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UNM Van Operator Safety Training

Studies conducted by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), of the US Department of Transportation, reveal that loaded 15-passenger vans have significantly higher risk of rollover than passenger cars and light trucks. Loading the van raises the center of gravity and shifts it towards the rear greatly affecting the handling characteristics and stability of the vehicle. When heavily loaded the steering characteristics and responsiveness are very different from light passenger vehicles, this can cause serious consequences in an emergency situation when an untrained driver expects the vehicle to respond like a car. The NHTSA research has also found that June through August is the deadliest time of year for 15-passenger van occupants due in part to the busy summer travel months.

In 2002, the University of New Mexico developed and implemented the Van Operator Training Program to reduce the risk of accident and possible injury or death associated with the operation of 15-passenger vans. The program requires:

- the training of operators in how to reduce rollover risks, and avoid potential dangers,
- ensuring that 15-passenger vans are in safe and proper working order,
- reducing the passenger count to 11 by retrofitting the vehicles to reduce the propensity for roll-over, and
- ensuring that all passengers use passenger restraint systems (seat belts).

In order to operate a fifteen (15) passenger van, including the UNM vans modified to carry 11 passengers, one must obtain a Van Operator's Permit in addition to the UNM Driving Permit. The Van Operator's Permit requires attendance and successful completion of the two-part 15 Passenger Van Training. This training includes classroom and behind the wheel training. For more information on either of these training programs you can consult the SRS Manual found on the SRS website, or you can contact SRS at 277-2753.



Motor Vehicle Safety

For many of us, the most dangerous components of our job involves the use of a motor vehicle. Twenty-one percent of workplace fatalities in the US are the result of motor vehicle crashes.

In an effort to decrease the potential for injury, the University has implemented the Motor Vehicle Safety Program. This program is located in the Safety and Risk Services (SRS) Manual, Section 2.18 available online at our website (<http://srs.unm.edu>). The program outlines the criteria for obtaining and maintaining the UNM Vehicle Operator's Permit as referenced in University Policy 7780, UBP "Use of University Vehicles".

There are several key requirements included in the Motor Vehicle Safety Program. First, is the possession of a valid Driver's License. Second, a valid UNM Vehicle Driving Permit is required before any person can operate a UNM vehicle. This includes the completion of a Defensive Driving Course available through SRS, or online (for a fee), or through Continuing Education (for a fee). Third, current holders of UNM Driving Permits must renew their permit every five years. **HAVE YOU CHECKED YOURS LATELY?** This renewal will include retaking the Defensive Driving Course, a driver's license review check and the issuance of a new permit.

Forklift Operation Program for UNM

All employees, who operate a University-owned Powered Industrial Truck (PIT), also known as a forklift, are required to comply with the UNM Forklift Operations Program. This program includes classroom training, a physical examination (biennially), on-the-job training with field supervision and completion of a final evaluation conducted the Safety and Risk Services Department. Operators must have a valid UNM Driving Permit. All operators will be required to re-qualify every three years for their University PIT Operators Permit through successful completion of the classroom training phase and a current physical examination. Operators that have prior PIT training, that is appropriate to the PIT and working conditions of the new location, will benefit from accelerated training through the exemption from the on the job training, provided the supervisor and SRS concur.

FAQs:

- Who teaches the Classroom Training? - The Classroom PIT Training will be taught by SRS.
- Where will I get the physical examination? - The physical examination is available through Employee Occupational Health Services. Your supervisor is responsible for arranging for the exam.
- Who will supervise my on the job training? - The on-the-job training will be provided by the department supervisor, or a designated PIT operator, that possesses the knowledge, training and experience to train PIT operators.
- How and where will I get my final Operators Permit? – Upon satisfactory completion of the on the job training the supervisor will arrange the operators final evaluation with SRS. The final evaluation will be conducted at the department using PIT and equipment on hand, by an SRS representative.

SRS monitors the campus for lead and other hazardous metals



Travis Miller, Program Specialist at SRS, uses a portable handheld X-Ray Fluorescence (XRF) Spectrometer. XRF spectrometry is used to identify chemical elements in the surface of a substance and quantify the concentration of those elements. This device is primarily used throughout campus to identify painted materials that may contain lead or other heavy metals. The portable device has the ability to provide instant and on-site readings without the more traditional destructive sampling and waiting for a laboratory to perform analytical tests. Information from the XRF assists decision-making to minimize exposure to lead and other heavy metals. This method saves both time and money, and the XRF has paid for itself in cost savings in the first year of use.