

**SANTA BARBARA COUNTY  
BOARD AGENDA LETTER**



Clerk of the Board of Supervisors  
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101  
(805) 568-2240

**Agenda Number:**

**Prepared on:** August 19, 2004  
**Department:** General Services  
**Budget Unit:**  
**Agenda Date:** September 7, 2004  
**Placement:** Departmental  
**Estimate Time:** 30 Minutes on September 7, 2004  
**Continued Item:** NO  
**If Yes, date from:**

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**TO:** Board of Supervisors

**FROM:** Ronald S. Cortez, Director  
General Services Department

**STAFF CONTACT:** Tom Alvarez, Assistant Director  
568-2628

**SUBJECT:** Workers' Compensation Injury Prevention Project  
All Districts

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**Recommendations:**

That the Board of Supervisors accept a staff presentation on the Workers' Compensation Injury Prevention Project for the County of Santa Barbara. **Estimated time of presentation is 30 minutes.**

**Alignment with Board Strategic Plan:**

The recommendations are primarily aligned with Goal No. 3. A Strong, Professionally Managed County Organization.

**Executive Summary and Discussion:**

In November of 2002 your Board approved a contract with Bickmore Risk Services to complete an Injury Prevention Plan for the County of Santa Barbara. There were two ultimate deliverables; specific departmental plans which were prepared and provided to the individual departments and a County-wide Executive Report to be presented to your Board. The Bickmore conclusions and recommendations, contained in both deliverables, were based on employee surveys, site visits of County facilities, reviews of current injury prevention plans and an assessment of historical loss data. Bickmore has now completed this project and will present their findings on September 7.

In summary, Bickmore found that the County of Santa Barbara has historically viewed safety as a priority. It is now appropriate to make it a core value. The County's goal of reducing the number and costs of workers' compensation injuries can only be achieved when safety is shifted from a priority to a value. By way of example, we have prioritized workers' compensation in recent years due to rising costs versus having an ongoing core value to create a safe work environment at all times.

Involvement from all levels of employees within the County is the key to a successful prevention program. Management should build upon the existing strength of the culture to facilitate this shift. Specifically, by refining training, accountability and communication in the areas of ergonomics and return to work, a more immediate impact will be made on reducing employee injuries and workers' compensation costs. Once these two programs are functional, the same implementation structure should be utilized for the next tier of safety issues.

Note that a follow on presentation will be made to outline common activities that departments are implementing to prevent workplace injuries and reduce workers' compensation costs. Additionally, three departments will present their specific prevention program. It is currently estimated that this presentation will be 30-45 minutes and will take place in early October.

**Mandates and Service Levels:** NA

**Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:** Not yet determined, they will be developed by the individual departments.

**Special Instructions:**

**Concurrence:**