



County Connection

News from Washington Counties Risk Pool

Fall 2007

We've Come a Long Way, Baby!

Risk Pool Entering 20th Year of Operation

Created by counties for counties in the unfavorable liability insurance market of the mid-to-late 1980s, the Washington Counties Risk Pool has become what its founders intended and much more.

A key force behind the move to break free of New York-based, for-profit insurance companies, Bill Vogler, then-Grays Harbor County Commissioner, and others decided that something had to change.



Bill Vogler at WSAC Centennial Conference last year

"A lot of counties were frankly being dumped from policies (by insurance carriers) and going bare with no coverage," he recalls, noting this was happening nationwide, not just in Washington. "Counties had basically gone from relatively inexpensive premiums to something completely out of reach."

The Pool's early history could fill chapters, but long story short, the perseverance of several dedicated people working diligently over the years resulted in an independently-run organization with coverage over which county officials could call the shots instead of Wall Street, Vogler said.

Eventually, with a few twists, the dream became reality.

Vogler's involvement continued with membership on related Washington State Association of Counties (WSAC) committees and boards, chair positions on the Washington Counties Insurance Fund (WCIF) and the WCRP Board. He was selected as WCRP's initial President from August 18, 1988, to February 16, 1990. He now is WSAC's Executive Director.

Vogler is quick to share credit with others, among them, Gary Lowe, then-WSAC Executive Director, Vyrle Hill, then-Pacific County Administrative Officer, Frank Bishop, then-Cowlitz County Budget Director, and officials with the pro-pool "cheerleader counties" Thurston, Spokane, Kitsap, Yakima, Grays Harbor and Benton.

Also vital to their cause was gaining the support of county Prosecuting Attorneys, whose staffs were involved in defending claims against their respective counties. One big role of the Pool's first Executive Director, John Crawford, formerly a Benton County Civil Deputy Prosecuting Attorney, was to explain to the PAs that the Pool had no intention of usurping their legal authority.

Tremendous effort went into learning the insurance business, establishing the necessary experience to help determine premium rates, collecting data and conducting studies.

"We were a bunch of government geeks running around competing in the insurance industry," Vogler said. "None of this would have been done without the backing of the WSAC directors. It wouldn't exist today."

Twenty years later, the Pool is run by its own Board, consisting of one representative from each of the 28 member counties, and offers property coverage as well as liability.



Mike Shelton

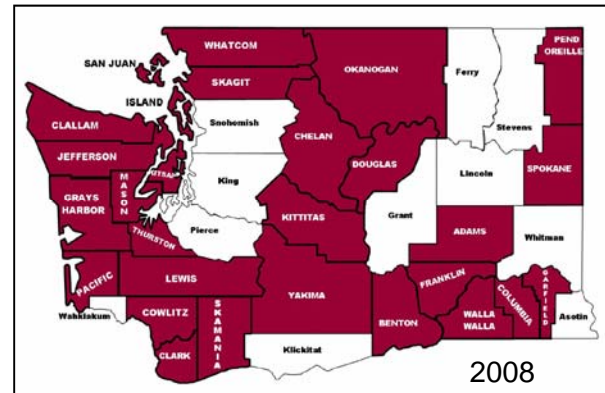
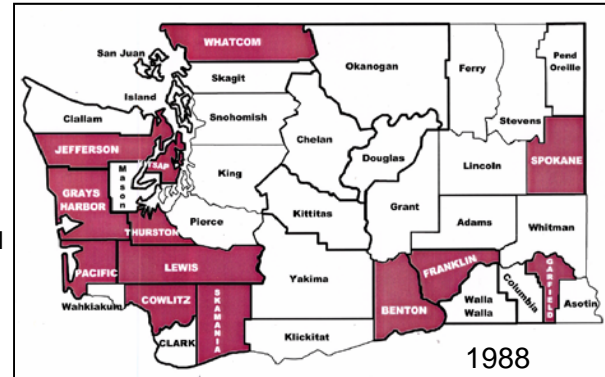
Mike Shelton, who joined WCRP's Board in 1993 as an Island County Commissioner and recently left to assume leadership of WCIF, says he is impressed with the Risk Pool's evolution. "It has become much more sophisticated, a place counties still want to get their coverage ... a better program than counties can get anywhere else."

Future newsletters will include more on WCRP's development and coming plans.

Membership Milestones

The 13 original Member Counties highlighted on upper map joined the Pool in 1988. They were followed over the next few months by Chelan, Clallam, Island, Klickitat, Mason, and San Juan counties.

Over the years, many other counties joined and a few opted out (Thurston for the 1999-00 year, Klickitat in 2002 and Whitman in 2003), bringing current membership to the 28 counties highlighted in lower map.



Member County Joined

Adams	1988
Benton	1988
Chelan	1989
Clallam	1989
Clark	2002
Columbia	1993
Cowlitz	1988
Douglas	2003
Franklin	1988
Garfield	1988
Grays Harbor	1988
Island	1989
Jefferson	1988
Kitsap	1988
Kittitas	2003
Klickitat	1989
Lewis	1988
Mason	1989
Okanogan	1995
Pacific	1988
Pend Oreille	2003
San Juan	1989
Skagit	2003
Skamania	1988
Spokane	1988
Thurston	1988 & 2000
Walla Walla	1995
Whatcom	1988
Whitman	1993
Yakima	1996



Outgoing President Leaves in Good Stead

This is my last President's Message for the *County Connection*, as I will be handing the gavel over to the very capable hands of President-elect **Keith Goehner**, Chelan County Commissioner.

Congratulations to the members of the Board of Directors, Executive Committee and standing committees! Through your work and the work of the Risk Pool's terrific staff, brokers and actuaries, the Washington Coun-

ties Risk Pool has had another fantastic year!

Premiums for the Risk Pool's liability insurance program remained level for a second year in a row. The Risk Pool's property and casualty insurance program membership continued to grow.

Our new Loss Control Coordinator **Jill Lowe** hit the ground running and organized several different training topics throughout the state to rave reviews, as well as continued courses, testing and certification for local Risk Management staff.

Claims Manager **Susan Looker** and her dedicated staff continued their work in the trenches to keep claims within or well under our actuarial projections. In addition to all these great results, the Risk Pool increased its members' equity by over \$1.1 million and established the highest ratio of assets to liabilities ever reported!



Risk Pool photo

WCRP 2006-07 President Steve Clem, right, of Douglas County, is lauded for his many hours of hard work on the Pool's behalf during the past year, and welcomes Keith Goehner of Chelan County as President for the coming year, at the Annual Summer Conference in July.

accomplished through your teamwork and I offer my thanks to each one of you. However, I would like to specifically acknowledge and thank our Executive Director **Vyrle Hill** for his leadership, professionalism and bottom-line results, as well as **Sue Colbo** for her invaluable financial services support and **Kitty Bottemiller** for her work behind the scenes organizing our meetings and publishing the *County Connection*.

The last two years as an officer of the Risk Pool have been very rewarding and I sincerely appreciate the opportunity you provided to me. I encourage each of you to become involved in the Risk Pool as much as you can.

Our Risk Pool will maintain success only through our collaborative efforts as "partners" in this truly quality organization.

Executive Committee

President

Keith Goehner, Chelan County

Secretary/Treasurer

Mark Abernathy, Kitsap County

Committee Members

Diane Oberquell, Thurston County

Toni Gilbert, Clallam County

Rose Elway, Grays Harbor County

Steve Clem, Douglas County

Randy Watts, Whatcom County

Neva Corkrum, Franklin County

Leon Long, Spokane County

Jay Winter, Walla Walla County

Marilyn Butler, Skamania County

Risk Pool Staff

Administration

Vyrle Hill, Executive Director

Sue Colbo, Auditing/Accounting Officer

Claims

Susan Looker, Manager

Mike Cook, Analyst

Candy Drews, Analyst

Tammy Cahill, Representative

Claire Thompson, Assistant

Member Services

David Goldsmith, Manager

Jill Lowe, Loss Control Coordinator

Kitty Bottemiller, Editor/Events

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Published by



**WASHINGTON COUNTIES
RISK POOL**

Created by Counties for Counties



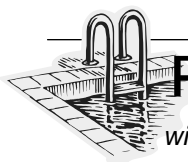
Pool photo

Mark Abernathy, Kitsap County Risk Manager, is the Pool's newly elected Secretary/Treasurer.

The Pool's Mission

- To provide comprehensive and economical risk coverage,
- reduce the frequency and severity of losses, and
- decrease costs incurred in the managing and litigation of claims.

POOL NEWS



Poolside

with Executive Director
Vyrle Hill



Vyrle Hill

This column highlights a few Pool-related tidbits but please read about other Pool happenings elsewhere in this newsletter.

Celebration Time: The Washington Counties Risk Pool is in the process

of delivering for its member counties its 20th annual Joint Self-Insurance Liability Policy. Yes, it's true - it may seem to some (including me) like only yesterday, but August 18, 2008, will mark the Pool's 20th anniversary. How fast the past 20 years have passed!

And without fanfare, the first year of operations in our new Mottman Plaza headquarters was just completed. Our facility at 2558 RW Johnson Road SW in Tumwater was purchased in conjunction with the Washington Counties Insurance Fund and was first occupied in early September last year.

Broker Services: On September 20, Willis of Seattle Inc.'s Managing Partner Theresa Clune called to confirm that agreement had been reached in negotiations between Willis and Arthur J. Gallagher Risk Management Services.

This results in the remainder of the Pool's broker services agreement being transferred from Willis to Arthur J. Gallagher. It will fulfill the Pool's desire to continue its relationship with longtime account executive Mike Croke and associate Liz Miser at their new positions with Arthur J. Gallagher RMS, that they assumed in early August. Contact us if you need to contact Mike or Liz. And special thanks to Terri, Hans, Pam, Lee and the others from Willis for their understanding and support during the interim.

2007-08 Officers and Executive Committeepersons: During the Annual Board of Directors Meeting July 27, Chelan County Commissioner **Keith Goehner** was elected WCRP President and Kitsap County Risk Manager **Mark Abernathy** was elected WCRP Secretary/Treasurer for 2007-08. Along with **Toni Gilbert**, Clallam County, **Steve**

Clem, Douglas County, **Diane Oberquell**, Thurston County, and **Randy Watts**, Whatcom County, they will be joined on the WCRP 2007-08 Executive Committee by **Neva Corkrum**, Franklin County, **Marilyn Butler**, Skamania County, **Leon Long**, Spokane County, and **Jay Winter**, Walla Walla County, who were elected to three-year terms commencing October 1, and **Rose Elway**, Grays Harbor County, who was selected to fill the unexpired term resulting from the resignation of Island County's **Mike Shelton**.

Membership Compact Compliance Audits: Member Services Manager **David Goldsmith** continues in our quest to complete the initial round of compliance audits by year's end. He's finished the field reviews, but scheduling conflicts will delay until November presentation of the final results to one or more counties.

Management and Supervisory Training: Almost since joining our staff in January, Loss Control Coordinator **Jill Lowe** has been diligently coordinating a *Management and Supervisory Training* course for presentation to member counties' administrative and management staffs. She attended several similar presentations and screened potential presenters. Connie Poulsen and Patricia Buchanan were ultimately selected as presenters for the Pool's course.

Thanks to the Pool's Board of Directors for approving the inclusion of this enhanced training in the forthcoming year's budget and work plan, and to ACE USA, the provider of the primary layer of the Pool's liability reinsurance program, and its Public Entity Senior Vice President Rich Vincelette for the financial assistance resulting from their loss control reinvestment plan that is making this training possible.

Connie Poulsen is Director of Leadership and Management Education with Peninsula College and has served recently as lead trainer for Clallam County's supervisor classes. She assisted with the course outline and format for the upcoming training, and she will present supervisory skills during the first two days of each session.

Pat Buchanan is a shareholder at Paterson Buchanan Fobes Leitch Kalzer &

Waechter. Her law practice includes both professional and general liability defense work with emphasis on employment law and municipality and school operations. She will present a general employment law primer during the final half-day of each session.

Our goal is to present 15 2½-day sessions during FY-2008, 13 of which already have been scheduled in the following counties: Benton, Clark, Franklin, Jefferson, Lewis, Mason, Pacific, Pend Oreille, San Juan, Skagit, Skamania, Thurston and Walla Walla. Specifics are posted on our Web site. Sessions are also planned in Chelan and Okanogan counties and details on those will be coming shortly.

Executive Director Contact: Share your comments, suggestions, and oh yes, criticisms. Direct these to Vyrle Hill – WCRP Executive Director, 2558 RW Johnson Road SW, Suite 106, Tumwater WA 98512-6103; OR phone: (360) 292-4500 ext. 101, (360) 292-4495 direct, (360)292-4501 fax, or (360) 480-2116 mobile.

WCRP STAFF NEWS

Member Services

On the Audit Trail

Well, some nine months and 3,000 miles later, the field audits are complete and all drafts are written!

Pending responses from a couple more counties, all drafts will be final by early October. My personal schedule takes me to China and Tibet for the month of September and into early October. Upon my return, all remaining final audits will be presented to the applicable County Commissioners/Councils.

Conducting these audits has been a very eye-opening exercise for me personally and it will be for the Pool as well, once the results are fully analyzed and put into report form. Anecdotally, the results are that all member counties are actively involved in risk management at the home front to the extent necessary for their jurisdiction.

Clearly the larger, higher-deductible counties have more extensive and ag-

Staff News continued on Page 4

STAFF NEWS from page 3

gressive programs than do the smaller, low-deductible counties. I'm pleased to report that all counties are aware of areas of exposure and are working to manage identified risks.

This being said, there is room for improvement to gain full compliance with the Pool's adopted risk and claim management policies, largely in the area of risk transfer and contract management, and special events. All member counties have a process but some are without an adopted policy base to guide internal compliance or completeness.

An example is a formal procedure to have filed a certificate of insurance naming the county as an additional insured prior to work being performed under contract. While this can be an annoying detail, it does provide further protection to the county and is a good business practice.

Again, thanks to all member counties and risk management teams for their help. I look forward to presenting my full report to the membership at our Fall Session in November (along with my travel log of China and Tibet - only kidding). See you in Bremerton!

David Goldsmith
Member Services Manager

Loss Control

Recently I attended *Risk Management Considerations in Public Safety Operations*, a lively and informative presentation by Gordon Graham. He asked the 167 attendees if any had a decision-making process. Two hands went up (mine wasn't one of them.)

It had never occurred to me to have such a process although what he said made great sense. To me, the most important aspect of his process is:

Do you have discretionary time to make this decision? If so, use it wisely. Consult your county expert (Risk Manager, Human Resource Manager, Prosecuting Attorney, etc.) before acting on something that is not a task that you perform on a regular basis.

The following steps were outlined in the presentation. I hope you find them useful:

1. Identify and clarify the issue. What is it about? What am I being asked to do?
2. Am I able to address this issue? If yes, handle it now by moving to #3. If it isn't within your current job description, then get it to someone who can handle it now and follow up to see it got handled.
3. Is there discretionary time or not? If you don't handle this issue frequently, take time to think the issue through using the next four steps of this process.
4. Determine what current policy says about this issue. If there is no policy, does the mission statement apply?
5. What is our past practice regarding this issue? Failure to treat citizens and co-workers consistently can cause problems. If you deviate from the norm, you have to have specific articulated facts to justify this deviation from the way you normally perform this task.
6. Is it the right thing to do under the circumstances? Every task we get has an ethical concern, so every decision we make must include an ethical analysis.
7. What are the potential consequences of my decision? Intended? Unintended? Short term, long-term issues?
8. Make and implement your decision. (Be your supervisor gets a "heads-up" before implementation if the decision is at all "dicey".)
9. Document as necessary.
10. Learn from and share your experience.

As I stated earlier, the use of discretionary time to think things through was a critical part of this decision-making process. Technology and work load heavily influence how quickly we feel we need to make a decision.

Using discretionary time could significantly reduce some of those decisions that come back to haunt us.

Jill Lowe
Loss Control Coordinator

Claims Division

It's been a fast and busy summer for us. I hope everyone has enjoyed theirs. As we are winding down our pol-

icy year, it too has gone by quickly.

The appeal was recently filed in the *Broyles, et. al. vs. Thurston County, et. al.* case. As most of you know, this employment liability case went to trial last fall and the jury awarded a sizable verdict. We remain hopeful that an appeal will be successful, and will keep you updated.

I recently attended the Risk Pool-sponsored *Management and Supervisory* training with instructors Connie Poulsen and Patricia Buchanan. It was excellent and is highly recommended for anyone needing to learn or brush-up on their skills and knowledge in the employment/supervisory arena.

Check out this and other training opportunities at www.wacounties.org/wcrp then by clicking on the TRAINING link.

At the WCRP Fall Session, we will have a Roundtable for Claims Administrators and Risk Managers the afternoon of November 7 (see Fall Session details on Page 7). As requested at the last Roundtable, we will discuss Personal Injury Protection (PIP) and Underinsured/Uninsured (UM) coverage, and the "other insurance" clause in the Risk Pool policy. There will also be time to "roundtable" any other hot topics. We look forward to seeing you there.

As you may be aware, insurance-related Referendum 67 will appear on the fall ballot. We encourage you to study this matter carefully prior to casting your vote.

The difficulties of life are intended to make us better, not bitter. - Author Unknown.

As always, please feel free to contact us with any comments or questions.

Susan Looker
Claims Manager

County Claim Form Improved

If you submit claims to the Risk Pool using the Web-based County Claim Form, please be aware that the form is being enhanced in response to your suggestions. If/when you have questions regarding this electronic claims-filing tool, please contact Claire Thompson, WCRP Claims Assistant, at 360-292-4480, or Claire@wcrp.wa.gov



MEMBER NEWS

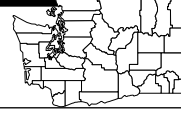


Photo courtesy Puyallup Fair

They're off with the young rider hanging on like heck in this publicity photo of a local Mutton Bustin' event.

Benton County

Contracts training drew 34 participants from various county departments on September 13, including HR/Risk Manager **Melina Wenner**, whom with her staff, organized the training. **Vyrle Hill**, Pool Executive Director, **Alan Miles**, Kitsap County Senior Deputy Prosecuting Attorney, and **Mike Croke** teamed to provide instruction.

Clark County

Risk Manager **Mark Wilsdon** served as keynote speaker for the Oregon Trail Chapter of the International Association of Administrative Professionals (IAAP) in Portland, Ore., at the chapter's meeting September 12. His *So You Think You Are Covered!* presentation approached the topic from personal and business angles, touching on the exposures involved for being a good Samaritan, an employee in various situations, on personal business and in such roles as neighborhood soccer mom. **Judy Finsson**, who works with Mark and has provided valuable training support for the Pool, is an IAAP member.

Also, former Clark Risk Manager **Ed Pavone** who retired in May re-

cently visited the Risk Pool office, where he regaled the staff with tales of his leisure travels to Italy's Amalfi Coast. While sightseeing, Ed and wife Charlene happened upon the former mansion of some Sicilian, shall we say, celebrities (*not* relatives, Ed assures us), and discovered that it is now an upscale hotel. "We were reasonably sure they weren't going to shoot us," Ed said. He looks as if not punching a daily time clock agrees with him well!

Cowlitz County

Ever on the lookout for interesting and thought-provoking newsbits, Risk Manager **Clyde Carpenter** graciously sent in an item from the local paper depicting a relatively new and upcoming rodeo event that took place at the county fairground this summer - Mutton Bustin'. As it involves cute kids and farm animals, you can imagine its potential for high entertainment (not to mention a bit of a headache for the uninitiated Risk Manager.)

Small children mount big sheep, which generally aren't used to being ridden, the gate flies open, and the rider tries to hang on as long as possible (usually a few seconds). A tamer version of the bucking bronco, this event is becoming a big hit with rodeo crowds. Clyde notes that some Risk Managers at recent Special Events Coverage training by Willis were unfamiliar with it but are quickly learning the ropes. One requirement helping prevent injuries is the wearing of protective helmets (see pic above).

Island County

Phil Bakke has been appointed to the District 1 position on the Board of Commissioners by Commissioners **Mac McDowell** and **John Dean**, to replace Commissioner Mike Shelton, who recently resigned after 15 years in that post to assume the Executive Director position at the Washington Counties Insurance Fund September 1. He succeeds Mark Fukuhara, who returned to his home state of Hawaii over the summer.

Bakke is a 12-year employee of the county, stepping down as Planning Director for the commission seat. He is a graduate of Western Washington Uni-



Risk Pool photo

Mike Shelton listens as praise and a few professional travel stories are poured on by fellow Board Member/Thurston County Commissioner Diane Oberquell at the WCRP Annual Board Meeting in July.

versity and University of Washington, and began as Commissioner September 10. One of his first tasks involved a proposal to appoint **Jeff Tate**, his former Planning assistant, as his replacement. Tate, who was appointed temporary director a few days earlier, was promoted by the BoCC to the permanent position.

In other news, Dean has been named to take Mike's place as the county's representative on the WCRP Board, with General Services Manager **Betty Kemp** continuing as WCRP Board Alternate.

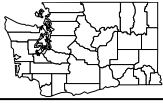
Mike was designated Island County's Director on the Pool Board in January 1993, and attended 49 of 52 meetings to date. He also has served on the Pool's Executive Committee since October 1993. He is the only Risk Pool President/Board Chair to have served two terms, beginning in 1995. He also served on the Pool's Finance Committee, chairing that group in 2006-2007.



John Dean

Dean is former editor and associate publisher of the *Stanwood/Camano News*, where he worked 26 years before assuming BoCC duties January 1. He and wife Julie, a hospital nursing supervisor, live on south Camano Island, have two children and a grandson. Dean graduated

Member News continued on Page 6



MEMBER NEWS



MEMBER COUNTY NEWS

from Page 5

from St. Patrick's College Seminary in California with a BA in Humanities. He has numerous community involvements with a philanthropic foundation, fairs and senior centers. He was Stanwood-Camano's 1986 Man of the Year, has co-authored a history book and is an accomplished musician. He says he looks forward to learning more about risk management.

Kitsap County

Timothy Perez joined the county's Risk Management staff July 9, following the retirement of **Maureen Walker** in June.

Tim attended Central Washington University and has a BS in Safety & Health Management. He began his career as a Safety Specialist with the North Central Region DOT in Wenatchee, where he learned the importance of safety programs and his role as a safety and health professional.

In 1999 he accepted the position of Safety Engineer with Johnson Controls World Services at the Naval Submarine Base Bangor in Silverdale, which was responsible for maintenance, repair, and support of all facilities, utilities, refuse, waste, security, vehicles, equipment, construction management and custodial services.

There he provided program development, implementation and oversight of Environmental, Safety & Health, Industrial Hygiene, and Workers Comp Programs. In 2005, He was promoted to ESH Manager with a staff of five and served in that capacity until the contract ended. In 2006, Tim received his MBA from City University with a Project Management specialty.

His primary duties as a Risk Management Analyst for Kitsap include maintaining Safety and Loss Control programs, Accident/Incident Investigation and Prevention, Property & Liability Claims, and Workers Comp. Tim and wife Danielle, who works for the state, have two young daughters. Tim is a Kitsap Peninsula native, and says he can't think of a better place to work, live

and raise a family.

Lewis County

Michael Strozyk has been selected by the BoCC as permanent Director of the county's reorganized Central Services Department, after having served as Interim Director for the past several months.

Risk Manager **Harry Green** reports that Michael has been employed by Lewis County since April 2004 as E911 Communications Manager, where he was responsible for the 911 Communications Center and Radio Services Division. He brings over 17 years of governmental experience to the position.

In his new job, Michael is responsible for four departmental divisions: the E911 Center, Information Technology, Facilities and Southwest Washington Fair, more than 75 full-time employees and annual budgets exceeding \$8 million. Michael is a graduate of Washington State University and lives in Chehalis, having recently moved from the Puyallup area.

Skamania County

Debi Van Camp, formerly the county's HR Specialist, was promoted by the BoCC over the summer to the position of Assistant Risk Manager, Administrative Services Director **Marilyn Butler** announced. Debi continues to serve as the county's Alternate to the WCRP Board, and Marilyn, as the county's WCRP Board Director.

Also making the news in Skamania is the continued fall-out from the massive Rock Creek mudslide which began in the Stevenson area during heavy rainfall



Photo from Skamania County Web site

Prepping for the next heavy weather: recent pile-driving activity in Rock Creek, Skamania County.

last winter. Dredging of the creek is now underway to allow pilings to be driven on the bridge's upstream side. This should deflect debris away from bridge supports as it moves downstream. More work is scheduled soon further upstream to reduce the threat of damage to the bridge and utilities.

In addition, the area has recently experienced forest fires which at one point engulfed at least 250 acres, and that already has claimed four hillside homes, a vacant house and a couple of old lumber mill sites. County officials recently received confirmation from FEMA that it will be getting funding for fire-management.

Also, the county recently renewed its membership in the Evergreen Safety Council, launching its 11th year with the organization.

Spokane County

Cliff Berg and **Cindy Close** of the county's Risk Management staff recently graduated from a *Health and Safety Technicians* certification course developed and offered by Evergreen Safety Council.

The 13-day course delves into four elements: safety sciences, safety leadership, industrial hygiene and general safety.



TRAINING & EVENTS




Risk Pool photo
Management expert Connie Poulsen is helping the WCRP with several employment-related courses.

Pacific County employees attended a workshop on *Customer Service in the Public Sector* presented by Connie Poulsen on July 11 in South Bend. Approximately 15 employees took part in the training.

September sessions of the WCRP-sponsored *Understanding the Public Records Act 2007* with attorney John Justice instructing, met in

Spokane, Wenatchee, Vancouver and Port Orchard, and involved approximately 200 attendees. This is in addition to sessions held earlier in the summer in Bellingham, Pasco and Olympia, which drew approximately 180 attendees.

Approximately 40 employees representing half of WCRP's member counties turned out for the Pool-sponsored class on *The Basics of Collision Investigation* with instructor Bill Cooper on September 25 in Ellensburg. Cooper, a retired police chief and author of many materials on collision investigation, has been a frequent trainer for the Pool on related topics over the years.

Upcoming Courses

Next up in WCRP's *Focus* training series is *Prevention of In-Custody Deaths* with Dr. John Peters as instructor on October 10 in Spokane and October 11 in Federal Way. For details, go to www.wacounties.org/wcrp, then click on TRAINING link.

Seventeen students are registered to attend the review of, then take the exam for, the *Risk Management for Public Entities* course November 5-7, in Bremerton. This is the latest Pool-supported training offered to help counties satisfy their Membership Compact requirements.

Plans are in the works to offer in-depth *Management and Supervisory* training to Risk Pool member counties in several locations around the state during the coming months.



Risk Pool photo

Vickie Chambers, left, of Island County, and **Tammy Devlin**, Thurston County, share break time during the *Arbinger Leadership Training* offered at WCRP's Summer Conference in July in Leavenworth.

The 2-1/2-day sessions stem from one held August 28-30 in Tacoma and attended by three dozen employees from 12 WCRP member counties. They were asked to critique the curriculum and presentation, which has been refined based on their input.

Subject matter emphasizes management and employment law-related topics. Leadership/management expert Connie Poulsen and attorney Pat Buchanan instruct. For details and a list of where the courses will meet, go to www.wacounties.org/wcrp and click on TRAINING link.

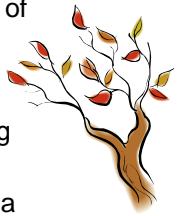
Traffic Safety Conference Meets in Late October

The Annual Traffic Safety Conference sponsored by Evergreen Safety Council meets in Seattle (Southcenter) October 25 and 26.

Topics include dealing with distracted, drowsy and aggressive drivers, properly and legally securing your load and fleet safety management. Speakers include Richard Terrilli, Administrator of OSHA Region X, and Ross Bentley, founder of ESC's Swerve Driver Training. For details, go to www.esc.org or call 800-521-0778.

Fall Session on Kitsap Peninsula in November

Bremerton is the site of WCRP's Fall Session, which includes a Board Work Session November 8 and Fall Meeting November 9.



Also on the schedule is a Claims Administrators and Risk Managers Roundtable session on the 7th.

In addition, new Board Member orientation/training and organizational planning are on the week's agenda. Meetings will take place in the Kitsap Conference Center-Bremerton Harbor-side at 100 Washington Ave. in Bremerton.

The Pool has reserved a block of overnight rooms for the event at the Hampton Inn next door. Reservation deadline is Monday, October 22, after which whatever space is not spoken for will be released to the general public.

For reservations, call (360) 405-0200.

Members Pass Exam in Leavenworth

Congrats to the following for successfully completing the *Intro to Claims* course, a review of which was offered by WCRP last May in Yakima. Several students chose to take their exam at the Risk Pool's Summer Conference in July: **Drew Woods**, Columbia County; **Tawni Shepherd**, Lewis County; and **Tim Perez**, Kitsap County.

The following successfully completed the *Intro to Property and Liability Insurance* course/exam: **Toni Gilbert** and **Marge Upham** of Clallam County; **Linda Reimer**, Adams County; **Ryan Verhulp**, Franklin County; and **Vickie Chambers**, Island County.

Completing this course material, provided by the Insurance Institute of America, helps counties satisfy their Risk Pool Membership Compact requirements.



Public-Entity Pools Urged to Address Concern Over FEMA Policy Change with Support Groups

Advocates for public-entity insurance pools are closely eyeing a move by the Federal Emergency Management Agency involving what they believe is a significant change in FEMA policy for reimbursement of deductible and other uninsured losses through the Public Assistance program.

According to Harold Pumford, Chief Executive Officer for the Association of Governmental Risk Pools (AGRiP), concern is rising over a memo issued by FEMA June 4 that potentially affects all public entities, whether covered by a pool, insured by an insurance company, or self-insured. In an AGRiP special report released August 23, Pumford says

his organization is supporting efforts by state and national organizations that represent public entities to address this issue with FEMA and Congress.

Pumford's recent message was directed to all AGRiP member contacts. However, it is of interest primarily to those involved in providing property coverage to public entities (which includes WCRP).

The change, outlined in FEMA Fact Sheet 9580.3 (available at http://www.fema.gov/government/grant/pa/9580_3.shtm) states that FEMA won't pay the same type of deductible it has in the past, and is interpreted to mean local governments could be responsible for millions of dollars in deductibles.

Leslie Wollack of the National

League of Cities Federal Relations Center is attempting to contact FEMA and other associations about ramifications of the move, calling her understanding of the change "a huge problem, particularly for states that have been hit by multiple storms."

She said her organization will work with the NLC's Risk Information Sharing Consortium and state leagues to fight such a change, and encourages pool officials to address the issue with their respective state as well as any national organizations which represent their members.

WCRP Executive Director Vyrle Hill is monitoring related discussion and developments on this issue with AGRiP, the Public Risk Management Association (PRIMA) and others.

Change in LGSI Leadership Announced by State

The Local Government Self-Insurance Program of the state Office of Financial Management has a new Administrator. She is Shannon Stuber, formerly an Assistant Audit Manager with the State Auditors Office.

Shannon has been the SAO's Local Government Risk Pool Specialist, SAO representative to the State Property and Liability Advisory Board, and the SAO lead on developing consistent state oversight of joint local government self-insured risk pools.

Shannon started in her new position September 24, and can be reached at (360) 902-7311. She replaces Tim Hays, who recently accepted an Investment Analyst position with the state Office of the Insurance Commissioner.

Don Johnsen will continue as LGSI Examiner principally responsible for local government self-insured employee health benefits programs.

In announcing this change, Lucy Isaki, Senior Assistant Director and Legal Counsel at OFM, asks that anyone with questions contact Don at don.johnsen@ofm.wa.gov or (360) 902-7308.

OT Pay Not Required for Off-Duty Workers Asked to Carry Pagers

In a recent Michigan case involving police officers employed by a County Airport Authority, the Sixth Circuit Court held that they were not entitled to overtime pay under the Fair Labor and Standards Act for off-duty time during which they were required to carry pagers.

Plaintiffs were required to carry pagers at all times when not on duty and respond immediately if paged.

The Court concluded that the lower Court's grant of summary judgment to the defendants was appropriate because the plaintiffs failed to show that the on-call policy imposed "burdens that seriously interfere(d) with their ability to use the time for personal pursuits."

Specifically, the Court noted that the plaintiffs were summoned to work

only infrequently; the City had no discipline policy for failure to respond to a page; the pages operated on a statewide basis allowing plaintiffs to travel throughout Michigan in their off-duty time, and plaintiffs could engage in their regular activities while off-duty.

The Court also held that the emergency policy in place after September 11, requiring plaintiffs to remain close to home for enhanced availability, did not entitle them to overtime, as the policy did not severely restrict the plaintiffs' personal activities.

This case review from Adair v. Charter County of Wayne, 452 F.3d 482 (6th Cir. June 22, 2006) was discussed during a presentation on "Public Sector Human Resource Management Case Law Update" by Spencer Fane Britt & Browne LLP of Omaha.

