# News & Risk Management Review

**SPRING 2024** 



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#### **SDAO Board of Directors**

#### President

Todd Heidgerken, Clackamas River Water

#### **Vice President**

Ben Stange, Polk County Fire District #1

#### Secretary

Emily Robertson, Multnomah County Drainage District #1

#### Treasurer

Kathy Kleczek, Union Health District

#### Past-President

Michele Bradley, Port of Tillamook Bay

#### **Board Members**

Nick Bakke, Rogue Valley Sewer Services
Adam Denlinger, Seal Rock Water District
Jennifer Holland, Sisters Park & Recreation District
Paula Miranda, Port of Newport
Meg Spencer, Siuslaw Public Library District
Scott Stanton, Umatilla County Fire District #1
Brent Stevenson, Santiam Water Control District

#### **Next Board of Directors Meeting**

April 4th | 9am | Joint Work Session with SDIS
Board of Trustees | Timberline Lodge
April 4th | 1pm | Board Meeting | Timberline Lodge
June 13th | 10am | Board Meeting | Salem

#### **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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By Frank Stratton, Executive Director



The 2024 SDAO Annual Conference was a great success! Thank you to everyone who joined us in Seaside. We had over 725 people in attendance from special districts, insurance agencies, vendors, and more.

Our pre-conference day was one of the busiest we have seen. We had over 200 people attend one or more of the four sessions offered on Thursday. The following day, we kicked off the conference with keynote speaker Betsy Allen-Manning who enlightened us on diverse personality traits and effective collaboration.

The Exhibitor Trade Show featured 28 vendors. It was wonderful to hear about the various products and services available to our members.

During the Annual Business Meeting on Saturday, we received updates from our board president, trust chair, caucus chairs, and the SDAO Chief Financial Officer. Additionally, the membership voted on updated bylaws and the seats up for election on the SDAO Board of Directors. The following individuals were selected for the 2024-2026 term:

#### **AT-LARGE**

Michele Bradley, Port of Tillamook Bay Meg Spencer, Siuslaw Public Library District Scott Stanton, Umatilla County Fire District #1

#### FIRE

Ben Stange, Polk County Fire District #1

#### **IRRIGATION**

Brent Stevenson, Santiam Water Control District

#### **SANITARY**

Nick Bakke, Rogue Valley Sewer Services

#### **WATER**

Adam Denlinger, Seal Rock Water District



Saturday evening, we celebrated the achievements of two special districts and four individuals at the annual awards banquet. Each story was truly inspiring, showcasing the incredible impact our members make within their communities.

Following the banquet, we were treated to a performance by illusionist Scott Anderson, who wove magic and comedy into the night.

The conference concluded on Sunday with breakfast and door prize giveaways donated by our wonderful members.

We appreciate your unwavering commitment to your community. We hope to see you at the 2025 conference from February 6-9 in Bend!



# CALL TO ACTION: SPECIAL DISTRICT GRANT ACCESSIBILITY ACT (H.R. 7525)

In March, the Special District Grant Accessibility Act was approved by the Federal House Oversight and Accountability Committee on a 38-2 vote. This is a bill the National Special Districts Coalition (NSDC) has been working on for several years. SDAO is a founding member of NSDC. Committee staff has indicated that it's unclear when House leadership will schedule the special district bill for a floor vote. If passed, this bill would establish a formal definition of "special district" in federal law, as well as require the Office of Management and Budget to issue guidance to federal agencies requiring special districts to be recognized as local governments for the purpose of federal financial assistance determinations.

#### **CONTACT YOUR U.S. HOUSE REPRESENTATIVE**

We need your help! Despite the prevalence of special districts throughout the United States, federal law lacks a consistent definition of special purpose units of local government. Please reach out to your U.S. House Representative asking them to support H.R. 7525 to prioritize its passage.

We have put together a template letter for you to use as well as a one-page handout that you are encouraged to include with your message. Please visit **https://www.sdao.com/template-for-letter-regarding-hb-7525** to download.

Unsure of who your representative is or their contact information? Please visit the house.gov website at <a href="https://www.house.gov/representatives/find-your-representative">https://www.house.gov/representatives/find-your-representative</a>.

#### JOIN THE SDAO LETTER

We also invite you to support the letter from SDAO. Please visit **https://cvent.me/ekzZGP** to add your district's name to the letter.

This issue affects all special districts nationwide. We greatly appreciate your help with making sure our congressional delegation understands the importance of this bill.





# SDAO INTERNSHIP GRANT PROGRAM Peadline Tast Paproaching

The deadline to submit an application for a matching grant through the SDAO Internship Grant Program is Friday, April 19, 2024 at 5pm.

This program is available to SDAO members to assist 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, but to help with project needs.

For more information and an application, please visit:

www.sdao.com/internship-grant-program.



**Application Deadline:** 5pm on Friday, April 19, 2024

## ACADEMY

CERTIFICATE RECIPIENTS

#### **BOARD LEADERSHIP ACADEMY**

Daniel Hammel
Northern Wasco County PUD







#### FIRE DISTRICT DIRECTORS ACADEMY



Brad King

Junction City RFPD



Debra Garner
Aurora RFPD

#### SDAO MEMBER SCHOLARSHIP GOLF TOURNAMENT

Friday, September 13th at the Chehalem Glenn Golf Course in Newberg

We will open registration on July 1st.



Each year, the SDAO Awards Program recognizes member districts for their remarkable accomplishments, enabling them to enhance their service to the public. Additionally, the program acknowledges individuals who have significantly contributed to their district's success. The following award winners were selected by the SDAO Awards Committee and honored at the 2024 SDAO Annual Conference on Saturday, February 10th. You can watch videos featuring each award winner on our website at www.sdao.com/sdao-awards-program.

## **OUTSTANDING SPECIAL DISTRICT PROGRAM AWARD: 5 OR FEWER EMPLOYEES** *Elgin Health District*

Working against the odds, Elgin Health District raised over \$2.7 million to build an 8,000 square foot rural health clinic for residents of Elgin and the surrounding area. Through leases with Grande Ronde Hospital and a private dentist, they were able to offer expanded medical and dental services. Additionally, they added behavioral health and physical therapy services and will be adding a pharmacy kiosk which will allow patrons to pick up their prescriptions in town instead of 40 miles away.

#### **OUTSTANDING SPECIAL DISTRICT PROGRAM AWARD: 6-25 EMPLOYEES**

Clackamas Soil & Water Conservation District

In response to the impacts of the state's changing climate, Clackamas SWCD has created an integrated and multifaceted programmatic approach to help local landowners protect and restore their properties by adapting and enhancing district programs to better address this emerging conservation issue. In their Climate Change and Wildfire Program, the district serves as a provider, convener, and partner to assist those who have already experienced the hardship of climate change and help prepare their residents for future catastrophes and a changing environment.

#### **OUTSTANDING SPECIAL DISTRICT SERVICE AWARD: BOARD MEMBER**

Michael Fox, Port of Hood River

Michael Fox has worked tirelessly and very effectively to accelerate the region's top priority of replacing the Hood River-White Salmon Interstate Bridge. Michael's generous sharing of his engineering and major large construction project management experience has influenced the project and the port in tremendous ways. He has led the successful effort to stand up a new local government, the Hood River White Salmon Bridge Authority, secured millions of dollars in funding from state legislatures, supported federal grant application and advocacy efforts in Washington, D.C., and is helping to develop the RFP for a design build process to deliver the new bridge.

#### **OUTSTANDING SPECIAL DISTRICT SERVICE AWARD: MANAGER**

Brian Moore, Bay Area Hospital District

As CEO, Brian Moore has led his district with focused and effective leadership while maintaining a commitment to their mission and vision. He continually strives to maintain an organizational tone which has attracted, developed, and retained a motivated management team. Brian effectively models behavior which helps to earn and maintain the respect of staff, volunteers, and the board. Additionally, he fosters relationships with community partners as he is keenly aware that they are essential for the hospital's success.

#### **OUTSTANDING SPECIAL DISTRICT SERVICE AWARD: EMPLOYEE**

Kris Schaedel, Hood River Soil & Water Conservation District

Kris Schaedel has led the efforts, in partnership with Oregon State University (OSU) Extension, in facilitating bilingual agricultural focused trainings and educational opportunities for orchardists in Hood River County and the greater Columbia Gorge region. She has pulled together staff from Oregon Department of Agriculture and OSU's Pesticide Safety and Education Program (PSEP) to determine the steps to facilitate an educational program that will prepare students to take the Oregon Private Pesticide Applicators License Exam, proctor the exam locally by having the SWCD become a certified testing center, and provide support to students who don't pass with review of the material and a chance to retake the exam. Kris's work on this is the catalyst for ODA and OSU PSEP to get the pesticide exam prep class in Spanish up and running, fix errors in the Spanish translation of the test and test materials, and obtain higher test taking and passing rates for takers of the Spanish version of the test.

#### **OUTSTANDING SPECIAL DISTRICT SERVICE AWARD: VOLUNTEER**

Ed Horn, Two Rivers North Special Road District

Ed Horn, a dedicated volunteer, has generously contributed over six years of service to the Two Rivers North Special Road District. He actively engages in various tasks including road repair, gravel spreading, and snow removal. Ed's reliability is unmatched, and he consistently steps up to assist whenever needed. He also takes responsibility for maintaining the road district's essential equipment.





Outstanding Special District Program Award: 5 or Fewer Employees

Elgin Health District



Outstanding Special District Program Award: 26 or More Employees

Clackamas Soil & Water Conservation District



Outstanding Special District Service Award: Board Member

Michael Fox, Port of Hood River



Outstanding Special District Service Award: Manager

Brian Moore, Bay Area Hospital District



Outstanding Special District Service Award: Employee

Kris Schaedel, Hood River Soil & Water Conservation District



Outstanding Special District Service Award: Volunteer

Ed Horn, Two Rivers North Special Road District

# SDAO HUMAN RESOURCES REGIONAL TRAINING SERIES

Our team is hitting the road this spring to bring you training focused on important human resources topics. Join us at one of the following locations:

- · May 13 Pendleton | Pendleton Convention Center
- · May 16 Klamath Falls | Shilo Inn
- · May 22 Redmond | Eagle Crest
- · June 3 Roseburg | Roseburg Holiday Inn Express
- · June 4 Newport | Hallmark Resort Newport
- · June 6 Salem | Chemeketa Eola

More information including training details and a registration link will be available in April at www.sdao.com/sdao-human-resources-training-series.

# SDAO RISK MANAGEMENT REGIONAL TRAINING SERIES

#### DATES AND LOCATIONS -

July 23 - Klamath Falls | Basin Transit Service Transport District

July 24 – Bend | Deschutes Library

Oct 22 – Grants Pass | Josephine Community Library

Oct 23 – Bandon | The Barn Bandon Community Center

Dec 10 - Tillamook | Port of Tillamook Bay

Dec 11 - Salem | SDAO

#### WE WILL COVER THESE TOPICS IN DETAIL AND MORE:

- $\cdot\,$  What to Expect from an OR-OSHA Inspection
- Developing a Safety Culture
- · From Idea to Action Launching Your First Tabletop Exercise

TIME: 9am-12pm

#### **REGISTRATION**

\$25 for SDAO members and SDIS agents. Each member district can use code *RMREG24* for one complimentary registration. Discount codes are limited and offered on a first come, first served basis. Visit *https://tinyurl.com/ye28ya4m* to register.



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**.

Name:		
Title/Position:		
District:		
Mailing Address:		
Phone: (w)	(h)	(c)
Fax:	Email:	
Awards Committee		nd submits rankings for the SDAO Awards ernship Grant Program. This is conducted
Conference and Education Committee	Meets two to three times prior to the SDAO Annual Conference to provide recommendations for conference programming.	
Submit your completed form to:		P.O. Box 12613, Salem, OR 97309-0613

Deadline: May 24, 2024

ASSOCIATION OF OREGON

Fax: 503-371-4781

Email: sdao@sdao.com

Thank you for your willingness to serve!



THAT IS ONE GOOD THING ABOUT THIS WORLD... THERE ARE ALWAYS SURE TO BE MORE SPRINGS. --L. M. MONTGOMERY

It is that time of year again when we start talking about all the things that need tending to. Our team of expert consultants collaborates closely with members to understand their individual needs to provide exceptional, effective, strategic, and compliant best practices for their district.

#### **BASIC PLANNING NEEDS**

Consultants are available to assist districts with a wide range of planning projects. This service is focused on facilitating and outlining basic goals, objectives, and actions to assist the district with preparing for a preferred future or address management/operational issues. Implementation details and evaluating performance measures are generally left for the district to complete. Consultants can assist districts with developing strategic, business, capital equipment, training, and succession plans.

#### LEADERSHIP TRANSITION

Every district experiences leadership changes. Being prepared for that change, be it sudden or planned, will impact the short and long-term future of the district. We have developed a guide to assist with planning for and implementing a process that will ultimately lead to a successful transition from one district manager to another. Take advantage of our district manager transition planning checklist.

#### **BOARD PRACTICES AND ORGANIZATIONAL ASSESSMENTS**

Don't forget to schedule a board practices assessment (BPA) and/or organizational assessment this year. These two services are typically very popular, and the calendar fills up quickly. The BPA is conducted in a 90-minute on-site facilitated meeting with the full board and management/staff personnel who normally participate in board meetings. During the BPA, participants evaluate the board's effectiveness in key performance areas, identifying strengths and weaknesses in governance practices. Within a week after the meeting, the board receives a written summary of their self-assessment, along with a document outlining the consultant's impressions and recommendations.

The organizational assessment is an evaluation that will provide a baseline assessment of the current conditions and services of the organization. SDAO will conduct an organizational analysis of the district based on specific elements, stakeholder input, organization overview, management component, financial controls, and more. The purpose of this evaluation is to assess the agency's operations and make recommendations on future improvements.

#### FREE CONSULTING SERVICES

Members in the general liability program are eligible for up to eight hours of free consulting services each year provided by one of our experienced consultants. After the eight hours of complimentary service are exhausted, members will have the option of continuing consulting services at a reduced hourly rate. Members that are not in the general liability program can access the program at the reduced hourly rate, however, are not eligible for the free eight hours of consulting services.

#### **NEW CONSULTANTS**

We added two amazing consultants to the team this year. Please meet MaryKay Dahlgreen and Fred Charlton.



I began my library career 46 years ago at the Fairbanks-North Star Borough Library. I have worked in rural and urban libraries and spent 22 years of my career at the State Library of Oregon. I recently retired from the Lincoln County Library District where I spent five years as executive director.

My work has included children's services, adult services, consulting, strategic planning, training, management, and executive service. I earned my master's in librarianship from the University of Washington and a certificate in public administration from the University of North Dakota.

I have served in various capacities in the Oregon Library Association, Pacific Northwest Library Association, and the American Library Association. I was a member of the Special Districts Association of Oregon Board of Directors from 2020 until my retirement.



I began my career in the Oregon fire service almost 35-years ago as a volunteer firefighter with the Forest Grove Fire Department in 1989. In 1994, I was hired as a career firefighter with the City of Milwaukie, Oregon and in 1997, the Milwaukie Fire Department annexed into Clackamas Fire District #1 (Clackamas Fire). I spent the remaining 24-years at Clackamas Fire and promoted through the ranks and became Fire Chief in 2012. In 2021, I was able to "retire" from Clackamas Fire and I currently work as the Division Chief of Training for Hillsboro Fire & Rescue in Hillsboro, Oregon.

I hold an associate degree in fire science technology from Portland Community College, a bachelor's degree in fire service administration from Eastern Oregon University, a master's degree in public

administration through Portland State University, I am designated as a Chief Fire Officer (CFOD) through the Center for Public Safety Excellence and hold numerous other professional certifications.

Professional contributions and community service includes past president of the Oregon Fire Chief's Association, past chair of the North Clackamas County Chamber of Commerce, involvement in the Clackamas and Hillsboro Rotaries, community volunteer, current board director for the NW Fire Diversity Council, and current budget committee member for the Clackamas County Development Agency.

Please visit **www.sdao.com/consulting-services-program** to learn more about the services we provide. We look forward to hearing from you soon!

Cheers to spring!



LEGISLATIVE SESSION IN REVIEW The 82nd Oregon Legislative Assembly held its short session from February 5 to March 7, concluding three days earlier than the constitutional deadline to sine die. During the session, 293 bills, resolutions, and memorials were introduced, with 115 successfully passing both chambers

Each member was permitted to introduce up to two bills and each committee was permitted to introduce up to three. Due to the very tight timelines to get bills through committees, those that were not worked long in advance of the convening of the assembly often struggled. For example, bills had to be posted for a work session within seven days of the opening day to remain alive. Furthermore, ongoing construction on the Capitol frequently interrupted committee meetings and floor sessions adding further urgency to meet those deadlines.

A few days before the session began, the Oregon Supreme Court ruled that the nine Republican Senators and one Independent Senator – a third of the Senate – were ineligible to run for reelection, thereby upholding Ballot Measure 113 approved by the voters in 2022. Senate Minority Leader Tim Knopp, R-Bend, warned that the ruling would mean majority Democrats would have to incentivize Republicans to attend sessions.

#### **GOVERNOR KOTEK'S PRIORITIES**

Governor Kotek emphasized several priorities for the short session:

- Housing Production Proposal: After narrowly missing passage during the 2023 long session (by one vote in the Senate), the Governor aimed to secure approval for her housing production plan.
- Reforming Ballot Measure 110: Governor Kotek expressed openness to revisiting the measure that decriminalized possession of small amounts of hard drugs.
- · Additional Funding: Recommendations for increased funding for mental health, addiction services, education support, and childcare.
- · Accountability: The Governor sought to hold state agencies accountable.

#### LEGISLATIVE LEADERSHIP PRIORITIES

Meanwhile, legislative leadership entered the session with similar priorities:

- · Housing Production and Infrastructure
- · Homeless Crisis
- · Increase Access to Addiction Treatment and Behavioral Health Support
- · Improve Community Safety

#### LEADERSHIP ROLES

Speaker Dan Rayfield and Majority Leader Julie Fahey remained in their leadership roles for the majority party in the House; however, Rep. Jeff Helfrich served as the newly elected Minority Leader in that chamber. The leadership in the Senate remained the same from the previous long session with President Rob Wagner, Majority Leader Kate Lieber and Minority Leader Tim Knopp.

#### **SESSION SUMMARY**

Generally speaking, the five-week session marked a departure from previous years. Democrats and Republicans came together to pass major bills, contrasting from the contentious 2023 session when Senate Republicans walked out for six weeks, bringing the Legislature to a standstill.

Significant legislation to address some of the state's most challenging issues, all of which was largely bipartisan, included bills to address housing production, infrastructure, addiction, public safety concerns, and—a surprise nearing the end of session — campaign finance reform.

A robust revenue forecast showed that the state had \$588 million more in General Fund revenue from the previous forecast and more than \$1.21 billion in additional revenue from the close of session forecast. These funds paved the way for making substantial investments in various programs.

As the House concluded its business on the final evening, Julie Fahey, D-Eugene, was elected as its next speaker, as Dan Rayfield, D-Corvallis, stepped down to focus on his campaign for attorney general.

#### **LOOKING AHEAD**

The following Senators will be ineligible to run for their existing offices in 2024: Senator Tim Knopp (Bend), Senator Brian Boquist (Dallas) who is now running for Treasurer, Senator Lynn Findley (Vale) – retiring and not running, Senator Bill Hansell (Athena) – retiring and not running, Senator Dennis Linthicum (Klamath Falls) who is now running for Secretary of State, and Senator Art Robinson (Central Point). Four Senators disqualified from running in 2026 but will serve until the end of 2026: Senator Daniel Bonham (The Dalles), Senator Suzanne Weber (Tillamook), Senator Kim Thatcher (Keizer), and Senator Cedric Hayden (Fall Creek).

March 12th was filing day, and as a result, there will be at least seven new faces in each chamber. Senator Michael Dembrow of Portland is retiring after serving 16 years. Senator Elizabeth Steiner (Portland) and Senator James Manning (Eugene) could finish their four-year terms if they don't succeed in their bids for Treasurer and Secretary of State.

In the House, Democratic Representative Dan Rayfield, D-Corvallis, can't return to the House because he is running for Treasurer. Republican Christine Goodwin (Canyonville) and Democrat Khanh Pham (Portland) are running for open Senate seats. Democrats Maxine Dexter of Portland and Janelle Bynum of Happy Valley are running for U.S. House seats. And two members are retiring, Democrat Paul Holvey of Eugene after 20 years — he defeated a recall attempt last fall — and Republican Brian Stout of Columbia City after just two years serving in the chamber.

Voters will also decide the fate of three referrals from the Legislative Assembly passed during the 2023 session, two constitutional and one statutory:

- Senate Joint Resolution 34 would amend the Oregon Constitution to establish an Independent Public Service Compensation Commission that will be responsible for establishing the salaries of state-wide elected officials, judges at the state and circuit level, and the members of the Legislative Assembly.
- House Joint Resolution 16 would amend the Oregon Constitution to give the House of Representatives the power of impeachment for statewide elected officials of Executive Branch for malfeasance or corrupt conduct in office, willful neglect of statutory or constitutional duty, or other felony or high crimes, and the Senate the power to try any impeachment received from House.

HB 2004 would establish ranked choice voting as the voting method to determine major
political party nomination and elections for the office of President and Vice President of
the United States, United States Senator, Representative in Congress, Governor, Secretary
of State, State Treasurer, and Attorney General and allow local governments including cities,
counties, school districts and special districts to use ranked choice voting as well.

To qualify constitutional measures for the ballot, gatherers will need to collect approximately 160,551 signatures; statutory measures to qualify for the ballot will need 120,413 signatures. The deadline to turn in those signatures will be July 5, 2024. 54 petitions have already been filed, although several have already been withdrawn, and it is hard to predict what petitions will have the financial backing to have a chance to appear before the voters.

Finally, there will be three statewide seats that will be up during the upcoming election cycle – State Treasurer, Secretary of State, and Attorney General.

#### **NOTABLE ACTIONS**

- · Temporarily fixed Oregon's Recreational Immunity Statute under SB 1526
- · Campaign finance reforms placing limits on contributions by individuals and organizations
- \$211 million for a new drug addiction system that recriminalizes small amounts of hard drugs that were decriminalized under Ballot Measure 110
- · Gave Oregonians the right to repair their own electronic equipment
- · Gave cities the option to expand their urban growth boundaries to build housing
- · Housing infrastructure development \$101.4 million
- · Housing Project Revolving Loan Fund \$75 Million
- · Supporting shelters, turnkey sites and navigation centers \$65 Million
- · Homeless prevention services \$41 Million
- \$170 million for subsidized childcare
- \$34.0 million General Fund appropriation, on a one-time basis, for homeless prevention services
- \$30 million for summer learning programs
- · ODOT winter road maintenance \$19 Million
- · Semiconductor workforce development \$10 Million
- Bridge of the Gods Preservation Study \$6 Million



# SPECIAL DISTRICT SOCIALITE SERIES: ELEVATE YOUR DISTRICT'S SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE

#### Hosted by SDAO and Streamline

Ready to amplify your district's voice and build stronger community connections? Join SDAO and Streamline for a three-part social media webinar series! This series will equip your district with the tools to navigate online rumors, target the right audience, and craft engaging content that keeps the community informed and involved. Register today and learn how social media can be a powerful tool for your district!

**PART 1** | Tuesday, May 7, 2024 @ 12pm | Cut through the noise and build trust: Learn how to combat rumors and connect with your community on social media.

**PART 2** | Thursday, May 9, 2024 @ 12pm | Turn theory into action: Master our 6 social media best practices for impactful district engagement.

**PART 3** | Tuesday, May 14, 2024 @ 12pm | Content to captivate your audience: How to create engaging posts that keep your community informed and involved.

## REGISTRATION HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/Y7D4XABB





## Snowpack Expected to Improve Drought Conditions

March 19, 2024 | Bend Source Weekly

As spring slowly approaches in Central Oregon, winter snowpack and precipitation levels can help predict drought conditions in the months ahead. Deschutes Basin Watermaster Jeremy Giffin sees promise, noting that the state of our reservoirs is the best start to the irrigation season in the last six years. As of March 18, the Oregon SNOTEL snow/precipitation update report showed that the Upper Deschutes basin was at 112% of average for the snow water equivalent, which is the water content in the snow, and 111% of average in total precipitation. "Things are definitely looking up," said Giffin. Read more at https://tinyurl.com/r2swsxzy

## **Woodburn Fire initiates Gervais station** work

March 13, 2024 | Woodburn Independent

If you notice some recent activity around Butteville and Jensen roads, less than a minute north of Gervais, it's the preliminary, preconstruction stages of Woodburn Fire District bolstering its firefighting defense.

That fortification effort is one district officials are beyond pleased to have underway, as it fills a vital gap that has been a concern since 2007 when the dilapidated old Gervais fire station was shut down.

The preconstruction activity perking up on the property this month involves drilling a well and creating an access road on site. Construction on the WFD Station No. 23, the Gervais station, is roughly planned to be fully underway by early July with the station serving the district by early 2025. Read more at https://tinyurl.com/48b8jczm

# Duo from HPNW work with local volunteers to preserve Dallas headstones

March 13, 2024 | Polk County Observer

On a cold, misty morning March 5, David Pinyerd and Bernadette Niederer were fighting a winning battle against gravity.

A tall gravestone from 1891 in the Dallas Cemetery had begun to lean dangerously. They set up a tripod around the stone, secured and removed the heavy top portion, then dug around the damp ground to reinforce the base with fresh gravel.

"It's got a 600-pound top half. Marble is 175 pounds per cubic foot. It moves surprisingly fast if you knock it down," Pinyerd explained. "Every year we hear of somebody dying in a cemetery who knocked over a stone or had a stone fall on them." Read more at https://tinyurl.com/2vhpw9p9

# SDA O Special Districts Association of Oregon MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS Verview

Thank you for your membership! Membership with Special Districts Association of Oregon offers a wide variety of benefits. Below we have provided a quick snapshot of available programs and services from both the association and the insurance program.

#### **SDAO BENEFITS**

**LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY** – Our highest priority is representing our members before the Oregon Legislature and various state administrative agencies. We also advocate for districts at the federal level through our partnership with the National Special Districts Coalition.

**AWARDS PROGRAM** – Districts and individuals are recognized each year through our awards program to celebrate their ingenuity, creativity, diversity, and commitment to excellence.

**BOARD EDUCATION PROGRAMS** – Board members of our district members can enroll in the Board Leadership Academy or Fire District Directors Academy at no charge to further their education on rules and regulations, governance, and leadership.

**SDAO ACADEMY** – Special district employees can enroll in this professional development program at no charge. It offers current, in-depth training and educational opportunities in three specialty areas.

**TRAININGS** – Each year, SDAO offers various training programs in response to member input as well as external developments and influences. These trainings are offered throughout the state.

**INTERNSHIP GRANT PROGRAM** – SDAO offers a matching internship grant to members to assist in meeting or improving loss control and best practices at their district. This grant is offered annually each spring in time for recruiting summer interns.

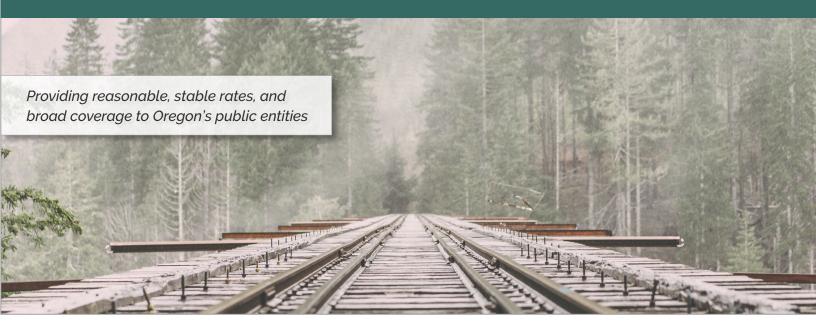
**SCHOLARSHIP AND GRANT FUND** – Active board members or employees of a member district can apply for a scholarship that may be used for any SDAO or SDIS course or approved outside educational opportunity such as affiliate conferences or trainings.

**RESEARCH AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE** – Special districts often come with unique challenges. Our research and technical assistance staff can research and respond to your questions as they arise.

**NETWORKING GROUPS** – We currently offer two networking groups for district staff including the HR Alliance and Finance Alliance.

**ONLINE CLASSIFIEDS** – SDAO members can post their open positions, RFPs, and items for sale on our website at no charge. Our classifieds page is our most frequently visited page on our website!

**INSURANCE PROGRAMS** – As a member of SDAO, your district has access to Special Districts Insurance Services (SDIS) insurance programs including property, liability, medical, and dental coverage.



#### **SDIS Board of Trustees**

Chair: Andrea Klaas. Port of The Dalles

Vice Chair: Darren Bucich, McKenzie Fire & Rescue

Secretary: Dave Lindelien, Lane Transit District

Treasurer: Stacy Maxwell, Jackson County Fire District 3

**Trustees:** Pete Boone, Tualatin Valley Water District

Nicole Dalke, Springfield Utility Board

Mark Hokkanen, Tualatin Hills Park and Recreation

District

Emeritus: Ted Kunze, Molalla RFPD #73

#### **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 Meeting**

April 3 | 1pm | Timberline Lodge

June 5 | 10am | Tigard

# SDIS It's Not / Just Insurance

When the word insurance is heard most people think of claims, must-haves, premiums... Now imagine if when you heard the word insurance you thought helpful, customer oriented, resources. We want you to feel like SDIS is more than just insurance. Our goal is to provide you with a helpful, customer-oriented and friendly one-stop shopping experience.

SDIS members are all part of a self-insured pool. This means the members of the pool are the owners to whom the assets or equity belong. The fundamental purpose of the pool is to protect program participants against unexpected and catastrophic losses. Benefits to being a part of the pool include lower rates, trainings, walkthroughs of your facilities, pre-loss legal services, education, and a local claims office to assist you in the event of a loss. Being part of a pool also means everyone has a responsibility to being proactive in mitigating their losses. When we do this well, the pool stays strong and healthy.

#### BENEFITS OF BEING AN SDIS MEMBER

Risk Management Services – There are nine risk management consultants available to assist wherever they can. It may be walking through your facilities, providing free in-person training on safety topics, or protecting your property. You can call or email us (*riskmanagement@sdao.com*) regarding concerns you may have and discuss potential risk mitigation ideas.

**Safety & Security Grant Program** – This program awards matching grants to districts to make improvements that make it safer for staff and patrons.

**Online Training** – Members are eligible for free online training through Vector Solutions. There are over 75 free trainings available offering something for everyone.

**Insurance Discounts** – Each year, the Best Practices Program provides an opportunity for every member to receive up to a 10% discount on property and liability contributions.

**Pre-Loss Legal Services** – We have in-house counsel that can assist you with pre-loss legal questions. Such issues may include employment practice questions, terminations, board practices, and more. You can reach us at **help@sdao.com**.

**Human Resources Assistance** – Our team is dedicated to helping you stay on top of current laws, policies, and procedures. We have organized the HR Alliance, a networking group that allows members to discuss concerns or get help from other members. If you would like more information, please email **hr@sdao.com** for details. We have also contracted with HR Answers. This group provides HR Consulting for our members and is another resource for you.

**Claims** – In the event you do have a loss, our claims department is local. Our adjusters can meet with you by phone, virtually or in person. A big difference between SDIS and a regular insurance carrier is that our adjusters fight for what is best for you and the pool, not the bottom line.

We hope that you agree SDIS is not just insurance. We strive to offer you the best service and as many resources as possible so you can focus on what matters most, providing a valuable service to your patrons.

# GOODBYEWINTER. LIELLO SPRING NANNEL

As the snow melts and the days grow longer, it's essential to assess your building's roof for any damage that winter may have inflicted. Let's dive into the key steps for a thorough post-winter inspection:

#### SPRING ROOF INSPECTION CHECKLIST

#### 1. Visual Inspection from the Ground:

- Before grabbing a ladder, start with a visual check of your roof from the ground. Look for obvious signs of damage such as:
  - » Missing, cracked, or curled shingles.
  - » Damaged or missing flashing.
  - » Sagging roof sections.
- · Binoculars can be handy for this initial overview.
- · If qualified and legal, a drone can be handy as well.

#### 2. Inspect Your Shingles Up Close:

- If you're comfortable and equipped to safely use a ladder, take a closer look at your shingles. A drone can also be a big help here. Make sure to follow all rules, guidelines, laws and statutes. Winter storms and freezing temperatures can cause shingles to:
  - » Crack.
  - » Break.
  - » Go missing.
- · While inspecting, also keep an eye out for:
  - » Granule loss (indicating aging shingles).
  - » Mold or moss growth (which could signal moisture problems).

#### 3. Check the Gutters and Downspouts:

- Your gutters play a vital role in directing water away from your roof and foundation. Ensure they're clear of debris, such as leaves and twigs.
- Look for any signs of rust or damage. Properly working gutters are crucial for preventing water damage.

#### 4. Look for Signs of Leakage

- · Leaks can be subtle and go unnoticed until they cause significant damage. Inspect your:
  - » Ceilings
  - » Interior walls
- Watch out for water stains, mold, or peeling paint, as these can be indicators of a leaking roof. Don't forget to check the insulation for dampness.

#### 5. Inspect the Roof Flashing

- Flashing, which seals the areas around vents, chimneys, and skylights, is prone to separation or damage.
- · A compromised flashing can easily lead to leaks, so ensure it's intact and firmly in place.

#### 6. Assess Ventilation

- Proper ventilation prevents heat and moisture buildup that can lead to roof rot and insulation damage.
- Check your vents to ensure they're not blocked by nests or debris and that they're in good working condition.

#### 7. Evaluate the Roof's Structural Integrity

- Winter weather can strain your roof's structure. Look for signs of sagging or uneven roof lines, which could indicate structural issues.
- Pay special attention to areas where snow and ice may have accumulated for extended periods.

#### 8. Schedule a Professional Roof Inspection

- While DIY inspections are valuable, consider hiring a professional roofing contractor for a comprehensive assessment.
- They can identify hidden issues and recommend necessary repairs or maintenance.

Remember, a well-maintained roof ensures the longevity and safety of your building. By following this checklist, you'll be well-prepared for the coming seasons. Happy spring maintenance!



# SETTING THE STATE IN 2024: NAVIGATING HR SUCCESSFULLY AND AVOIDING COMMON PITFALLS

#### BY: DEBORAH JEFFRIES, HR ANSWERS

What if you could anticipate and avoid your next HR debacle? Kicking off the new year in a good space is a great place to be a leave you breathing easier.

In the realm of Human Resources, steering clear of potential pitfalls is paramount for any business. The repercussions of outdated policies and inadequate documentation can significantly impact an organization's trajectory. Are you confident in the current state of your employee handbook? Do your policies address every essential aspect? These questions often indicate areas prone to HR issues, whether it's in hiring, firing, employee documentation, or other critical areas vital to an organization's growth.

To assist in fortifying your proactive approach to managing HR policies and procedures, we offer these suggestions containing key areas from our professional experts to enlighten you on the most frequent HR mistakes and how to circumvent them effectively.

#### **CONSIDER:**

**The Outdated Employee Handbook**: An outdated handbook can lead to costly errors and challenges with employee experiences, communications, and meeting expectations. Whether you have an outdated employee handbook or none at all, take a look at what you may want to include:

- · Social media guidelines
- · Communications policy
- · Statement of company culture
- Nondiscrimination policy
- · Anti-harassment policy
- · Attendance policy
- · Professional conduct expectations
- · Code of ethics
- · Safety guidelines



Employee handbooks can help small businesses avoid misunderstandings and minimize their risks regarding employment-related lawsuits and claims. These claims often stem from inconsistent treatment of employees or a lack of clarity in policies and procedures.

Handbooks that outline policies and guidelines not only provide expectations for employee conduct, it also creates a framework to guide management and leadership – helping to ensure policies are enforced appropriately and evenly across departments.

**Documentation Essential for Performance-Based Termination:** Understand the criticalness of proper documentation and the steps involved in a corrective action policy to mitigate risks.

Having candid conversations with employees who aren't performing well isn't easy. But documenting those employee performance conversations is important, especially when terminating the employee

is the result of continued poor performance. What you need is a corrective action policy. While it provides employees with an opportunity to improve their performance, it also can support decisions to terminate or demote that employee. If you don't have the documentation that shows a pattern of poor performance, small businesses may open themselves to liability issues such as a wrongful termination or discrimination complaint.

**Effective Employee Data Management:** Gain insights into the proper handling of sensitive employee data and the significance of maintaining meticulous records in compliance with regulations.

Employee records and human resources administration can seem time-consuming. But proper employee recordkeeping can help keep you in compliance with regulatory agencies.

**Modernizing Interview and Hiring Processes:** Discover key considerations and questions to ask during interviews to ensure a successful hiring process.

Your interviewing and hiring process need to be deliberate, purposeful, and consistent. Here are some factors to consider when hiring:

- **Skills** Does your new hire possess the basic technical skills to carry out the job functions? What essential business (soft) skills, such as negotiating, persuading, or emotional intelligence do they have?
- **Job Experience** What is their job experience? How has what they've done in the past going to benefit your business in the future? How much training will they need?
- Education Do they have the education necessary to perform the duties of the position?

**Importance of Job Training:** Explore the necessity of continuous training and development for employee growth within the organization.

For employees to grow, they'll likely need professional development somewhere along the way. Training and development can range from helping employees develop skills (Excel or Word classes) to providing tools and training to become a great leader. Unfortunately, lack of job training is among "missed" opportunities for HR and business.

Training begins when an employee joins your team in the onboarding process. Proper onboarding training sets the right expectations and can prevent issues later. You'll want to introduce your organization culture, mission, vision, and expectations.

**Clarity in Policies:** Identify often-overlooked policies such as vacation payout, complaint filing, and disaster response that are crucial for a well-defined framework.

Clearly defined HR policies are fundamental to your success. They protect your business and educate employees about what is expected. Here are several policies that may slip through the cracks when you're developing yours.

**Compliance with Employment Laws and Regulations:** Understand the essential areas and agencies in employment law compliance to avoid potential legal liabilities and penalties.

Keeping up with employment laws can be overwhelming for HR and small business owners. But ignoring HR compliance and employer liability can lead to costly litigation and penalties.

By learning from these mistakes and implementing best practices, your organization can safeguard itself against potential setbacks and forge a path toward sustained success.

For the full article, please visit https://hranswers.com/setting-the-stage-in-2024-navigating-hr-successfully-and-avoiding-common-pitfalls/.

# BEST PRACTICES PROGRAM





## 2024 BEST PRACTICES PROGRAM

Your district can receive up to a 10% discount on your 2025 general liability, auto liability and property insurance contributions. There are five opportunities to earn 2% towards your total discount.

These opportunities include the following:

#### 1. AFFILIATE ORGANIZATION MEMBERSHIP | CREDIT: 2%

You will receive a 2% credit for being a member of any of the following affiliated organizations:

- · Cemetery Association of Oregon
- · Oregon APCO-NENA
- · Oregon Association of Chiefs of Police
- · Oregon Association of Clean Water Agencies
- · Oregon Association of Conservation Districts
- · Oregon Association of Hospitals and Health Systems
- · Oregon Association of Water Utilities
- · Oregon Economic Development District Association
- · Oregon Fire Chiefs Association
- · Oregon Fire District Directors Association

- · Oregon Library Association
- · Oregon Mosquito and Vector Control Association
- · Oregon People's Utility Districts Association
- · Oregon PRIMA
- · Oregon Public Ports Association
- · Oregon Recreation and Park Association
- · Oregon Rural Health Association
- · Oregon Transit Association
- · Oregon Water Resources Congress

#### 2. PUBLIC MEETING POLICY | CREDIT: 2%

In order to receive the 2% credit, your district must have adopted or have a current policy in regards to public meetings. This policy must meet the new legislative requirements that went into effect January 1, 2024. A sample policy is available in the SDAO Resource Library at **www.sdaoresourcelibrary.com**.

#### **3. PUBLIC MEETING CHECKLIST | CREDIT: 2%**

To receive credit in this category, you must complete the self-evaluation checklist that is available within the Best Practices Survey. The survey is available online at **sdis.org**.

#### 4. SDAO/SDIS TRAINING | CREDIT: 2%

At least one (1) representative of the district must complete an SDAO/SDIS training of the following listed options:

- · Any SDAO Board, Human Resources, or Risk Management Regional Training
- · SDAO Annual Conference
- Metro Breakfast
- Board Practices Assessment Training

For an up-to-date list of the current scheduled SDAO/SDIS trainings please visit: https://www.sdao.com/calendar

#### 5. PUBLIC MEETING TRAINING (ONLINE) | CREDIT: 2%

ALL members of the Board of Directors of the district must complete the public meeting training offered on Vector Solutions (formerly SafePersonnel). The training will be available towards the end of spring 2024. Notifications will be sent out once the training is live on the Vector Solutions/SafePersonnel training sites. This training will be located in the course library under the SDIS custom course tab.

If your district has already set up their training website with Vector Solutions and you are looking to complete trainings, please contact your district's management team for information on creating your login. If you have forgotten your district's training website address or your login information, please contact Vector Solutions at **800-434-0154**.

If you have not set up your district's personalized training website and would be the district contact for the site, please email **memberservices@sdao.com** and send us your name, district name, contact phone number and email address.

#### **RECEIVING CREDIT**

To receive credit, a district representative must complete the Best Practices survey (located online on the SDIS Insurance Site) and click the Save button at the upper right-hand corner of the screen. Credit will only be awarded in a category when a box within that section is checked. If you cannot answer "yes" to at least one question within that category, credit will not be recorded. Your district will be notified by email this spring when the survey becomes available online. The survey must be submitted by a district representative who will verify completion of the credit requirements within the survey. Training credits taken by members are not automatically updated in the Best Practices Survey and must be manually checked off by the member. Please note, each district is responsible for completing their own survey online. The deadline to complete the survey is November 1, 2024.

If you have any questions regarding the Best Practices Program or need help completing it online, please contact Jaime Keeling at **jkeeling@sdao.com** or 800.285.5461 ext. 122

#### **KNOW YOUR BENEFITS**

#### THE BENEFITS OF VIRTUAL MENTAL HEALTH CARE

The National Institute of Mental Health estimates that more than one-in-five Americans live with mental illness. Unfortunately, an estimated 122 million Americans live in areas where there are shortages of mental health professionals. In more rural areas, the nearest mental health professional could be several hours away. People who lack access to mental health services may postpone or neglect mental health care. But ignoring mental health issues can have a detrimental PARTNERS impact on you, your family and your co-workers. It may also make mental health issues worse.



Virtual mental health care is helping to provide critical access to mental health care services around the country. This is especially important as the increasing popularity of remote work has enabled more employees to work from rural parts of the country.

#### WHAT IS VIRTUAL MENTAL HEALTH CARE?

Virtual mental health care refers to a range of services that can be offered online via phone, tablet or computer. It often comes in the form of remote appointments or online communications. Although it may feel strange initially to open up to a mental health professional on your computer, forms of virtual health care have been around since the 1990s. Today, virtual mental health care may include the following options:

- · Virtual therapy sessionsBroker Logo
- · Online coaching sessions
- · Self-help apps
- · Virtual substance misuse programs

There are numerous benefits to virtual mental healthcare, especially if you live in an area where it's difficult or impossible to find a qualified local mental health professional. For this reason, companies are increasingly offering virtual mental health services as part of employee benefits packages.

#### HERE ARE SOME OF THE BENEFITS OF VIRTUAL MENTAL HEALTH CARE:

- · Improves access to mental health professionals—Virtual mental health care is convenient and accessible, enabling more people to receive quality care where they live.
- · Adds scheduling flexibility—Telehealth appointments can often be made outside of typical work hours. They may also be combined with in-person sessions if you live in the same area as your mental health professional.
- · Increases comfort—Many people avoid seeking mental health care because they're afraid of being recognized in a psychiatrist's office or because of other logistical concerns, such as lacking proper transportation. Telepsychology enables you to receive quality care with anonymity from the comfort of your own home.
- · Enhances addiction treatment—Substance abuse and addiction issues are particularly prevalent in rural and low-income areas, which often lack proper mental health care resources. The expansion of virtual mental health services allows more people to get the support they need.
- · Meets the needs of mental health care sessions—Telehealth is well-suited for mental health care because physical exams aren't typically required. This means entire sessions can be delivered virtually.

#### LEARN MORE ABOUT VIRTUAL MENTAL HEALTH CARE

Mental health care is for everyone. You don't need to have a mental illness to benefit from mental health sessions. Using the virtual mental health care benefits provided by your employer can help you reduce stress, overcome burnout and improve your overall well-being.



#### **MDLIVE**

Virtual Care, Anywhere.

# 24/7/365 on-demand access to affordable, quality healthcare. Anytime, Anywhere.

With MDLIVE, you can visit with a doctor 24/7 from your home, office or on the go. Our network of Board Certified doctors is available by phone or secure video to assist with non-emergency medical conditions.

There is a \$0 Copay for MDLIVE.

SDIS covers all cost of your MDLIVE telehealth visit.

#### Who are our doctors?

MDLIVE has the nation's largest network of telehealth doctors. On average, our doctors have 15 years of experience practicing medicine and are licensed in the state where patients are located. Their specialties include primary care, pediatrics, emergency medicine and family medicine. Our doctors are committed to providing convenient, quality care and are always ready to take your call.

#### Are my children eligible?

Yes. MDLIVE has pediatricians on call 24/7/365. Please note, a parent or guardian must be present during any interactions involving minors. We ask parents to establish a child record under their account. Parents must be present on each call for children 18 or younger.

#### When should I use MDLIVE?

- Instead of going to the ER or an urgent care center for a non-emergency issue
- During or after normal business hours, nights, weekends and even holidays
- If your primary care doctor is not available
- To request prescription refills (when appropriate)
- If traveling and in need of medical care

#### How much does it cost?

Signing up is free, you only pay per visit. If you're receiving MDLIVE as part of a group benefit, you may not be required to pay at all.

Costs per consult do vary. Sign up to find out your consult fee.



### MD

#### Download the App

Doctor visits are easier and more convenient with the MDLIVE App. Be prepared. Download today.







#### **Common Conditions We Treat**

- Allergies
- Asthma
- Bronchitis
- Cold & Flu
- Diarrhea
- Ear Infections
- Fever
- Headache
- Infections

- Insect Bites
- Joint Aches
- Rashes
- Respiratory Infections
- Sinus Infections
- Skin Infections
- Sore Throat
- Urinary Tract Infections
- And More!

#### **Behavioral Health**

- Marital Problems
- Child Behavior & Learning Issues
- Financial Hardship
- Coping with Loss & Grief
- Parenting Counseling & Advice
- Problems at Work
- Stresses & Challenges of Everyday Life

Virtual Care, Anywhere.

MDLIVE.com/regence-or

1-888-725-3097

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Email: sdao@sdao.com Web: www.sdao.com

**PRSRT STD U.S. POSTAGE** PAID SALEM, OR PERMIT No. 263

SDAO ASSOCIATION OF OREGON

**CONTACT SDAO Administrators for SDIS** Toll-Free: 800-285-5461

#### **GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS**

Hasina Wittenberg: 503-906-7228 Mark Landauer: 503-906-7238

#### **MEMBER SERVICES**

Toll-Free: 800-285-5461 Email: memberservices@sdao.com Fax: 503-371-4781

#### UNDERWRITING

Toll-Free: 800-285-5461 Email: underwriting@sdao.com Fax: 503-371-4781

#### **RISK MANAGEMENT**

Toll-Free: 800-285-5461 Email: riskmanagement@sdao.com Fax: 503-371-4781

#### **REPORT AN SDIS WC CLAIM**

Toll-Free: 800-305-1736 Email: wc@sdao.com Fax: 503-620-6217

#### **REPORT AN SDIS P/C CLAIM**

Toll-Free: 800-305-1736 Email: claims@sdao.com Fax: 503-620-9817

#### MEMBER CALENDAR

April 3	SDIS Board of Trustees Meeting – Timberline Lodge		
April 4	SDAO Board of Directors and SDIS Board of Trustees Joint N		
April 4	SDAO Board of Directors Meeting – Timberline Lodge		
April 4	First Thursday Webinar		
May 2	First Thursday Webinar		
May 7	Streamline Social Media Webinar Series (Part One)		
May 9	treamline Social Media Webinar Series (Part Two)		
May 13	HR Regional Training – Pendleton		
May 14	Streamline Social Media Webinar Series (Part Three)		
May 16	HR Regional Training – Klamath Falls		
May 22	HR Regional Training – Redmond		
May 27	Memorial Day (SDAO Closed)		
June 3	HR Regional Training – Roseburg		
June 4	HR Regional Training – Newport		
June 5	SDIS Board of Trustees Meeting – SDAO Tigard Office		
June 6	First Thursday Webinar		
June 6	HR Regional Training – Salem		
June 13	SDAO Board of Directors Meeting – SDAO Salem Office		

