, and Roger Riddlemoser, Director) moved into over-drive hyper-speed, guiding the work-stream that has translated CDC and other guidance into the actual safety measures, PPE and signage that now exist throughout the District.

It's impossible for you to know the number of undocumented hours that were put into these efforts to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19 at BCPS. They of course didn't do these things single-handedly; they relied on their staff, office support, partnership with Rob Jindracek's team, and of course, the other members of the "Health, Hygiene and Sanitation" work stream to make it all happen. Bottom-line, the District is very fortunate to have their expertise, in-house, to guide our safety protocols. I want everyone to know! **EH&S Leaders are AWESOME! Kudos to you.**



Holiday Decorations and Safety

Holiday Safety

The holidays are once again just around the corner. Every year, we are reminded of life-threatening hazards that can occur around the season, but despite everything we know, many incidents occur each year. These incidents can quickly turn a celebratory time into devastation. One of the most common causes of injury or death and property loss are a result of decorations (including Christmas trees) and cooking.



Winter holiday fire facts from NFPA.org

- Electrical distribution or lighting equipment was involved in more than two of every five (44%) home Christmas tree fires.
- Two of every five (20%) home Christmas tree fires started in the living room.
- One fifth (20%) of the decoration fires started in the kitchen.
- Between 2009 and 2013, an average of 1.7 million home decoration fires were started by candles, compared to one million (1M) in January to November.

Decorations

Carefully decorating your home can help make your holidays safer. Between 2011-2012, U.S. fire departments responded to an average of 160 home fires that started with Christmas trees per year. U.S. fire departments responded to an estimated average of 280 home structure fires per year that began with decorations, including Christmas trees.

1 Your cat thinks the tree is a new toy!

Keep pets and children at least three feet away from burning candles and electrical cords to prevent burns and electrical fires.



2 That ever-growing pile of fallen pine needles on the floor is a great laugh!

A dry tree in your home is a fire danger. Think of it as a huge pile of kindling in your home. Choose a tree with fresh, green needles that do not fall off when touched.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AJ34v9C88k&feature=vrubed>



3 You've spent more time trying to free yourself out of the tangled lights than decorating the tree.

Check the manufacturer's instructions to find out how many lights can be connected to prevent electric shock and fire.



Keep anything that can burn away from a heat source, despite how awesome it looks.

4 Flameless candles are also a great alternative to real ones when decorating.



5 Your house is a holiday tourist attraction, but is it safe?



An overloaded electrical outlet is a major fire hazard. Plug strings of lights directly into the wall and keep the number to a minimum.



6 Have some of the bulbs on your string of lights have already taken time off for the holidays?



Replace any string of lights that has worn or broken cords or loose bulb connections. These can easily start a fire.

7 Don't forget to water your tree!



Always keep water in the tree stand. Check daily and add water as needed. Dried-out trees are a major fire hazard.

8 Some lights are only for indoor or outdoor use, but not both. And most certainly, not for your head or your pet.

Make sure you use the correct lights for the location. Read small print and labels.



9 Are you one of those people who gets lazy about throwing out your Christmas Tree?

Dried-out trees are a fire danger and should not be left in the house or garage or placed outside against the house. Check with your local community to find a recycling program.

Christmas tree disposal: Christmas trees are combustible items that become increasingly flammable as they continue to dry out in your home. More than one-quarter (25%) of home fires that begin with Christmas trees occur in January. Although Christmas tree fires are not common, when they do occur, they're much more likely to be serious.

Dry Tree vs Maintained (Wet) Tree

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A26h00c88k&feature=youtu.be>

By following a few simple practices and precautions above, you can have fun decorating while creating a fun and perfectly fire-safe holiday for you and your loved ones!

And remember, have working smoke alarms in your home and create a home escape plan. Practice it with your family so everyone knows what to do if a fire does occur.

**Go the Extra Mile; it's never
crowded there!**

A Partnership that Benefits Students, Staff and the District's Finances.

BCPS and Johnson Controls Inc. partnered together for a Guaranteed Energy Savings Performance Contract Program at nine schools.

LED lighting and plumbing retrofit/upgrades have been completed at Stranahan High School and are in progress at Bethune ES, Dillard ES, Maplewood ES, and Tequesta Trace MS, with 4 other schools to start in the next few weeks: Dandy MS, Pines Lakes ES, Pompano Beach ES, and Pompano Beach MS. These necessary infrastructure and safety upgrades include energy efficient LED technologies and low water flow plumbing fixtures, which will generate significant cost and consumption savings with energy and water, while promoting resiliency and environmental stewardship.

Project Highlights and Benefits include:

- Over 24,000 New & Enhanced LED Lighting Fixtures
- Safe and Enhanced Student and Teacher Learning Environment
- Environmentally Conscious Equipment and Technologies
- Focused Energy Resiliency & Water Conservation
- Guaranteed Energy & Utility Cost Savings
- Equivalent of 3,601 metric tons of greenhouse gas savings
- Power Savings of ~808kW ; Energy Savings of ~2 million kWh

Ergonomics and Material Handling



Ergonomics and Material Handling



Ergonomics involves designing and arranging workplaces, so people work efficiently and safely. For example, think of cars in the 1970's versus cars today. Controls and seating have been engineered to fit most drivers. Ergonomics is used to evaluate how you do tasks and to identify any risk factors that might lead to injury.

Pain, swelling, stiffness, burning, and numbness may be symptoms of disorders that can develop into disabilities.

Musculoskeletal disorders involve conditions in the soft tissue, specifically, muscles, ligaments, tendons, nerves or spinal disks. Work that involves hazardous overexertion, awkward postures, or repetitive motions can contribute to musculoskeletal disorders. Ergonomics solutions address these hazards by adjusting the job to the person. Since you are the person doing the job, you can help design the job to fit you.

Employee Injury Statistics

Nationally, one-third of all workers' compensation claims are due to ergonomic issues, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. According to BCPS workers' compensation data, between FY2018-2021, injuries caused by *Object Lifted/Handled* was the 4th highest cause of injury at 475 injuries and *Lifting/Strain* was the 5th highest cause of injury at 395 injuries. See Figure 1 below. Of those injury causes, between FY2018-2021, the top 6 Employee Titles affected were custodians, teachers, general worker, paraprofessional, food service worker and cook. See figure 2 below.



Figure 1 Number of Lifting/Strain Injuries FY 2018-2021

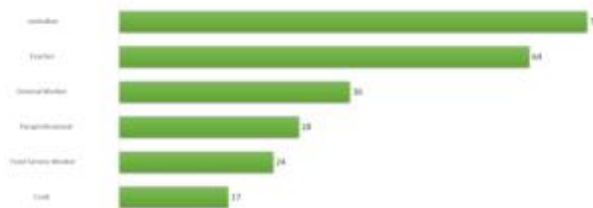


Figure 2 Top Work Titles with Lifting/Strain Injuries FY 2018-2021

Overexertion

When the job involves heavy lifting, pushing or pulling, a common ergonomic solution is to use mechanized material handling equipment. Be reminded, that equipment may require the operator to be trained or certified to use. For more information on material handling equipment use and requirements, review Section F.4 *Specialized Vehicles & Equipment* (e.g., Heavy Machinery, Forklifts, Cranes) in the BCPS Environmental Health and Safety Manual. Refer to the following link to the handbook- [EHS manual Link](#)



Awkward positions

Awkward postures include repeated or prolonged reaching, twisting, bending, kneeling, squatting, reaching overhead or having to stay in the same position for long periods of time. Ergonomic solutions for some jobs can include using work surfaces with adjustable heights and using anti-fatigue mats for workers who are on their feet for prolonged periods.



Repetitive Motions

Doing the same motions over and over could put stress on a single muscle. The number of repetitions, speed of movement, and required force determines severity of the risk. Ergonomic solutions can include reorganizing the job to reduce the number of steps, automating the job, increasing the number of breaks, or setting up a worker rotation schedule. Consider alternating different muscle groups- for example alternate between manual work and computer work.

Checklists

Please refer to the Grainger and National Safety Council Ergonomic Checklists to assist in preventing ergonomic hazards in your workplace.



Checklist Ergonomics



- ✓ Ensure your chair is adjusted so your feet rest on the floor and your knees are level with your hips
- ✓ Keep your body centered in front of your monitor and keyboard
- ✓ Keep your monitor about an arm's length in front of you
- ✓ Keep items you regularly use – including the telephone or a stapler – close to your body to avoid unnecessary stretching throughout the day
- ✓ Position your computer mouse close to your keyboard, and keep your wrist relaxed when using the mouse
- ✓ Keep your wrist in a straight position when typing – not bent up or down – and consider using a wrist rest to help minimize stress
- ✓ Keep the brightest light source in your office to the side of your monitor, to help avoid glare
- ✓ Stretch and walk around regularly; do not remain sedentary
- ✓ Vary the workday – if possible, try to space out different types of tasks
- ✓ Do not ignore pain. Inform your supervisor immediately if you experience ergonomic discomfort on the job
- ✓ Refrain from carrying items that are too heavy
- ✓ Select tools that are ergonomically designed for comfort
- ✓ Lift with your legs, not your back
- ✓ Maintain good standard of housekeeping; carry out regular inspections



Dec 2020 Holiday cooking



Holiday cooking

Making kitchen fire safety a priority during this joyous but hectic time is important, especially when there's a lot of activity and people at home. As you start preparing your holiday schedule and organizing that large family feast, remember, by following a few simple safety tips you can enjoy time with your loved ones and keep yourself and your family safer from fire.

According to NFPA.org, in 2017, the three leading dates for home structure fires caused by cooking were: **Thanksgiving**, **Christmas day**^[1] and **Christmas Eve**. That's why it's important to know what you can do to help keep your friends and family safe while entertaining for the holidays.^[2]

Cooking fire facts from NFPA.org

- Thanksgiving is the peak day for home cooking fires, followed by Christmas Day, Christmas Eve, and the day before Thanksgiving.
- In 2017, U.S. fire departments responded to an estimated 1,600 home cooking fires on Thanksgiving, the peak day for such fires.
- Unattended cooking was by far the leading contributing factor in cooking fires and fire deaths.
- Cooking equipment was involved in almost half of all reported home fires and home fire injuries, and it is the second leading cause of home fire deaths.

Dangers of Turkey Fryers

<https://youtu.be/kjUynq0HXDQ>^[3]

Holiday Cooking Safety Tips

- Stay in the kitchen when you are cooking on the stove top so you can keep an eye on the food.
- Stay in the home when cooking your turkey and check on it frequently.
- Keep children away from the stove. The stove will be hot, and kids should stay three feet away.
- Make sure kids stay away from hot food and liquids. The steam or splash from vegetables, gravy or coffee could cause serious burns.
- Keep knives out of the reach of children.
- Be sure electric cords from an electric knife, coffee maker, plate warmer or mixer are not dangling off the counter within easy reach of a child.
- Keep matches and utility lighters out of the reach of children — up high in a locked cabinet.
- Never leave children alone in room with a lit candle.
- Keep the floor clear so you don't trip over kids, toys, pocketbooks or bags.
- Make sure your smoke alarms are working. Test them by pushing the test button.

Deck the Halls with Fire Safety

<https://youtu.be/-ugeFgJlp4>^[4]

For more reading on holiday safety, refer to the primary source used in this article.
<https://www.nfpa.org/Public-Education/Fire-causes-and-risks/Seasonal-fire-causes/Thanksgiving>^[5]

<https://www.nfpa.org/Public-Education/Fire-causes-and-risks/Seasonal-fire-causes/Winter-holidays>^[6]

<https://www.nfpa.org/Public-Education/Fire-causes-and-risks/Seasonal-fire-causes/Winter-holidays/Holiday-fires-by-the-numbers>^[7]

Easy, Fun and Kid Friendly



This Holiday Season will be "different" for most of us! So why not do and make somethings different. Whether you have kids or not, here's an easy fun recipe for the "kid" in you. It's called "Monkey Bread" (aka "Pull Apart"!).

Ingredients

- ½ cup granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 2 cans (16.3 oz each) Pillsbury™ Grands!™ Flaky Layers refrigerated Original biscuits
- ½ cup chopped walnuts, if desired
- ½ cup raisins, if desired
- 1 cup firmly packed brown sugar
- ¾ cup butter or margarine, melted

Steps

1. Heat oven to 350°F. Generously grease 12-cup fluted tube pan with shortening or cooking spray. In large 1-gallon plastic food storage bag, mix granulated sugar and cinnamon.
2. Separate dough into 16 biscuits; cut each into quarters. Shake in bag to coat. Arrange in pan, adding walnuts and raisins among the biscuit pieces. Sprinkle any remaining sugar over biscuits.
3. In small bowl, mix brown sugar and butter; pour over biscuit pieces.
4. Bake 30 to 40 minutes or until golden brown and no longer doughy in center. Loosen edges of pan with metal spatula. Cool in pan 5 minutes. Turn upside down onto serving plate; replacing any biscuit pieces and caramel from pan. Pull apart to serve. Serve warm.

PS. We don't count calories during the holidays! Peace

The secret to making your holiday inspiring is actually quite simple.

BE inspiring yourself.

As with any change, you must be the change you want to see in others.

Let's make the BEST of each day. Peace



Our Role in Environmental Stewardship

- The "Energy Tools for Schools" energy conservation program developed through a business partnership agreement with Florida Power & Light. **The District has reduced electrical consumption, on average, by 10% per year.** This is immense when considering the District has

more than 36,000,000 square feet of building floor space. This ten-percent decrease equates to an average kilowatt-hour (kWh) savings of 59,524,753. **This kWh savings, and its environmental impact (CO2 and GHG) on the environment, equates to the removal of 8,937 passenger vehicles from our roads for one year or 5,040 homes from our energy grid for one year.** This ten-percent reduction, incidentally, helped the **District save \$8,940,813 on our average, annual electrical costs as well.**

- Environmental Compliance Team is working with the Petroleum Tanks and Environmental Services Contractor(s) to remove waste oil storage tanks no longer in use at High Schools where Automotive, Marine, or other trade programs were operated.

Fight Against Covid 19

- The Health and Safety Team continues to work on the BCPS COVID-19 Back to School Health, Hygiene and Sanitation Work Stream to coordinate the weekly meeting. COVID-19 operational Guidance Manual is in development, and requests for additional signage and stencils from the schools are currently being processed.
- The Training and Communication Team created online training course on Electrostatic Spraying to compliment the District's purchase of equipment to continually disinfect our schools and ancillary sites. To date, over 1,069 FSPs and Transportation staff, who will use this equipment, have participated in this online training covering equipment use and safety.

Community Steps Up/ Spirit of Giving



- EH&S "family" is following our annual Holiday tradition of adopting a Broward County family to help spread holiday joy, by foregoing in-house gift-giving. Instead, EH&S is donating to fulfilling a family children's holiday gift wishes.- Coordinated by Santa's personal elf- Carol Cascio. This is what this season is all about!

Contact Us

Office: 754-321-4200

emshelpdesk@browardschools.com for assistance with HVAC concerns or EHS-Help@browardschools.com for other assistance.

From our Team to you and your family –

**“Best Wishes for the Holidays
and for Health and Happiness,
NOW and throughout the
coming year.” Peace**