

# SAFETY PARTNER NEWS

July/August 2015

## Drowning Doesn't Look Like Drowning

Drowning is not the violent, splashing call for help that most people expect. Drowning is almost always a deceptively silent event. The waving, splashing, and yelling that dramatic conditioning (television) prepares us to look for is rarely seen in real life.

If you spend time on or near the water, then you should make sure that you and your crew know what to look for whenever people enter the water. The "Instinctive Drowning Response" is what people do to avoid actual or perceived suffocation in the water. And it does not look like most people expect. There is very little splashing, no waving, and no yelling or calls for help of any kind.

Drowning is the number 2 cause of accidental death in children (under the age of 15). Of the approximately 750 children who will drown this year, about 375 of them will do so *within 25 yards of a parent or other adult*.

So what does the Instinctive Drowning Response really look like? Except in rare circumstances, *drowning people are physiologically unable to call out for help*. The mouths of drowning people are not above the surface of the water long enough for them to exhale, inhale and call out for help.

**“There is very little splashing, no waving, and no yelling or calls for help of any kind.”**

*Drowning people cannot wave for help.* Drowning people leverage their bodies by extending their arms so they can lift their mouths out of the water to breathe. Drowning people who are struggling on the surface of the water cannot stop drowning and perform voluntary movements such as waving for help, moving toward a rescuer, or reaching out for a piece of rescue equipment.

Unless rescued by a trained lifeguard, drowning people can struggle on the surface of the water for only 20 to 60 seconds before submersion occurs.

This doesn't mean that a person who is yelling for help and thrashing isn't in real trouble — they are experiencing aquatic distress. Aquatic distress doesn't last long and can occur before the Instinctive Drowning Response. *However, unlike true drowning, these victims can still assist in their own rescue by grabbing lifelines, throw rings, etc.*



## Upcoming Events

### Contractor First Line Safety Seminar (CFLSS)

Planning for the annual CFLSS is scheduled to begin in September. The planning committee is interested in receiving feedback on topics you would like to see at the event.

Submit your ideas and suggestions to [safetypartners@ameren.com](mailto:safetypartners@ameren.com).

**Missouri Session:**  
Friday, December 4th

**Illinois Session:**  
Friday, December 11th

More information will be coming soon.

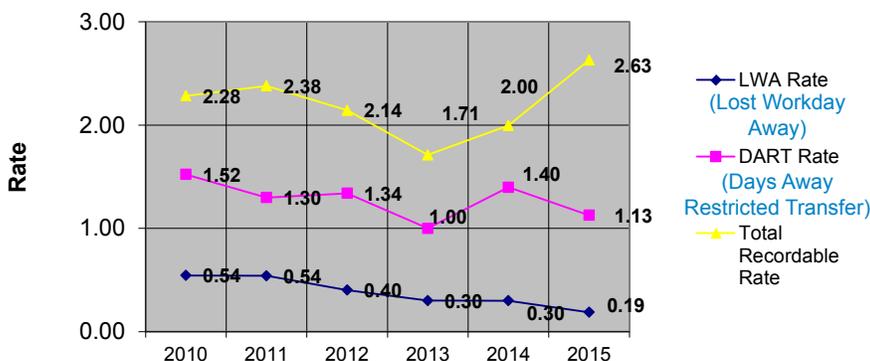
# BACK TO SCHOOL SAFETY TIPS

As summer draws to a close, back-to-school season is in full effect. Remember to safely share the roads with school buses, pedestrians and bicyclists, and provide children with the necessary knowledge to stay safe at school.

Here are some important considerations and safety tips regarding back-to-school safety:

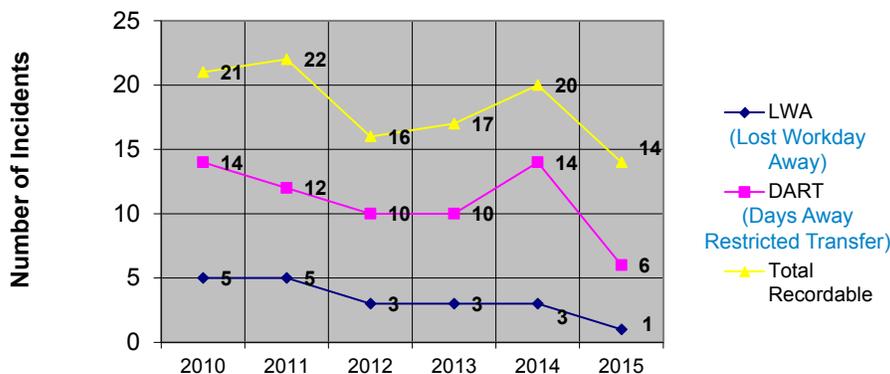
- The area 10 feet around a school bus is where children are in the most danger of being hit. Stop your car far enough from the bus to allow children the necessary space to safely enter and exit the bus.
- Understand that school buses have large blind spots. Although they have big mirrors, they may not be able to see you clearly. Slow down and allow the bus to switch lanes if the bus uses its blinkers.
- Do not stop with a portion of your vehicle over the crosswalk. Blocking the crosswalk forces pedestrians to go around your vehicle and puts them in a dangerous situation.
- Teach children to follow traffic signals and rules when walking or biking. Stress that they should cross the street at crosswalks or intersections with crossing guards when they can.
- Establish a safe route if your child walks or rides their bike to school. Map out the area with your child ahead of time.

## Ameren Missouri Contractor Injury Rate Trend



## Contractor Safety Stats Through July 2015

### Ameren Missouri Contractor Injury Trend



## Good Catch!

When opening a single-phase transformer, a URD inspector noticed the hinges were coming out of their housings.

The inspector immediately slid the door back into place. Due to his quick actions, the inspector was able to prevent the door from making contact with any energized equipment — preventing a potential outage, arc flash or injury.

Following a brief stand down, the door hinges were then properly secured and the job was completed without incident.

Good Catch!

Asking me to overlook a safety violation is asking me to compromise my entire attitude towards the value of your life.

— Patrick A. Michaud

We are interested in hearing what topics you would like to see in the newsletter. We would also appreciate any comments/feedback you have about the newsletter. Please contact us by email or our website.