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NEWS & RISK MANAGEMENT REVIEW

SPRING 2021

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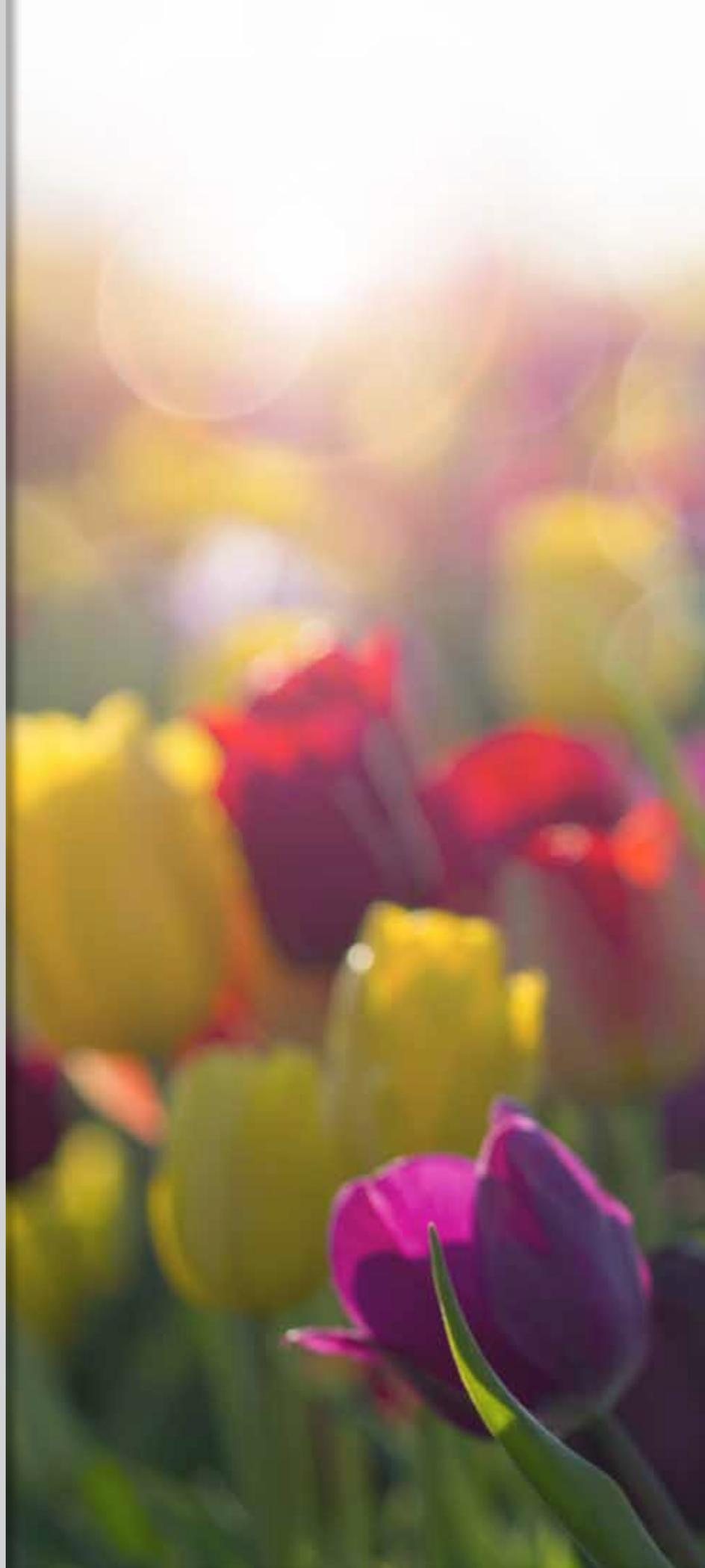
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— SDAO Board of Directors —

**President**

Michele Bradley, Port of Tillamook Bay

**Vice President**

Todd Heidgerken, Clackamas River Water

**Secretary**

Ben Stange, Polk County Fire District #1

**Treasurer**

Emily Stumpf, Multnomah County Drainage District #1

**Past-President**

Carl Tappert, Rogue Valley Sewer Services

**Board Members**

Nick Bakke, Rogue Valley Sewer Services

MaryKay Dahlgreen, Lincoln County Library District

Adam Denlinger, Seal Rock Water District

Jennifer Holland, Sisters Park & Recreation District

Kathy Kleczek, Sunset Empire Transportation District

Scott Stanton, Umatilla County Fire District #1

Brent Stevenson, Santiam Water Control District

— Next Board of Directors Meetings —

April 8 | 10 a.m. | Virtual via GoToMeeting

June 10 | 10 a.m. | Salem Office

— Executive Director —

Frank Stratton

— Services —

Awards, Education and Training, Internship Grant, Legislative, Research and Technical Assistance, Scholarship and Grant Fund. and SDAO Advisory Services, LLC

— Contact —

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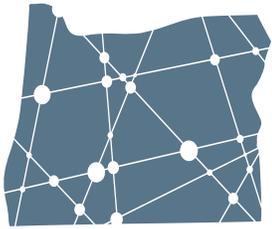
**Claims Office**

PO Box 23879 | Tigard OR 97281-3879

Toll-Free: 800-305-1736 | Phone: 503-670-7066

# Thank you for Attending the 2021 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

By Frank Stratton, Executive Director



Thank you to everyone who attended the 2021 SDAO Annual Conference! While we definitely missed that face-to-face interaction with you all, I'm happy to say that it was a successful event. Though the

conference was held on a virtual platform, we were still able to offer 20 different trainings and host our district caucus meetings, annual business meeting, board member elections, and awards ceremony. We had **885 individuals** representing over **340 special districts** in the state join us live over the course of the two-day event on February 3rd and 4th. To date, this was our largest annual conference yet!

Knowing that networking is a huge reason why our members attend the conference, our staff worked hard to ensure that the format allowed for several opportunities for attendees to connect with one another. There was a message board offering members a chance to ask questions and have conversations about various topics. Attendees could also reach out to others via messaging or video calls.

After Wednesday's caucus meetings, we split into groups and attended one of two virtual trivia games. The winning teams each walked away with a \$50 Amazon gift card split amongst the players. One team even took their Amazon gift card winnings and donated it to the Oregon Food Bank.

Another exciting feature of this year's conference was free registration for all SDAO members.

We had 32 sponsoring companies support our virtual event allowing for us to offer this at no cost. I can't say thank you enough to our sponsors. SDAO is so appreciative of being able to work with you all, and I know our districts really value your relationship.



The conference platform will be available until May 3rd. During this time, you can view sessions that you may have missed or those you want to review again. If you were unable to register and you'd like to view these sessions, you can still register by contacting Kaylie Bahnsen at [kbahnsen@sdao.com](mailto:kbahnsen@sdao.com). Once the platform has closed, we will have all of the recordings available on our website to view for years to come.

## Save the Date

Next year, we are excited for the opportunity to hold the 2022 SDAO Annual Conference in person at The Graduate in Eugene from February 10-13. I hope to see you there!

# Board Member Spotlight: Jennifer Holland

*SDAO Board of Directors*

**Position: Park & Recreation District Representative  
November 5, 2020 - Present**

**What role do you serve at your special district and how long have you been with them?**

I am currently the Executive Director at Sisters Park & Recreation District. I have had the pleasure of serving in this role since August 2019. Living and working in Sisters is a dream come true. I love the small town atmosphere and our amazing community.

**Why did you seek to join the SDAO Board of Directors?**

I sought out being an SDAO board member because I wanted to learn more about SDAO as well as give back. I previously was a member of the ORPA Board of Directors for seven years and felt that my experience would help me be a valuable board member.

**How did you get involved with your district?**

Previous to working in Sisters, I worked for Willamalane Park and Recreation District for 17 years. While I loved the district and the town of Springfield, I wanted to move into a role where I could have a greater impact on change. Sisters has always been a place I loved to visit and when the position opened up, it seemed like the right time in my life to make a change. I'm so glad I took the leap and I am incredibly grateful to all of those who have helped me on my journey.

**How has SDAO helped you or your district?**

SDAO has been a lifesaver! From providing insight when we are handling a sensitive human resources issue to the countless resources that have been developed to assist with policy development and compliance. All the staff are professional and quick to jump in and save the day.

**Tell us about your life outside of your day job(s).**

Outside of work, I spend my time with my 12-year-old son Cal. We both are looking forward to traveling and spending more time with friends and family once COVID is a distant memory!



# SDAO Internship



## GRANTS

Now Accepting Applications! Deadline: 5pm on Friday, April 16, 2021

If your district is looking to hire an intern this year to help with your project needs, we encourage you to apply for a matching grant through the SDAO Internship Grant Program. This valuable program offers us the chance to educate our future leaders on the different operational aspects of our state's special districts while simultaneously fulfilling district needs.

Last year, SDAO awarded \$40,290 in matching internship grants to 14 special districts around the state. All recipients saw great success with the program, including **Klamath Irrigation District**, **North Morrow Vector Control District**, and **Junction City RFPD**:



*"Over the past six months, [our intern] worked with the K.I.D. management to set conditions for future improvements across the District. He examined our water tracking system, solar arrays, hydropower facility, and water recirculation pumping stations to get an understanding of the diversity across the district. We then gave him the task to examine our internal tracking systems with a critical eye to identify how and where improvements could be found.*

*The results of his analysis resulted in the creation of a new database to preserve data which was being lost to outdated technology. He further set the conditions for the district to move forward with a modern water ordering system currently under development." –Gene Souza, Klamath Irrigation District*



*"During the SDAO Internship, my role was to shadow and work with an experienced mosquito control technician. This way, I learned the proper techniques for dipping, mosquito larval taxonomy in the field, distribution, biology, and the importance of mosquito species found in the district. It also taught me the importance of mosquito control in protecting the citizens of North Morrow County from annoying disease transmitting mosquitoes. Our district is very thankful for being awarded a \$3,000.00 SDAO Internship Grant." –Roberto Ayala, North Morrow Vector Control District Intern*

*"With the help of the grant, we were able to hire a volunteer firefighter who is working towards his goal to become a career firefighter. He has continued to develop a hydrant testing program and work towards completing the hydrant testing this year. He was also able to gain valuable experience and understanding of the day-to-day operations of the fire district."* –Chief Brandon Nicol, Junction City RFPD





**2021 INTERNSHIP GRANT PROGRAM APPLICATION**

**Application Deadline: 5pm on Friday, April 16, 2021**

SDAO members are eligible to apply for a grant through the SDAO Internship Grant Program. The intent of this program is to assist districts in meeting or improving loss control and best practices, ultimately benefiting both the district and the intern. This grant is not intended to fund routine maintenance needs or normal staffing requirements.

Interns must be hired by the district as temporary employees to be in compliance with wage and hour laws relative to compensating student interns. A freshman through junior college-level student will need to be hired to qualify for funding of this grant. The maximum grant per district is \$3,000; the funding must be matched by the district by 50%. For example, you may be eligible to receive up to \$3,000 on your request for a project that will cost your district \$6,000 or more. You may be eligible to receive up to a maximum of \$2,100 on your request for a project that will cost your district \$4,200. SDAO may not fund all grant requests.

The SDAO Awards Committee will review each application to determine which projects are eligible to receive funding. **Funds will be disbursed by July 1, 2021.**

To be considered, your completed Internship Grant Program application must be received by SDAO by 5pm on Friday, April 16, 2021. Submit your completed application by mail to SDAO, PO Box 12613, Salem, Oregon 97309; by e-mail to [sdao@sdao.com](mailto:sdao@sdao.com); or by fax to 503-371-4781. Attach a separate sheet if necessary.



This grant program is not offered with the intention of funding routine maintenance needs or normal staffing requirements, but for assisting with various district projects. Interns must be hired by the district as temporary employees to be in compliance with wage and hour laws relative to compensating student interns. A freshman through junior college-level student will need to be hired to qualify for funding of this grant. The maximum grant per district is \$3,000; the funding must be matched by the district by 50%. For example, you may be eligible to receive up to \$3,000 on your request for a project that will cost your district \$6,000 or more. You may be eligible to receive up to a maximum of \$2,100 on your request for a project that will cost your district \$4,200. Depending on number of applications, SDAO may not be able to fund all grant requests.

You can download an application on our website at [www.sdao.com/internship-grant-program](http://www.sdao.com/internship-grant-program). If you have any questions, please contact Jennifer Quisenberry at [jquisenberry@sdao.com](mailto:jquisenberry@sdao.com) or 503-798-9245.

***Don't miss this opportunity! Be sure to complete and submit your application by 5pm on April 16, 2021.***

Stephen Lusch

CERTIFICATE RECIPIENT



Congratulations to Stephen Lusch for receiving the bronze certificate of completion for the SDAO Board Leadership Academy! Stephen is a board member for both the Roberts Creek Water District and Green Sanitary District. Stephen is the first recipient of a certificate in this program that was launched in summer 2020.

If you are interested in learning more or would like to enroll in one of our board education programs, please visit [www.sdao.com/board-leadership-programs](http://www.sdao.com/board-leadership-programs).

# Awards Program

Each year, the SDAO Awards Program honors member districts for accomplishments which allow them to provide better service to the public and gives recognition to individuals who have greatly contributed to the success of their organization. The following award winners were selected by the SDAO Awards Committee and recognized at the 2021 SDAO Annual Conference on Thursday, February 4<sup>th</sup>.

## AWARD WINNERS

### Howard Terpenning Lifetime Achievement Award

Winner: **Clark Balfour, Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue**

The Howard Terpenning Lifetime Achievement Award is presented to an individual who has shown an outstanding commitment to Oregon's special districts and to SDAO. Clark Balfour has demonstrated all of the qualities and experience necessary for being recognized with this award.

While spending his career as an attorney focused on serving special district clients, Clark contributed his personal time to his community serving as a board member for Tualatin Valley Fire and Rescue. Clark took his service a step further by joining the SDAO Board of Directors in 2010. His wealth of knowledge and expertise were invaluable to the board and staff members. Clark also acted as a resource to SDAO legislative staff while serving on the SDAO Legislative Committee and continues to do so today.

### Outstanding Special District Service Award: Manager

Winner: **Fire Chief Joshua Williams, Aurora Fire District #63**



Fire Chief Joshua Williams with the Aurora Fire District was recognized with the Outstanding Special District Service Award for his efforts with a helping a neighboring fire district during the wildfires. Chief Williams demonstrated a commitment to service and community while helping others in need.

### Outstanding Special District Service Award: Employee

Winner: **Barbara McCann with North County Recreation District**

Barbara McCann with North County Recreation District (NCRD) received the Outstanding Special District Service Award for her work with the NCRD community pool.

In 1995, when the NCRD community pool lost funding and was near closure, she decided to take action to save it. She felt the pool had improved her own children's quality of life, and she wanted future generations to have the same opportunity and enjoyment. Barbara's dedication and steadfast commitment over the years to preserve the community pool is very inspiring.

### **Outstanding Special District Service Award: Board Member**

**Winner: Jerry Enman, Klamath Irrigation District**

Board Member Jerry Enman with Klamath Irrigation District is the recipient of the Outstanding Special District Service Award.

The Klamath Irrigation District relies on Jerry's years of experience, knowledge, and grounded advice to help the farmers and ranchers in the area with irrigation questions and concerns. Between 2019 - 2020, Jerry donated over 1,040 hours toward improving the Klamath Irrigation District, his community, and the region.

### **Outstanding Special District Service Award: Volunteer**

**Winner: Wayne Austen, Canby Fire District**

Wayne Austen with Canby Fire District received the Outstanding Special District Service Award in recognition of his service to his district.

Wayne has served as a dedicated volunteer firefighter for the last 50 years! Wayne has filled every position in the Canby Fire District volunteer program and is currently the Division Chief. He has offered his time and skills to help give back to his community, year after year.

### **SDAO Congressional Leadership Award**

**Winner: Congressman Peter DeFazio**

The SDAO Congressional Leadership Award recognizes a member of Oregon's Delegation to Congress who has consistently gone above and beyond for Oregon's special districts. Congressman Peter DeFazio has been a longtime supporter of the SDAO's diverse membership. In particular, he has been a partner and leader for infrastructure and transportation-related projects across the state and has been instrumental in securing critical funding for several of Oregon's special districts. We are honored to be recognizing Congressman DeFazio with this award.

### **Outstanding Special District Program Award: Districts with 6-25 Employees**

**Winner: Canby Fire District**

Canby Fire District has implemented an excellent intern program that helps individuals gain experience in the fire service while completing their schooling. Their program is very cost effective and develops qualified firefighters for future staffing needs.

In recognition of this program, Canby Fire District has been awarded with the Outstanding Special District Program Award.

### **Outstanding Special District Program Award: Districts with 26 or More Employees**

**Winner: North County Recreation District**

North County Recreation District has been awarded the Outstanding Special District Program Award in recognition of their multi-faceted improvement effort for their historic buildings. They are restoring their 100-year-old main building and 90-year-old pool to benefit many generations into the future.

### **SDAO Extraordinary Staff Service Award**

**Winner: Jason Jantzi, Risk Management Consultant**

The winner of our inaugural SDAO Extraordinary Staff Service Award is Risk Management Consultant, Jason Jantzi!

This award honors an SDAO staff member who has gone above and beyond to help our members. Jason has offered an outstanding contribution during the COVID-19 pandemic and state wildfires last year. His attention to detail, long hours of research, and ongoing attendance at virtual meetings to gather the most up-to-date information has helped contribute to the success of our COVID response.

During the state wildfires, Jason acted as an important liaison between the fire service and SDAO, while still being the point person for COVID response questions. His efforts are greatly appreciated.

### **Award Videos**

Videos of each of our award winners can be found on our YouTube channel at [www.youtube.com/SDAOMemberServices](http://www.youtube.com/SDAOMemberServices).



# *Special Districts* **CONSULTING SERVICES**

Greetings everyone, I hope by the time you receive this newsletter; we are starting to see signs of an early spring – it is going to be a very welcomed season.

Spring cleaning- It is an expression that is as old as time and we may have forgotten the meaning of it. In households, it used to involve hanging area rugs outside on the clothesline and beating the dust out, reorganizing kitchen cabinets or simply flipping the mattress. What would spring cleaning mean for your district?

Consulting Services offers an array of services for your board to take advantage of to assist with your district's spring cleaning needs. We can provide board training as new board members get elected, offer a way for your board to see how its governance measures up by taking the Board Governance Questionnaire, or facilitate your management recruitments and organizational assessments, to name a few. During your time of spring cleaning at your district, I encourage you to look into our organizational assessments and Board Governance Questionnaire.

## **Organizational Assessments**

Without an organizational assessment, how do you know if your business or government agency is performing at maximum effectiveness and reaching its highest potential?

An organizational assessment is a tool that every organization should be using in the quest

for continuous improvement. Performing an organizational assessment allows the organization to identify strengths and weaknesses and must have participation of key stakeholders across the organization. An assessment is an excellent method to take a step back and evaluate how the organization is operating as a whole. Forward thinking organizations understand there are always ways to improve stakeholder, customer or constituent services and support. When conducting an organizational assessment, government agencies will identify strengths and weaknesses leading to improvement opportunities that allows exploitation of untapped potential.

Our team of consultants have the expertise to assist your district with assessing your overall operation. With a look from the outside, our consultants can provide you with guidance and recommendations that will set your district up for long-term success. Consultants assess organizational efficiencies and effectiveness, financial sustainability, personnel management, operating policies and procedures, staff and board training opportunities and involvement, and specific operational activities associated with the type of district being assessed. A written report is provided to the district that summarizes the consultant's findings and recommendations for improvements.

## **Testimonials**

***“The Lyons Rural Fire Protection District Board of Directors passed a motion to have SDAO come in to conduct an organizational review of the entire***

*fire district. We had never done this process before. The SDAO team conducted a complete review of our department top to bottom. We were presented with and approved the final report. The board and staff have been using this report as a template to make positive changes, updates and create new opportunities for the fire district. Our goal is to provide the highest level of service to the patrons of our district. We believe following this roadmap we can up our game internally and externally to provide that higher level of service."* -Gary Rychard, Board President, Lyons Rural Fire Protection District.

*"SDAO's Organizational Assessment was a HIGHLY worthwhile use of our time & resources. Our consultant was excellent. She got right to work – in just a few days after we set up our contract with her, she had toured our facilities, attended one of our meetings, and interviewed a large number of our stakeholders. We were impressed by how quickly she understood our organization and the challenges we face. She was very professional and provided honest feedback in a supportive manner. During the time she spent with us, she was a real member of our team and always readily available. At the end, she delivered an excellent 47-page report that is succinct and easy to follow. Among other things, it outlines the major areas where improvements are needed and contains the helpful resources needed to make these improvements. We highly recommend the Organizational Assessment and plan to make use of the other services provided by SDAO for volunteer Boards like ours."* -Karen Kessi, SDIC Board of Directors

### **Board Governance Questionnaire**

During times of crisis, all eyes look to the special district's board to figure out where things went wrong. Boards that strive to improve their governance practices are less likely to subject themselves to a calamity. A board's effectiveness is determined by its practices of good governance and understanding the principles of good governance is a necessity for board members in order to follow through on their duties and responsibilities.

Over the years, the Board Practices Assessment (BPA) has been used by nearly 150 district boards to help them identify strengths and weaknesses

in their governance practices and make improvements when needed. This year, we are offering an additional tool, the Board Governance Questionnaire, to help boards decide whether they would benefit from participating in the BPA. Your district can use the Board Governance Questionnaire electronically and confidentially to determine how your board is faring. Once the questionnaire is completed by each board member, a summary will be sent to the board with a rating. Based on their rating, your board can decide whether to request the BPA.

The BPA is a facilitated, 90-minute self-assessment involving all board members in rating their effectiveness in six key areas of risk management effectiveness and is offered as a free service from Consulting Services. Results of the BPA underscore the significant link between board performance and their district's risk management effectiveness. Simply put, good board practices lead to sound risk management.

We would like to also like to thank everyone that attended the SDAO Annual Conference. We were able to interact with many of the member districts through emails, phone calls, and via chat within the conference platform.

As always, we appreciate you making us the first call for your organization's needs and we look forward to hearing from you soon and hopefully seeing you even sooner.

For more information about the Consulting Services Program and the services we offer, please contact us at [sdaoconsultingservices@sdao.com](mailto:sdaoconsultingservices@sdao.com) or call 800-305-1736.

*- George and Shanta*





# Boards & Commissions

Diverse Leadership for a Better Tomorrow

## Recruitment Event



Members of Oregon state boards and commissions are vital participants in statewide decision-making and dedicated individuals have the opportunity to participate in developing a wide variety of important governmental policies. Major issues range from consumer protection, economic development, education, conservation, and health care — all of which are critical to the ongoing success of the State of Oregon.

The Governor is also committed to ensuring that all boards and commissions represent the growing age, racial and gender diversity of the state. This is an amazing opportunity to pool our collective viewpoints, visions and hopes for Oregon — and all citizens are welcome and encouraged to serve. You must be an Oregon resident and taxpayer to participate unless otherwise noted.

Registration Information:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/boards-commissions-recruitment-event-tickets-145913347751>



**Wednesday - April 28, 2021**

11:45am - 1:15pm

5:30-7:00pm

**Saturday - May 1, 2021**

9-10:30am



## Human Resources Regional Trainings

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the SDAO HR regional trainings will now be offered in a virtual format. More information to come. Please watch your email inbox for updates.





## SDAO COMMITTEE AND VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

We need your help! Our strength and effectiveness as an organization is directly related to the involvement of our members. The talent and energy that our members bring to SDAO are the critical components of our success as an association. Please review the volunteer opportunities listed below and indicate those of which you are willing to serve. If you have any questions, please contact SDAO at 800-285-5461 or [sdao@sdao.com](mailto:sdao@sdao.com).

**Awards Committee**      Reviews applications and submits rankings for the SDAO Awards Program and SDAO Internship Grant Program. This is conducted by email.

**Conference and Education Committee**      Meets two to three times prior to the SDAO Annual Conference to provide recommendations for conference programming.

To download the application, please visit  
<https://www.sdao.com/sdao-committee-volunteer-interest-form>

**Application Deadline: May 21, 2021**

*Save the Date*

SDAO Member Scholarship  
**GOLF TOURNAMENT**

**Chehalem Glenn Golf Course**  
**Newberg, OR**

**Sept.**  
**17th**



For the safety of our members, staff and sponsors, we will ensure that all COVID-19 protocols are followed. If county, state or federal restrictions do not allow for the event to be held, we will alert all members and issue any applicable refunds in full.



ADVISORY SERVICES, LLC

# *Your District's Financial Advocate*

## **SDAO Advisory Services**

When you need funding options for your district, SDAO Advisory Services is here to support you. In the last five years, we have partnered with SDAO members on over 100 financings securing over \$2.5 billion in funding. We are a wholly-owned, not-for-profit limited liability corporation of SDAO formed for the sole purpose of serving SDAO members. Your best interest is placed before any others and we offer competitive pricing. We are here to advocate for your district as your financial partner.

As the number one municipal advisor in Oregon for four years (2016-2019), we provide SDAO members with funding options, structures, and alternatives that are best suited to accomplish funding requirements. Focused on the long-term relationship with each member that goes beyond just a transaction, our goal is to earn your trust and business as a financial partner, working together in meeting your long-term goals by providing value-added results through seamless execution. Put our 25+ years of experience to work for your district.

## **SERVICES**

### Financial Management

- Debt monitoring and analysis
- Refinancing opportunities
- Investment alternatives
- Operating cash flow analysis

### Debt Issuance Planning Financing Alternatives

(public and private options, including bank loans)

- Market analysis
- Debt structuring options
- Credit rating consultation
- Document and disclosure guidance

### Bond Assistance

- Review and guidance of ballot titles
- Manage the issuance process, working with bond counsel and other financing team members
- Evaluation of the merits of a competitive or negotiated bond sale
- Assist in the solicitation of other financing professional service providers
- Review and evaluate bond pricing
- Guidance and monitoring of continuing disclosure compliance

## **CONTACT US TODAY**

David Ulbricht | Director of Advisory Services | 503-701-7774 | [dulbricht@sdao.com](mailto:dulbricht@sdao.com)

*SDAO Advisory Services is a Registered Municipal Advisor with the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Municipal Securities Rulemaking Board.*





National  
Purchasing  
Partners  
Government



# Special Districts Association of Oregon

Special Districts Association of Oregon and NPPGov have partnered to offer members departmental and individual discounts from national brands.

As a member of the Special Districts Association of Oregon, you have free access to NPPGov cooperative agreements.

Access NPPGov discounts at  
[nppgov.com/association/sdao](http://nppgov.com/association/sdao)



**Questions or Concerns?**  
**Contact NPPGov at 877.329.8847 or [customerservice@nppgov.com](mailto:customerservice@nppgov.com).**

Membership with NPPGov is only available to Government entities, including Public Safety & Education.

# EARTHQUAKE

## RISK

### IN OREGON

Special Districts Association of Oregon is partnering with ShakeAlert®, the United States earthquake early warning system, to inform members on earthquake risk in Oregon and what they can do to mitigate damage from earthquake shaking. ShakeAlert® is a system that detects significant earthquakes quickly enough so that alerts containing information on magnitude and expected shaking intensity can be delivered to people and automated systems seconds before shaking arrives, allowing folks and systems to take action.

By taking action to save lives and protect critical systems, Oregon's workforce and economy can recover more rapidly from a damaging earthquake. A series of articles will be shared through the end of this year covering topics like basic earthquake education, how earthquake early warning technology works, examples of earthquake early warning alerting solutions in place in Oregon today, and how you can take advantage of the ShakeAlert® earthquake early warning system. These articles will also help to disseminate ShakeAlert® education and training resources prior to the planned, live public test of the ShakeAlert® system across the state, likely occurring in 2021.

What is the earthquake risk in Oregon? We've all heard of the Pacific Ring of Fire - a 25,000 mile-long region that outlines the northern and southern

hemispheres of the Pacific Ocean, and also the Pacific Plate. 80% of the world's earthquakes occur along tectonic plate boundaries where tectonic plates come together and build up stress. Earthquake hazards along the West Coast are caused by the interaction of 3 tectonic plates within the Ring of Fire: the Pacific Plate, the Juan de Fuca Plate, and the North American Plate. These motions don't happen easily. Over time, strain builds up along the plate boundaries as they attempt to get by, under, or over one another. Once the strain is too high the plates slip past each other suddenly, releasing the energy in the form of an earthquake.

Just off the Oregon Coast lies the Cascadia Subduction Zone, a major tectonic plate boundary where the Juan de Fuca Plate is being pulled underneath the North American continent<sup>1</sup>. Though these two plates are moving toward each other, they are actually pinned in place between the occurrence of large earthquakes. The North American continent is flexing upwards, absorbing the motion of the two plates coming together. This is what is referred to as a "locked" subduction zone. When the plates do finally unlock, the resulting earthquake generates powerful shaking that can last for 4-5 minutes, causing extensive damage to homes, buildings, and infrastructure across the state. Subduction zone earthquakes can also generate destructive tsunamis - a series of extremely long ocean waves that forcibly

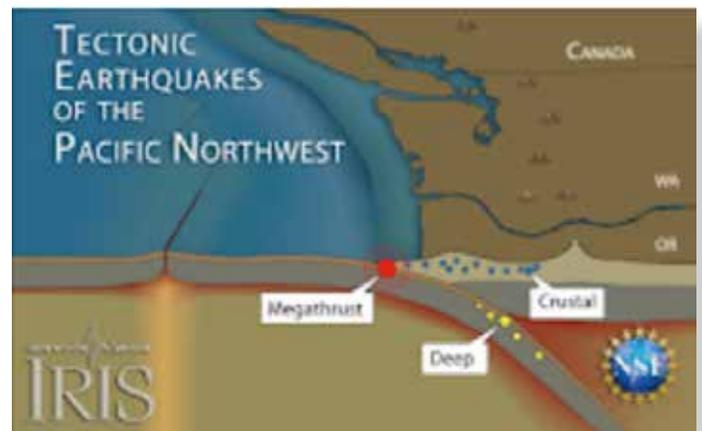
surge onto land and can move across entire oceans in less than a day<sup>2</sup>.

As the subducting Juan de Fuca Plate attempts to descend, it also bends and tears. This can generate deep earthquakes, like the 2001 Nisqually earthquake. These earthquakes happen deep underground - 30 to 50 mi depth. Deep earthquakes produce shaking that can be felt widely, causing damage in a large regional area. Shaking may last 30-60 seconds.

To accommodate the flexing of the North American Plate, the crust on land can tear near the surface along crustal faults and produce shallow, crustal earthquakes. Most notably in Oregon's recent history, the 1993 Scotts Mills "Spring Break Quake" and the 1993 Klamath Falls earthquake doublet are both examples of shallow crustal earthquakes. Damage from these earthquakes is concentrated near the earthquake's origin, where shaking is strongest. Shaking may last 5-20 seconds.

In general, the closer you are to the fault along which an earthquake occurs, the more intense the shaking you will likely feel. Intensity is a measurement of the severity of shaking someone experiences during an earthquake and varies depending on where you are because it depends primarily on magnitude, distance to the fault, and the local soil or rock type... among other things. An earthquake will have only one magnitude but has variable intensity throughout the local or felt area. And a greater magnitude earthquake means greater shaking intensity everywhere and over a larger region.

Geologists tell us there is a 7% to 12% chance over the next 50 years that the Cascadia Subduction Zone will unlock and generate a magnitude 9-plus earthquake that will impact Oregon statewide, as well as northern California, Washington, and British Columbia. Within that same timeframe, there is a nearly 40% chance of the Cascadia Subduction Zone generating a magnitude 8 to 9 earthquake near Southern Oregon and Northern California<sup>3</sup>. The last subduction zone earthquake to occur along the Cascadia Subduction Zone happened in 1700 - it measured a magnitude 9.0 and generated a tsunami that reached Japan (read the interesting discovery

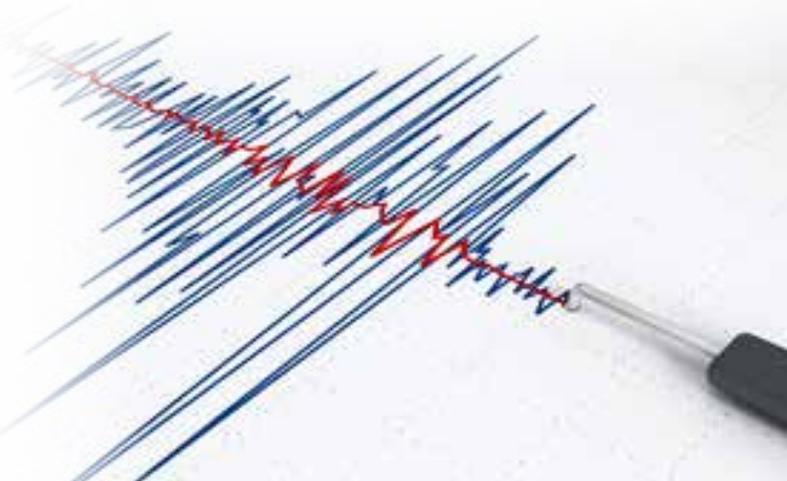


of this earthquake through the "Orphan Tsunami"). Geologists and Oregon state officials expect the next Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake to cause 1,250 to more than 10,000 fatalities, tens of thousands of buildings destroyed or damaged, tens of thousands of displaced households, \$32 billion in direct and indirect economic losses, and greater than one million dump truck loads of debris<sup>4</sup>.

Please watch for more articles from us with information about earthquake risk in Oregon. For more information about the ShakeAlert system, please visit [www.shakealert.org](http://www.shakealert.org).

#### References:

- 1 Washington Geological Survey, 2020. [https://www.dnr.wa.gov/publications/ger\\_homeowners\\_guide\\_earthquakes.pdf?44z7d5](https://www.dnr.wa.gov/publications/ger_homeowners_guide_earthquakes.pdf?44z7d5)
- 2 Washington Department of Natural Resources 2015. <https://www.dnr.wa.gov/programs-and-services/geology/geologic-hazards/Tsunamis#understanding-tsunamis.1>
- 3 Andrew Phelps and Douglas Toomey, 2020. Oregon Live. <https://www.oregonlive.com/opinion/2020/08/opinion-legislators-should-brace-for-next-disaster-with-seismic-preparedness-investments.html>
- 4 Oregon Seismic Safety Policy Advisory Commission, 2013. [https://www.oregon.gov/gov/policy/orr/Documents/Oregon\\_Resilience\\_Plan\\_Final.pdf](https://www.oregon.gov/gov/policy/orr/Documents/Oregon_Resilience_Plan_Final.pdf)





# What Does it Mean to be the **Key Contact** for SDAO?

SDAO and SDIS members are required to identify a single individual to serve as the key contact for their organization. This is the person who will field all communications from SDAO, whether it be in the form of our weekly emailed SDAO news or a phone call about something specific to your district. So, it is important that this person knows who SDAO and SDIS are and what services we provide to our members.

The primary role of the key contact is the dissemination of SDAO and SDIS-related information internally. As the primary individual who receives communications, it is paramount that the key contact scan through all messages and share them

with colleagues on a need-to-know basis, as well as with anyone else who might benefit from the information. Oftentimes, these communications will include important notices of upcoming training opportunities, critical changes to the law or other resources designed to assist your organization in the mitigation of exposures pertinent to a wide variety of topics.

It is also worth noting that the key contact is the sole staff member able to authorize fellow colleague(s) to have access to the SDIS Insurance Portal. The portal is where all your insurance information is housed, including claims history, property and auto schedules, coverage documents, risk management

reports, etc. If you need to authorize additional access for someone at your organization, please email your request to [memberservices@sdao.com](mailto:memberservices@sdao.com).

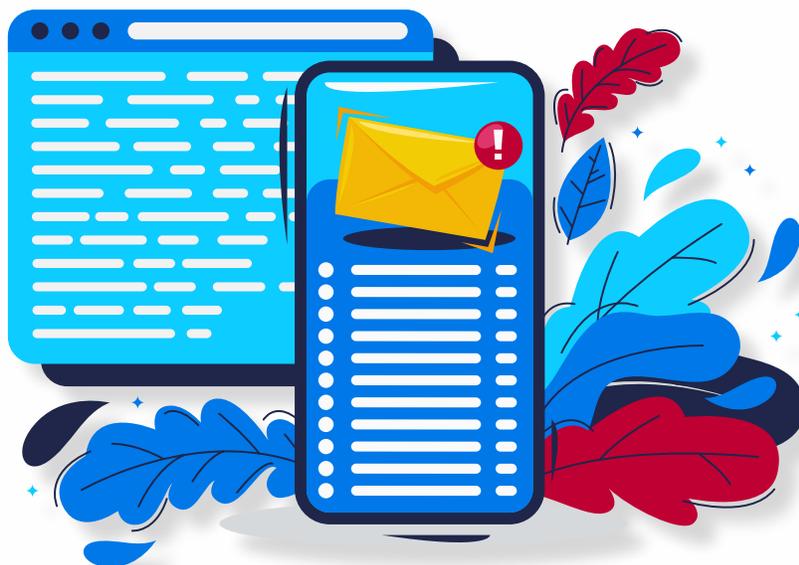


Recently, we developed a short video that reviews the vast resources and services available through our program. If you are still relatively new to your position and want to learn more about SDAO and SDIS, I would encourage you to watch and share it with any of your colleagues who may also benefit from the broadcast. We understand how valuable your time is, so we purposely kept the video to a brief 15 minutes in length.



To access this video, please visit [www.sdao.com/introduction-to-programs-and-services](http://www.sdao.com/introduction-to-programs-and-services).

If you have any questions or need further clarity on the role of the key contact, please contact SDAO Member Services at [memberservices@sdao.com](mailto:memberservices@sdao.com) or 800-285-5461.





# LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

*By: Mark Landauer, SDAO Government Affairs*

As the 81<sup>st</sup> legislative assembly enters its ninth week, one important deadline has passed and another one is quickly approaching making a fast-paced session even more so. February 23<sup>rd</sup> was the last day bills could be introduced and as of March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2,437 bills and measures have been proposed. By close of business on Friday, March 19<sup>th</sup>, bills will need to be posted for a work session in order for them to remain alive and will need to be approved and moved out of the originating policy committee by April 13<sup>th</sup> to advance through the legislative process.

Until recently, both chambers were meeting only once per week in order to introduce bills and get them referred to the appropriate committees. However, two weeks ago, the Senate Republicans denied a quorum, thereby preventing any bill introductions for that week. The stated purpose of the walkout was to protest the Governor's 60-day extension of her state of emergency which Republicans have bristled over since the beginning of the pandemic. As a result, President Courtney announced that the Senate would meet twice a week to ensure that timely conduct of the Senate's business could occur. The House moved to two-day-a-week floor sessions as well.

Three weeks ago, the Legislature received the latest revenue forecast. The news was actually good – at least from a revenue standpoint. Despite the fact that about 160,000 Oregonians are unemployed, the federal government's relief packages have played a critical role in the state's ability to maintain services. In fact, the revenue forecast showed the state has an additional \$800 million available to spend this biennium and next. And with the state expecting over \$4 billion in additional relief from the federal government in the coming months, the state's finances appear to be on stable ground. The Office of Economic Analysis also now predicts that the personal income tax kicker will kick to the tune of about \$570 million and the corporate tax kicker will also kick – thereby providing our K-12 education system additional resources for the upcoming biennium. This new influx of federal funds may also help the state avoid having to tap into over \$3 billion in reserves that the state has been able to save over the last several years.

Several recent developments are worth noting. One is that the Governor Brown recently issued Executive Order 21-06 which requires schools to reopen to in-person classroom instruction. This



is welcome news to many parents who have endured nearly a year of in-home schooling while also trying to fulfill their work duties. Another encouraging development is that President Biden recently announced that vaccines should be available to all adults by May 1st.

Another notable development is that the US Census will be unable to provide the necessary data to the Legislative Assembly for them to conduct redistricting. If the assembly is unable to pass a redistricting plan by July 1st, Oregon's Secretary of State is required to do it. But even then, the necessary data to conduct redistricting is not expected until the fall. As a result, the legislative leadership recently petitioned the Oregon State Supreme Court asking their guidance on whether redistricting could be done in 2022 rather than this year. Meanwhile, Secretary of State Shemia Fagan has raised several concerns about this approach and its impacts on the 2022 elections.

In other developments, the Governor recently announced a \$250 million funding package for summer learning and childcare

to support Oregon's kids and families as Oregon continues to recover from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Speaker Kotek also recently announced a set of proposals related to housing that would include \$535 million in new state investments for increasing affordable housing, addressing homelessness and supporting homeownership.

Meanwhile the Governor's Rules Advisory Committee on Green House Gas Reduction continues its work in the background. As you will recall, cap-and-trade legislation in the previous two legislative sessions resulted in Republican walkouts, thereby denying quorums to conduct business. Those walkouts were successful in stopping those bills. However, as a result of Governor Brown's Executive Order 20-04, the Department of Environmental Quality has been given a short timeline to produce rules for consideration by the Environment Quality Commission this fall. Please watch for more legislative updates as this session continues and we learn about potential impacts to special districts.

*This article was written on March 15, 2021 prior to publishing.*

# District in the News



## Pacific City Completes Significant Wastewater Infrastructure Project

USDA Rural Development | March 22, 2021

Pacific City in northwest Oregon recently completed a \$10.6 million upgrade of its wastewater treatment plant. The plant operated by the Pacific City Joint Water-Sanitary Authority (PCJWSA) was constructed more than 40 years ago. Many components of the facility had exceeded their useful life. Additionally, while serving approximately 1,000 permanent residents and up to 5,000 seasonal visitors, the system's capacity left little margin for error, resulting in several violations of the enhanced National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit requirements. With the town's population continuing to grow, the wastewater system required extensive upgrades to meet the needs of its current and future customers while also protecting the environment.

The water-sanitary authority was able to complete essential components of its initial project development, including an environmental review and preliminary engineering report, with a \$30,000 grant provided through USDA's Special Evaluation Assistance for Rural Communities and Households (SEARCH) Program. With assistance from a Rural Development loan of \$8.7 million and a grant of \$1.9 million provided through the Water and Waste Disposal Program, PCJWSA converted its current system into a sequencing batch reactor.

This municipal infrastructure project has expanded the system's capacity, setting the foundation to support future growth and a vibrant tourist economy in this rural community of 1,035 while also protecting the natural environment.

To see more SDAO members making impactful contributions to their communities, please visit our newsroom at [www.sdao.com/newsroom](http://www.sdao.com/newsroom).

# Wendy Patterson

CERTIFICATE RECIPIENT



Congratulations to Wendy Patterson for receiving the certificate of completion for the SDAO Academy! Wendy is the Business Manager for Marion Area Multi-Agency Emergency Telecommunications (Metcom 911). She is the first recipient of a certificate in this program that was launched January 2020.

If you are interested in learning more or would like to enroll in this program, please visit [www.sdao.com/sdao-academy](http://www.sdao.com/sdao-academy).

*Providing reasonable, stable rates, and  
broad coverage to Oregon's public entities*

## SDIS Board of Trustees

- Chair:** Andrea Klaas, Port of The Dalles
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## Services

- Background Checks
- Claims Administration
- Drug-Free Workplace
- Management Consulting Services
- On-site Loss Control Consultations
- Pre-Loss Legal Services
- Public Safety EAP
- Safety and Security Grant Program
- SDIS Insurance Programs

## Next SDIS Board of Trustees Meetings

Apr. 7, 2021 | 10 a.m. | Virtual Meeting

June 2, 2021 | 10 a.m. | SDAO Tigard Office

*\* Please note, due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, meetings may be held virtually.*

# SDIS and Executive Director Frank Stratton Honored with AGRiP Awards for Excellence

SDIS has developed an innovative employee assistance program (EAP) for emergency responders, earning the pool an Award for Excellence in Performance from the Association of Governmental Risk Pools (AGRiP). AGRiP's Award for Excellence in Performance is given to a public entity risk pool that has developed and implemented a creative, efficient and effective idea, approach or program – especially one that can be shared with or transferred to other pools.

Since January 2019, Public Safety EAP has provided confidential counseling, a wellness resource center, professional and personal coaching services, and other benefits to firefighters and EMS workers free of charge. The program has directly reduced health and other risks for Oregon's public safety responders, who often work in challenging situations with physical and emotional demands.

**Public Safety EAP** SDIS

- The Public Safety EAP serves all career firefighters in the state at no charge. Districts can also add their volunteers and administrative staff to the program.
- Utilization of the program has trended upward since its inception from 3.4% to 8.4%. Usage of the program is above industry average. The average utilization of an EAP is 3.6%.
- There has been a 100% increase in the number of employees in contact with the EAP since the end of 2019.
- The issues that generated the majority of counseling have been partner/relationship, depressive anxiety, stress, workplace stress and individual/behavioral.
- The Public Safety EAP has also been successful for incidents with legal, financial, and other issues.
- The cost for adding volunteers and administrative staff to the program for 2020-21 is shown in the table below. In cost:
 

Tier One (1 vol/assn)	\$65.29 per person per year
Tier Two (3 vol/assn)	\$144.83 per person per year

1-888-327-1060  
 PublicSafetyEAP.com

Public Safety EAP is a confidential counseling and support service staffed by trained professionals 24 hours a day to assist public safety personnel and their families. This program serves thousands of sworn police officers, firefighters, state troopers, EMS personnel, corrections officers, civilian staff and their families. Public Safety EAP is one of the most experienced in the country and nearly 95% of those who use the EAP are satisfied with the experience. You protect the public, but where can you turn for support? Contact SDAO to learn more about this program and how it can help employees at your district. Call us at 1-800-285-5465 or email us at sdtao@sdtao.com

SDAO

Notably, during the 2020 wildfire season, the EAP delivered thousands of phone and in-person counseling sessions to emergency responders and their families. Recognizing the critical role of public safety responders and importance of support to them, SDIS has generously made this program available to all cities and fire districts in Oregon, including those for which it does not provide workers' compensation coverage.

"These past few years have been exceptionally challenging in Oregon with wildfires, COVID, and legislative changes that could have had a big impact on the pool," said Andrea Klaas, SDIS Trust Chair. "The EAP is an example of how being proactive, and working with our membership, SDIS was able to establish a program that has far-reaching benefits for our emergency responder members and others throughout Oregon."

In addition, Frank Stratton, SDAO Executive Director, has been given the prestigious Award for Excellence in Leadership for his work with Oregon's special districts and in pooling. AGRiP's Award for Excellence in Leadership is given to an outstanding leader and/or mentor in the public entity pooling community who has made strong contributions to the industry and inspires others.



In his 30-year career with SDAO and SDIS, Frank has played an integral role in developing coverages and risk solutions for public sector special districts and schools in Oregon. AGRiP's award recognizes not only his contributions to the public sector and risk pooling, but also his commitment to mentoring newcomers in order to foster a public sector service mindset.

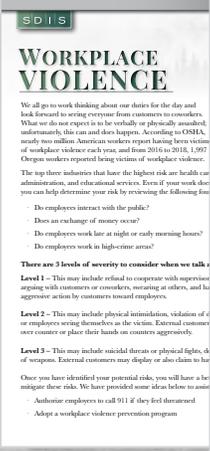
"These two awards highlight the very best of public sector risk pooling and leadership, and it's no surprise that SDIS and Frank Stratton have been selected," said Jon Shull, AGRiP Board President. "Public Safety EAP is a model for our community and is a credit to Frank's career of pool leadership."

Congratulations to the SDIS pool and Frank Stratton!

# Quick Reference Guides

When you need to quickly brush up on various topics related to operating your district, be sure to check out our quick reference guides (QRGs). These handy documents cover subjects ranging from Oregon OSHA inspections to virtual meeting etiquette to catalytic converter theft. Our latest guide, which covers services currently available through SDIS, reviews different options available to your district during these times of remote work.

We are continually adding more reference documents to our QRG library. Be sure to check out the QRG selection on our website at [www.sdao.com/quick-reference-guides](http://www.sdao.com/quick-reference-guides).



**WORKPLACE VIOLENCE**

We all go to work thinking about our duties for the day and look forward to seeing everyone from customers to coworkers. What we do not expect is to be verbally or physically assaulted, unfortunately, this can and does happen. According to OSHA, nearly two million American workers report having been victims of workplace violence each year, and from 2014 to 2018, 1,997 Oregon workers reported being victims of workplace violence. The top three industries that have the highest risk are health care administration, and educational services. Even if your work does not you can help determine your risk by reviewing the following list:

- Do employees interact with the public?
- Does an exchange of money occur?
- Do employees work late at night or early morning hours?
- Do employees work in high-stress areas?

There are 3 levels of severity to consider when we talk about workplace violence:

**Level 1** - This may include refusal to cooperate with supervisor, arguing with customers or coworkers, reacting at others, and being aggressive action by customers toward employees.

**Level 2** - This may include physical intimidation, violation of no employees writing themselves as the victim. External customer over customer or place their hands on customer aggressively.

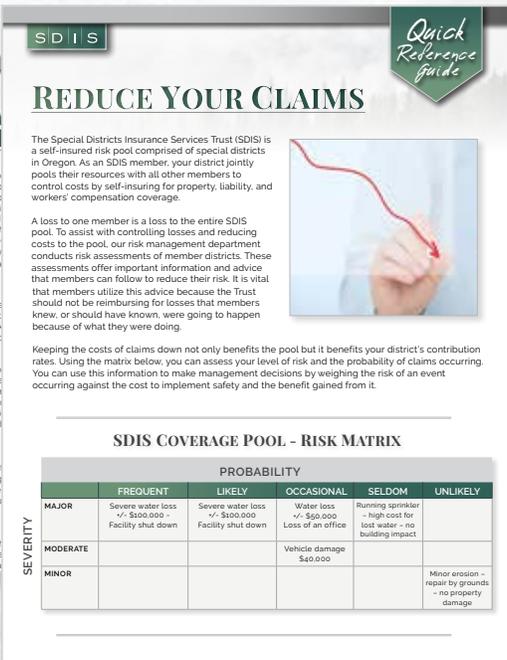
**Level 3** - This may include suicidal threats or physical fights, display of weapons. External customers may display or also claim to be violent.

Other you have identified your potential risks, you will have a better understanding of these risks. We have provided some ideas below to assist you in mitigating these risks:

- Authorize employees to call 911 if they feel threatened
- Adopt a workplace violence prevention program

**Projects**

This is the one that has personally helped me to pass it to Pinterest, which gives her great ideas for home improvement says "I want you to make this". Projects can be as easy as



**REDUCE YOUR CLAIMS**

The Special Districts Insurance Services Trust (SDIS) is a self-insured risk pool comprised of special districts in Oregon. As an SDIS member, your district jointly pools their resources with all other members to control costs by self-insuring for property, liability, and workers' compensation coverage.

A loss to one member is a loss to the entire SDIS pool. To assist with controlling losses and reducing costs to the pool, our risk management department conducts risk assessments of member districts. These assessments offer important information and advice that members can follow to reduce their risk. It is vital that members utilize this advice because the Trust should not be reimbursing for losses that members knew, or should have known, were going to happen because of what they were doing.

Keeping the costs of claims down not only benefits the pool but it benefits your district's contribution rates. Using the matrix below, you can assess your level of risk and the probability of claims occurring. You can use this information to make management decisions by weighing the risk of an event occurring against the cost to implement safety and the benefit gained from it.

		SDIS COVERAGE POOL - RISK MATRIX				
		PROBABILITY				
		FREQUENT	LIKELY	OCCASIONAL	SELDOM	UNLIKELY
SEVERITY	MAJOR	Severe water loss ~\$100,000 Facility shut down	Severe water loss ~\$100,000 Facility shut down	Water loss ~\$50,000 Loss of an office	Running sprinkler - high cost for lost water - no building impact	
	MODERATE			Vehicle damage \$40,000		
	MINOR					Minor erosion - repair by grounds - no property damage



**STING KITS**

stung by a bee or a wasp? or a spider bite? They can be most of them itch like crazy often, but being prepared

Have a first aid kit readily available. Regularly check the items inside the kit for expiration dates and replace as needed. Check the first aid kits as part of your regular inspections.

Ensure that employees are the only people that can access the kit. Only employees administering medication to themselves. An employee should not administer medication to another employee without the medical training and authorization of a medical professional.

**What to do if you are stung:**

1. Wash the area with soap and water.

2. Apply a cold compress to reduce swelling.

3. Take an over-the-counter antihistamine to reduce itching.

4. If you experience severe symptoms, seek medical attention.

# Can We Require COVID-19 Vaccination?

By: HR Answers

As more vaccines have become available, we continue to get good questions about requiring employee vaccines. As with most things related to COVID-19 and people there is no absolute answer on this topic. Generally, the answer is yes, however, there are exceptions. There are several considerations we encourage you to think about in deciding if you will require vaccination.

Making vaccination a requirement ultimately means your organization is willing to terminate an employee for not meeting this new condition of employment. This is question #1 for every organization considering the requirement path. If the answer to question #1 is yes, please don't forget the following exceptions which will apply if you implement a recruitment policy.

## Can your employees get a vaccination?

The good folks at Littler Mendelson P.C. have just published the most comprehensive list we have seen of links to state agency websites, vaccine allocation plans, and other guidance related to the rollout of COVID-19 vaccines, as well as basic vaccination plan phases. [www.littler.com/publication-press/publication/giving-it-our-best-shot-statewide-vaccination-plans](http://www.littler.com/publication-press/publication/giving-it-our-best-shot-statewide-vaccination-plans)

## Are any of your employees exempt by law or contract?

Exempt workers typically include people licensed or certified to provide health care, employees of a health care facility, a licensed health care provider or a clinical laboratory, firefighters, law enforcement officers, corrections officers, or parole and probation officers. Also, if you have a collective bargaining agreement that speak to vaccination, even if COVID-19 was not a consideration at the time the



language was developed, you will need to follow that agreement. Less common and still applicable would be any employment contracts which could present similar challenges.

## Does your employee have a disability requiring accommodation under the ADA?

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) has put together Technical Assistance Q & A on this very in-depth area of consideration. [www.eecc.gov/wysk/what-you-should-know-about-covid-19-and-ada-rehabilitation-act-and-other-eeo-laws](http://www.eecc.gov/wysk/what-you-should-know-about-covid-19-and-ada-rehabilitation-act-and-other-eeo-laws)

If you make the vaccination a requirement you will need to document the recruitment, communication with employees and, above all else, keep the lines of communication open for further discussion of individual needs. Also, don't forget this would likely be paid time.

We believe it is appropriate for organizations to encourage vaccination, rather than require, for the health and safety of each employee and their co-workers. This encouragement could include identification of availability timelines and locations, which is one of the greatest concerns shared by those wanting vaccination. You may even want to provide use of PTO or other paid leave provisions to receive the vaccine. However, be careful of other incentives as that may conflict with Pay Equity laws in some states, like Oregon.

# Spring Clean Your Insurance

By: Jaime Keeling, Underwriter

The phrase "spring cleaning" usually brings to mind physical cleaning tasks, such as organizing the garage, packing away winter clothes, and tackling outdoor jobs. But there is more to clean than just your home. Your insurance coverage can also use a good spring cleaning as winter draws to a close.

Now is a great time to reach out to your insurance agent of record and do a quick check-in. Touch base and let them know if you have any upcoming changes on the horizon - possibly a construction project, a new employee or volunteer to report, or if you missed touching base at the January property casualty/general liability renewal, now would be a good time to review your schedule of values and make sure everything is current and up-to-date.



SDIS renews workers' compensation policies on July 1<sup>st</sup>. Very soon we will be posting the update packets for the renewal. This is where we are looking for updates to your payroll, assumed wages and any other changes to your workers' compensation policy. While working through COVID-19, there may have been many changes in the workplace, possible layoffs or changes in positions that need to be reported.

During this time of spring cleaning, you will also receive our annual request for updated contact and budget information, or the ever-popular LB-1 form. You may not realize how important it is that we have your current budget information on file. We need accurate (and consistently submitted) budget information because we use these figures to rate your general liability insurance. Over time, we have discovered that many members have not submitted updated budget information in several years. This is very challenging for our underwriters when we are updating and pricing your accounts. When we have inconsistently updated financial numbers and then receive a current budget, your rates can increase/decrease very drastically!

Don't just let your insurance policy renew without taking a look at your current coverages. Talk to your agent about any changes you may have made to the premises. Discuss risk management and ensure you are taking all of the steps to protect your district. Your insurance deserves sprucing up, just like your home. With the right due diligence about your insurance policies, it is possible to improve coverage, save money, and keep yourself protected. Speak to your agent to start spring cleaning your coverages today.





# Good News for Recreational Immunity

By Jens Jensen, PC Claims Manager



We have good news to share for members that open their land to recreation. A case known as *McCormick v. State Parks and Recreation Department* has been making its way through the court system for many years now. The event that started the litigation happened back in 2012 when the plaintiff sustained severe injuries after jumping off a dock at Lake Billy Chinook. Suit was filed in 2014 against the State for damages and the State moved to have the case dismissed under the premise of recreational immunity. The court granted the dismissal and plaintiff appealed to the Court of Appeals. The Court of Appeals reversed the State Court decision and the State appealed to the Oregon Supreme Court. The Oregon Supreme Court affirmed the State Court's decision and affirmed the concept of recreational immunity. The case is remanded back to the Court of Appeals currently. The final disposition of the case may not come out for a while, but we do believe this will be the end of the matter.

What does this mean? As things currently stand, property owners who open their land up to the public for recreation will be reasonably immune from liability for injuries that occur during the recreation. However, this will not stop a person injured on your property from filing a suit. We often say bad facts make bad case law, and eventually, the right case will come along to challenge recreational immunity again. Here are some things you can do to help avoid injuries and litigation before they happen:

## **1. Keep sidewalks and parking lots free of hazards.**

Inspect your parking lots and sidewalks frequently making repairs to identified hazards as soon as

possible. If you don't have the funds immediately for a large repair, devise a plan for funding and repair and follow the plan. Board ratification of the plan will also assist in the defense should a claim be brought while implementing the plan.

## **2. Document your inspections.**

This can include written checklists and photos if possible. Taking a photo of an area showing no hazards can also be valuable. This can help establish a baseline that an alleged hazard didn't exist at a certain time.

## **3. Help avoid trip and fall accidents.**

If you have chains or wire across bollards or fence posts, cordon off areas by placing flags on the wire to make it visible. These wires and chains can be difficult to see as dusk approaches. We see several claims a year from trips over chains and wire.

Spring is here and with brighter days, the public is going to be looking to recreate more. Fortunately, recreational immunity will help owners of land feel confident in allowing recreation, and a few preventative measures will help ensure recreational immunity will be there to fall back on if an injury does happen.



# Partnering With You to Get Your Injured Employees **BACK TO WORK**

*By: Dustin Karstetter, RTW Consultant*

When employees are injured, it is the goal of SDAO and our members to get them back to work, and to do so as early as reasonably possible. Our return-to-work (RTW) program helps us meet this goal while partnering on nearly 200 workers' compensation claims each year.

Our key functions include working alongside adjusters to track the recovery process of injured workers and aiding employers in facilitating early RTW opportunities for them. We are also involved with educating districts on the RTW process and corresponding benefits available through equipment purchases and wage subsidy reimbursements for their injured workers.

Ergonomic chairs and/or desks, laptops or tablets, mapping software, golf carts or ATVs, drones, exoskeletons, and various other tools can all assist with the RTW process. SDIS can assist with these purchases, helping bring injured employees back to work quicker and thus reducing claim costs and burdens on our districts, in addition to the reduced likelihood of future claims. In the last three years, our work with districts in this area has resulted in the purchase of over \$300,000 in equipment for injured workers to make use of during their recovery.

In the last year, the return of employees to the workplace has also resulted in \$161,000 being returned to our districts through wage subsidy reimbursements. This benefit is realized through districts providing a transitional duty job that accommodates an employee's work restrictions prior to their regular duty release during a claim. This is on top of the intangible benefits of reducing the time needed for workers to fully recover from

their injuries and improving workplace morale. The wage subsidy process has also been brought in-house, meaning we oversee the entire process, eliminating the need for third-party contacts.

Even amid our navigating the COVID-19 pandemic and the many changes this has caused to the way our district's conduct business, including how individual employees are able to perform their duties, we are still finding ways to help districts get their injured employees back to work and realize significant cost savings and benefits while doing so. As the health crisis makes employers re-imagine their business models, this also opens new RTW opportunities. As working from home becomes more commonplace, this opens more doors for transitional duties and corresponding wage subsidy and equipment benefits.

As we continue further into 2021 and our new business norms, SDAO is poised to partner on countless new claims, provide hundreds of thousands more dollars in benefits to our districts, and visit with several more of our members, virtually or on-site. We are also focused on helping districts become self-sufficient in their approach to RTW opportunities through the creation or updating of written RTW policies for each district who has workers' compensation coverage through SDIS.

If you feel your district would benefit from an introductory conversation about our RTW program and benefits, could use assistance in creating transitional duty jobs for your injured employees, or would like to discuss initiating/modifying an RTW policy for your entity, please don't hesitate to call me at 800-305-1736 and ask for Dustin.





# CYBER THREATS

## Coming ~~Have~~ **Have Arrived** to a Community Near You

*By: Scott Neufeld, Director of Risk and Claims Management*

Is your district at an increased risk of becoming the next cyberattack headline? Or has your district taken steps to prevent such events from happening? In the past several months, there has been a rise in the number of public entities falling victim to cyberattacks. **For example, here are some recent national headlines:**

- "Florida water system hack"
- "Louisiana government declares state of emergency after cyber-attack"
- "22 Texas towns hit with ransomware attack"
- "Hackers holding Baltimore hostage"
- "Florida city agrees to pay hackers \$600,000"
- "Mississippi city operations disrupted by ransomware"

This is not just an issue in other states, but right here in Oregon. ***You may have seen the following local stories:***

- "Cyberattacks hit Tillamook County"
- "Keizer, OR pays \$48,000 to hackers"
- "Cyberattack halts training for thousands of Oregon state employees"

Cybersecurity is at the forefront of our risk management concerns which is why we have selected this as the focus for the 2021 Best Practices Program. We want to help protect your district from a potential shutdown and having to pay enormous amounts of money to get your systems back up and operational. Knowing the vast technological diversity

of our members, we tried to find common ground in both educational opportunities, as well as resources to meet district needs.

Earlier this year, we teamed up with Eide Bailly to provide no-cost cybersecurity training and resources to members. The goal of this partnership is to help educate SDIS members on the principles and practices of cybersecurity and risk mitigation. All SDIS members have access to a cybersecurity guidebook, cybersecurity virtual webinars on varying cybersecurity topics and best practices, training sessions on cyber-related topics and access to cybersecurity resources.

The cybersecurity guidebook is now available on the SDAO website at [www.sdao.com/cybersecurity-resources](http://www.sdao.com/cybersecurity-resources) and includes an overview of cybersecurity essentials with a series of basic best practices. If you decide that you would like to dive deeper into your district's cybersecurity program, there are more technical items that can be reviewed.

The webinars will focus on educating members on cybersecurity and best practices for mitigating cyber risk. Eide Bailly conducted the first session at the SDAO Annual Conference in February where they introduced the cybersecurity guidebook. The next series of webinars will take place in April, June, August, and October. Topics will include cybersecurity essentials, securing remote workers,

working with IT managed service providers, responding to incidents, tailoring the cybersecurity guidebook to meet your organizational needs, and implementing an acceptable use policy. The best part about these webinars is they will be live and allow for attendees to ask questions of the Eide Bailly team.

The three cybersecurity awareness trainings will focus on every-day cybersecurity issues and best practices that you can use at your district or at home. Examples of topics that will be discussed include account management, home configurations, scams/phishing, and browser warnings. These trainings will take place in May, July, and September.

The last piece of our partnership is access to Eide Bailly's professional cybersecurity team. Eide Bailly will provide members with access to their cybersecurity experts where they can discuss their questions and concerns and consult on ways to improve their security processes.

We know we cannot stop all exposures to cyber threats but doing some very basic things to help protect your infrastructure can go a long way!

If you have questions or would like to get in touch with Eide Bailly, please contact Jaime Keeling at [jkeeling@sdao.com](mailto:jkeeling@sdao.com).

## Cybersecurity Webinars and Trainings

**April 13** | 10:30am - noon | Incident Response Preparedness

**May 18** | 11am - 11:50am | General Security Awareness Training

**June 15** | 10:30am - noon | Working with Technology Service Providers

**July 20** | 11am - 11:50am | General Security Awareness Training

**August 24** | 10:30am - noon | Implementing Policies for Cybersecurity & Acceptable Use

**September 21** | 11am - 11:50am | General Security Awareness Training

**October 19** | 10:30am - noon | Data Management & Security

For more information and to register, visit [www.sdao.com/cybersecurity-resources](http://www.sdao.com/cybersecurity-resources).



## COVID-19 vaccinations: What you need to know

Medical evidence shows that getting a COVID-19 vaccination can help keep you, your family, your community, and your country healthy and safe. Since the prioritization and distribution of vaccine doses varies by state and local communities, your best source of current information is your local or state health department. By getting vaccinated when you're eligible, you can act to help end the damage to the economy, prevent more illnesses and deaths in America, and eliminate and eradicate COVID-19.

### Where to get vaccinated

The federal government is sending vaccine doses to states for distribution and has provided general guidance on priority populations to receive the vaccine. States make the final decision on prioritization. Distribution will continue in phases through the spring and into summer. Check with your local or state health department for when you might be eligible and where you can get vaccinated.

### About getting vaccinated

It's worth noting, you can't get COVID-19 from the vaccine.

Some COVID-19 vaccinations require two shots. Most providers are scheduling the

second vaccination while administering the first and are providing a reminder card to the patient.

The majority of people will experience no side effects other than a sore arm. About 10% may have flu-like symptoms for a couple of days as the body develops antibodies. Some people have reported more severe side effects after the second shot. This is normal and generally not cause for alarm. A small number of people have had a very serious reaction that is treatable.

Currently anyone receiving a vaccine is asked to stick around for a 15- to 30-minute observation period just to be safe.

It takes a few weeks for your body to build up immunity after vaccination, so keep wearing a

mask when you're away from home, avoid crowded spaces, wash hands regularly and keep your distance from others outside your home. In fact, it's best to keep up with these safety protocols until the majority in your community has been vaccinated. It is not yet known if you can transmit the virus after vaccination.

It won't cost you anything to get vaccinated. The federal government is buying enough vaccine doses to immunize every American. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services or private insurance pays for administration.

### Who should get vaccinated

Vaccination is recommended for all adults unless they have a health condition that makes it unsafe to receive the vaccine. If in doubt, contact your doctor.

In addition, if you have allergies, are pregnant or nursing, or are immunocompromised, you should talk with your doctor before getting vaccinated to make sure the proper safety protocols are in place.

As of February 2021, there is no vaccine approved for children under age 16.

### You should get vaccinated even if you've had COVID-19

If it's been more than 90 days since you've had COVID-19, vaccination is recommended. We don't know how long immunity lasts.

### Vaccine safety

Vaccines teach our bodies to fight the virus by creating antibodies.

Vaccines undergo rigorous clinical trials to prove safety and effectiveness before they receive permission from the Food and Drug

Administration (FDA) for broad distribution. Clinical trials involve tens of thousands of people who volunteer to receive the vaccine. The FDA grants emergency use authorization only if independent analysis confirms the vaccines are safe and effective.

The Pfizer and Moderna vaccines have an effectiveness rate of more than 95%. While these vaccines are new, the technology behind them has been studied for years.

The vaccine does not contain the virus or inactivated virus. You cannot get COVID-19 from the COVID-19 vaccine.

### Vaccines in development

Many vaccines have been developed by scientists around the world and are undergoing testing and status changes all the time. For the most up-to-date information, visit the [New York Times vaccine tracker](#) online or the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#).

### How to know if information can be trusted

False claims about the COVID-19 vaccine have spread rapidly across social media, so check your information sources. You can't go wrong with your state or local health department, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention or the FDA.

### Staying safe is a team sport

Even after your vaccination, keep wearing a mask, avoiding crowded spaces, washing hands, and physical distancing. We want to keep everyone in our community safe until we get through this. And then we can reopen our communities and get back to a normal social lifestyle that we all enjoy.



**GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS**

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Email: [underwriting@sdao.com](mailto:underwriting@sdao.com)

Fax: 503-371-4781

**REPORT AN SDIS WC CLAIM**

Toll-Free: 800-305-1736

Email: [wc@sdao.com](mailto:wc@sdao.com)

Fax: 503-620-6217

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*Administrators for SDIS*

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**MEMBER SERVICES**

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**RISK MANAGEMENT**

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Email: [riskmanagement@sdao.com](mailto:riskmanagement@sdao.com)

Fax: 503-371-4781

**REPORT AN SDIS P/C CLAIM**

Toll-Free: 800-305-1736

Email: [claims@sdao.com](mailto:claims@sdao.com)

Fax: 503-620-9817

## MEMBER CALENDAR

April 1	SDAO First Thursday Webinar: Roof and Building Envelope Repair and Maintenance
April 7	SDIS Board of Trustees Meeting
April 8	SDAO Board of Directors Meeting
April 13	Cybersecurity Webinar: Incident Response Preparedness
April 21	SDAO Regional Risk Management Training <i>(Virtual)</i>
May 18	Cybersecurity Webinar: General Security Awareness
June 2	SDIS Board of Trustees Meeting
June 10	SDAO Board of Directors Meeting
June 15	Cybersecurity Webinar: Working with Technology Service Providers
June 16	Regional Risk Management Training – Pendleton <i>(Tentative)</i>