



Minnesota Educational Facility Management Professionals

October 2020
2nd Edition Newsletter

The Messenger

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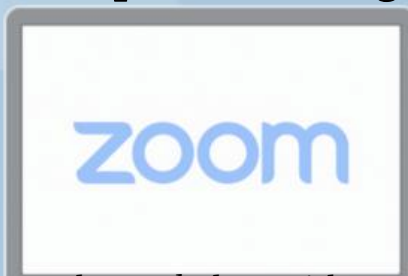
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NEW SECTION IN THIS NEWSLETTER

We are happy to announce a new “Project Highlight” section in the MASMS Newsletter. This section highlights school building projects that have been happening around our state.

This month we are excited to showcase the Minneapolis Public Schools, Patrick Henry High School addition and remodel. This project was submitted by Jim Wilson, Wendel. Check it out on page five!

ZOOM Chapter Meetings



**There is no perfect substitute
for attending in person
MASMS chapter meetings.**

When you make the investment of the time to attend chapter meetings you return to the workplace with a renewed sense of purpose, armed with new knowledge and tools, as well as valuable new contacts that can turn into long-term relationships. These benefits help you grow personally and more importantly professionally.

ZOOM Chapter meetings are not the perfect substitute, however these meetings will still provide you with information and the many benefits of connecting with your peers.

Take an hour to yourself each month, and sign onto the next ZOOM MASMS Chapter Meeting. You can join any chapter meeting that works at a time that works for you.

Reconnect with other members!

Upcoming ZOOM Meetings

October 13, 2020	MASMS Metro Zoom Meeting
October 14, 2020	MASMS Southern Zoom Meeting
October 15, 2020	MASMS No/NW/West Zoom Meeting
November 10, 2020	MASMS Metro Zoom Meeting
November 11, 2020	MASMS Southern Zoom Meeting
November 19, 2020	MASMS No/NW/West Zoom Meeting
December 8, 2020	MASMS Metro Zoom Meeting
December 16, 2020	MASMS Southern Zoom Meeting
December 17, 2020	MASMS No/NW/West Zoom Meeting

Watch your email for reminders and logon information.

**MESSAGE FROM
THE BOARD**



*Kevin Johnson,
Southern Chapter Director*

**Education...
As Important As Ever!**

Hopefully you all are surviving this once in a lifetime pandemic (I sure hope it is once in a lifetime)! COVID-19 has made us all dig into our MASMS Toolbox for help and suggestions to navigate rapidly changing guidelines!

Speaking of our toolbox, I would like to remind everyone to take advantage of our very informative Zoom educational meetings & opportunities over the next few months. I look forward to the day when we can again hold in-person meetings.

It felt really strange to not be up in St. Cloud for

our fall conference. For me, it was the first time in 20 years and it was missed!

Speaking of education, here is a short list of ways you can stay on top of your game:

Zoom meetings

- Every Thursday from 9:00 – 10:00 am we hold an open conversation on how districts are staying on top of COVID. You can learn what others are doing, ask questions, and find out what has worked, what has not and what might be new. These are VERY good meetings.
- Chapter meetings. In the absence of meeting face to face, each chapter is holding its chapter meetings online via Zoom.

NOTE: All of these educational meetings qualify for MASMS CEU credit!

MASMS website

- COVID-19 Discussion Forum
- Q & A from MASMS members
- Online training opportunities from vendors & other groups

Become a MASMS Leader

Here is the list of currently open positions

- Northern Chapter - Secretary and Director Positions
- West Chapter - Secretary and Vendor Rep Positions

I would also like to **congratulate** three of our members on passing the challenging CPS exam, which is one component of our MASMS Facility Certification Program! Awesome job to each of you! Speaking of our certification program, we now have 87 MASMS Members certified since 2013! That AVERAGES out to over 12 per year! And, a huge thank you to our two instructors, Maureen Mullen & Mat Miller! Very Nice Work!

I've said this before, but feel that it is important to repeat. MASMS is always looking for more and better ways to meet the needs of its members. Please let any board member know what we might consider adding, or improving so that we can continue to fill the "MASMS Toolbox" to help you become the best leader, or *Future Leader* possible!

Best wishes, and please be & stay SAFE!

Kevin

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Health & Safety The MASMS Health & Safety Committee supplies information for this section. If you have a specific topic you would like to see covered, let the MASMS office know.

6 Human Factors Made Worse by Pandemics Like COVID-19

Adapted from : <https://safestart.com/news/6-human-factors-made-worse-by-pandemics-like-covid-19/>
<https://safestart.com/> - extracted from Blog May 19, 2020

Human factors affect how likely people are to get injured—by making them less attentive to the hazards around them, for example—and as the human factors fluctuate throughout the day, so does the risk of injury. In one moment, a worker may be completely focused on the task at hand and then, in the next, their attention may be interrupted by a co-worker, a loud noise or a nagging thought.

It's not just small, incidental occurrences that can cause human factors to ebb and flow. Large-scale issues like COVID-19 and other massive societal concerns can dramatically alter the effects of human factors, and, in some cases, even introduce new human factors in the workplace.

During pandemics, human factors tend to spike and stay at a relative high level. Here's a list of several human factors that are likely to be heightened, which means they'll have a serious impact on workplace safety.

(As you read, keep in mind that commonly occurring states don't go away just because there's a public health emergency.)

Fear

In some cases, a healthy dose of fear can actually improve workplace safety. When a big, scary, visible hazard is present in the workplace then people are likely to be aware of it and, as a result, much less at risk of being injured by it. Their fear of it will center their focus and kill off their complacency.

But in other instances, fear can lead to erratic or unpredictable decision-making. The fear of contracting COVID-19 may also cause workers to appear standoffish, unsociable, and less willing to step in to help fellow co-workers. And employees may be so focused on avoiding contact with others that they'll be less attuned to the dangers of familiar physical hazards.

Distraction

The news seems to change by the hour regarding the coronavirus. Personal distractions also abound for many people, from a spouse's job insecurity to juggling child care and worries about the health of vulnerable family members.

It's impossible not to be consumed by personal distractions these days. But just because it's an understandable state of affairs doesn't mean it's any less dangerous. **Safety professionals in every industry should be aware that the vast majority of their workforce is much more distracted than normal.**

Stress

While it may not be the most obvious concern, chronic stress can dramatically alter how people act in the workplace (and it can exacerbate other human factors too). It affects the way workers process information, make safety decisions, and can even affect routine behaviors and habits like wearing PPE.

Stress may be hard to recognize because it can often be invisible, or else its symptoms may appear to be signs of other human factors, like frustration, fatigue or illness. But that just makes stress all the more difficult to address. All told, stress is among the serious safety issues caused by COVID-19.

Fatigue

A common symptom of fear, stress and general uncertainty about the future is to have trouble sleeping—subsequently causing fatigue. Which leads to millions of people showing up at work in states of stress, fatigue and fear. If you're counting, that's three different risk-elevating states of mind that are affecting employees before they punch in for their shift.

There may be other causes of fatigue too, in workplaces that have reduced the number of employees on the floor due to layoffs or social distances measures. In cases like these, people may need to work harder or longer than normal, which can lead to fatigue.

Rushing

Changes in workplace operations or production demands can not only cause fatigue, but they can also lead to other human factors. In particular, they can cause employees to work at a much faster pace than usual. In a word, it can lead to rushing.

There may be other pandemic-induced reasons for rushing. If people fear that their job may be on the chopping block, they could try to show their value by working harder than usual. Or they could rush to finish their tasks so they can leave work earlier, particularly if they need to take over child care duties or attend to other personal matters. General stress can also induce workers to exert themselves more than normal, even if there's no overt need for them to.

Rapid workplace changes often lead to a sense of uncertainty among employees, especially if safety procedures or production processes are adjusted. Uncertainty is an often overlooked but potentially dangerous state of mind—when workers aren't sure what they should do, how they should do it, what their co-workers are doing around them, or where they can get the answers they need, a host of potential safety issues can arrive.

Continued on Page 4

6 Human Factors Made Worse by Pandemics Like COVID-19 (Continued from page 3)

What can you do?

There's no single solution to these problems.

24/7 safety should be part of any proactive safety program, but there's only so much that can be done to alleviate the stress, fear and distraction caused by COVID-19. So, what can we do about the human factors, among all the other suddenly pressing workplace safety issues?

The first step is to recognize what's beyond our control. In most cases, we can't make people's economic and health worries go away. And it's impossible to make people leave their stress and mental distraction in their cars before they enter the workplace. **But what safety folks can do is help workers understand the risk of human factors and the importance of focusing as much as possible on the task at hand.**

- Bring the dangers of human factors into the light by holding extra toolbox talks and safety discussions,
- Supporting supervisors and other frontline leaders so they can better look out for workers who are at a higher risk of injury thanks to human factors.
- Making sure any changes to the work environment or operational processes are reflected in your safety programs.

Look into the Future: These may be unique times, but it doesn't mean that things will settle back to normal eventually. The sooner we collectively acknowledge that safety is going to look a little different in the age of coronavirus, the sooner we can all begin to tackle the challenges posed by COVID-19. This will also help with the uncertainty that may live in the minds of the workers.

Taking the proper steps to train workers and supervisors on how to deal with the dangers of human factors may be one of the most effective interventions that can be taken to protect workers in the midst of this pandemic as well as in the years that follow.



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Project Highlight

Minneapolis Public Schools | Patrick Henry High School | Addition and Remodel

Building-wide upgrades included:

- ◆ New secure entry / office addition
- ◆ Accessibility upgrades
- ◆ HVAC replacement
- ◆ Auditorium renovation
- ◆ Food service upgrades

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Civil / Structural Engineer: Larson Engineering

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Patrick Henry High School
Exterior



Patrick Henry High School
Theater



Patrick Henry High School
Interior



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Vendor Corner

*Mike Remington, Inspec
MASMS Vendor Rep*

TRYING NEW THINGS

The "problem" was getting worse every day; I had to do something about it soon, but I had never tried to do this by myself in my entire life. What if I mess up, make a mistake, it could cause an even worse problem! I calmed myself and got the courage to do it: I gave myself a haircut! Desperate times call for desperate measures and recent events have challenged us all to do new things we aren't used to doing.

There's a term for the fear of new things, it's "neophobia". It's natural to have some fears trying something new: fear of failing, fear of not knowing much about it, fear of embarrassment, etc.

When I've given presentations on Public Speaking and the normal fears of doing that, I point out a lot of the fear is because it's one of the first times you've done it and each time you do it you get more comfortable doing it. Think about the first time you drove a car, how intimidating! The first time you golfed or skied or played some other sport seemed impossible!

We all need to try new things, to face new challenges, to continue to grow. These difficult times are forcing many of us to try new things whether we like it or not, whether something simple like a haircut or much more significant challenges. Take care!

New Info Added Daily to the COVID-19 Discussion Forum

The MASMS COVID-19 Discussion Forum is for members to share information during this time. Feel free to use this forum to share information or ask questions about COVID-19 applicable to members. Login at www.masms.org

- Select the "Covid-19 Discussion Forum" button on the left side of this window.
- Share information

Contact the MASMS office with questions (320) 685-4585 or ruth@masms.org

Conversations with other MASMS members on Covid19

To keep MASMS members connected and informed, we created a weekly virtual meeting for directors/supervisors to discuss current topics.

We hold this meeting every
Thursday at 9:00 AM.

To participate please email the
MASMS office at ruth@masms.org.

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Nate Sorgert, Rush City Schools

Ron McCollum, Bagley Schools

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Larry Gorman, MTI Distributing

Jim King, MTI Distributing

Jack Adkins, Tremco Inc.

John O'Hearn, Tremco, Inc.

Brandon Klukow, Tremco, Inc.

Bob Troy, Hi-Tech Air Purification

Jill Sandager, PathoSans

Tim Solum, Premier Polysteel

Aaron Stockwell, Schwickert's Tecta America

Tim Wychgram, Schwickert's Tecta America

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Note from Sam Walseth, MASMS Lobbyist

With a few weeks left to go in the 2020 election cycle, Minnesota's political landscape is once again in the toss-up column, both nationally and how the results will shape our state Legislature. All 201 state House and Senate seats are up for election this year. Minnesota has the unique status of being the only state with a divided bi-cameral legislative system. Divided government is tricky and while bumpy at many times, we have made it work. We have a balanced budget and thankfully a healthy budget reserve to help us through tough times like we are experience right now.

The COVID-19 pandemic has wreaked havoc on lives, systems, and the economy. Whoever takes control in the state House and Senate in January has a tough job to do. The current budget ends on June 30th and the \$2.4 billion budget reserve will likely be exhausted by then. MN Management & Budget (MMB), the state's finance department, projects a \$5 billion shortfall in revenues for the two-year budget that is set to start next July (fiscal years 2022-23). Forecasted spending for state support programs will likely increase, creating an exceptionally large deficit to manage. Remember, the state cannot run an on-going deficit like the federal government and therefore the necessary budget balancing measures will be unpopular and painful.

The K-12 system is the largest single part of the state's general operating budget. In previous deficit years, the state has leaned on the school system to help cash-flow the state budget. The 'payment shift' is often criticized by the minority party, but it is an efficient budget balancing tool that helps the state avoid deeper cuts in other areas or tax increases. Even with the schools taking a payment shift as a major contribution to the deficit, the K-12 system has seen budget cuts. Those who have been around a long time, they might remember that when faced with a \$4.6 billion deficit in 2003, the K-12 system saw \$185 million cut from 'non-classroom' related items in the education budget.

Will the federal government step in with state budget stabilization relief as they did during the Great Recession in 2009-10? Will a vaccine prove highly effective, getting our economy roaring back to life with unemployment number quickly on the decline? Time will tell, but we should have a very sober, eyes-wide-open, understanding of the state budget realities, as they appear to exist today. However, I genuinely believe better days are ahead of us.

Lastly, I want to note that the MDE School Finance Work Group, comprised of public education professionals, has been working on school finance reform proposals for the last year and a half. They have produced some promising work on school facility funding. While implementing these recommendations will be difficult in the short run, the blueprint they are contemplating could give us a solid road map to work from over the years to come. I will report on the details of these recommendations later, when the Work Group makes finalizes them.

Thank you for the work you are doing to make to most of this difficult school year!

-Sam Walseth, MASMS Lobbyist,
Capitol Hill Associates





INFORMATION OVERLOAD

Dealing with information overload is something that many people struggle with. There is just so much data involved in doing our jobs. Sometimes it feels impossible to stay on top of everything. Here are 5 steps to help you **manage the overload**:

Identify the sources

First, work out where your data is coming from. Typical sources include emails, maintenance management software, reports, co-workers, etc. Once you know where the data is coming from, you can start to restrict or come up with a system on how you use the information sources.

Filter the information

Filter the information coming in. Set up a process to help you categorize and act on the information you receive. For example:

- Create email rules to push incoming emails into separate folders for you to review later
- File away articles, flyers and magazines to read at a later time.
- Tell your team only to copy you in on important emails or escalations
- Organize your incoming information into categories

As everyone is different, and each data item will have a different significance to each individual, You need to create your own filtering routines and processes, and file information as it makes sense to you.

Make time to review it

Put some time in your day to go through all the information that you are filing. Go through those email folders. Review documents that you have stored away. If you have to, book a meeting with yourself to do this so that you have got some structured time each week to deal with information.

Continued on Page 10

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INFORMATION OVERLOAD (Continued from page 9)

Having time set aside to deal with incoming information prevents you getting side-tracked during 'work time'. You should also remember that you will need to quickly deal with the urgent requests. Sometimes information needs to be acted on right now, and putting it to one side to review later will just not do the work.

Act on it or delete it

During your review time, your plan should be to act on it or delete it. Your actions could be:

- Deal with it now!
- Deal with it later – only if it is going to take more than 5 minutes to do
- Add it to your To Do list
- Pass it to someone else to action
- File it away as information that is useful to know

Delete everything you can.

Clear your desk and your head as much as you can. You can always come back to them later when you have got everything else under control.

Turn it off

You do not have to say yes to receiving all this information. Do you really need daily status reports from projects? Do you have to be copied in on all emails to do with budgets?

The more you trust your team and your colleagues, the less you will feel the need to see everything and be part of every communication exchange. Which of the sources you identified in the first step could you turn off or cancel completely?

Some people are better at dealing with information overload than others, but you can get better and improve how you deal with it.

On-line Training Opportunities

MASMS realizes that opportunities over the past few months to receive credits for the MASMS certification program have been cancelled. You can find information for on-line courses to take on-line, and receive credit for the MASMS Certification program.

Login at www.masms.org and select the "On Line Training Opportunities".

If you choose to take any of the on-line classes (listed on this site or others that you find), **you must email the MASMS office to receive credit for the class.**

Contact the MASMS office with questions (320) 685-4585 or ruth@masms.org

UPCOMING MASMS EVENTS

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12/8/20	MASMS Metro Zoom Meeting
12/16/20	MASMS Southern Zoom Meeting
12/17/20	MASMS No/NW/West Zoom Meeting

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