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NEWS & RISK MANAGEMENT REVIEW

WINTER 2020

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SDAO Mission

The mission of the Special Districts Association of Oregon is to assist special service districts in providing cost-effective and efficient public services to the people of Oregon.

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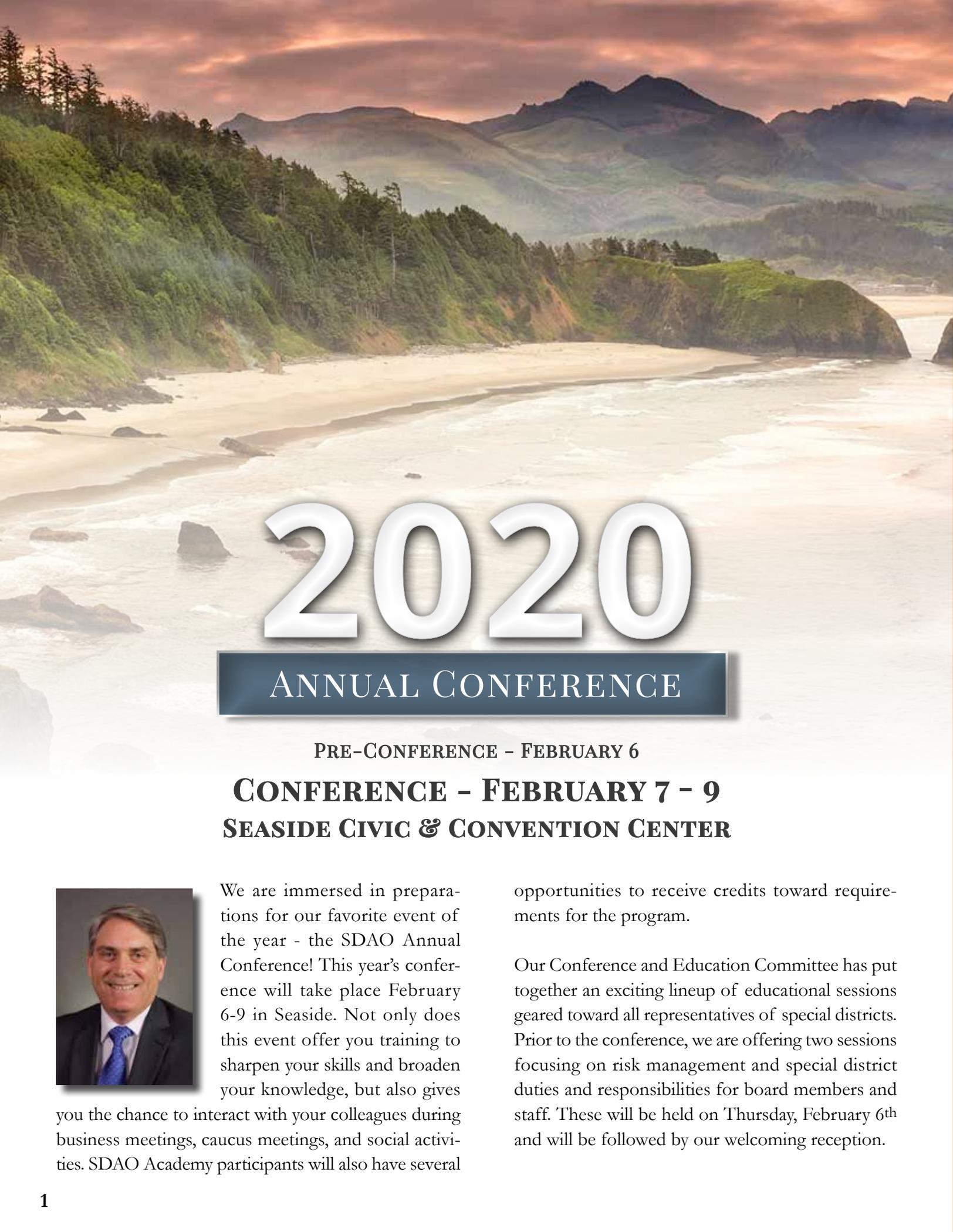
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2020

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

PRE-CONFERENCE - FEBRUARY 6

CONFERENCE - FEBRUARY 7 - 9

SEASIDE CIVIC & CONVENTION CENTER



We are immersed in preparations for our favorite event of the year - the SDAO Annual Conference! This year's conference will take place February 6-9 in Seaside. Not only does this event offer you training to sharpen your skills and broaden your knowledge, but also gives you the chance to interact with your colleagues during business meetings, caucus meetings, and social activities. SDAO Academy participants will also have several

opportunities to receive credits toward requirements for the program.

Our Conference and Education Committee has put together an exciting lineup of educational sessions geared toward all representatives of special districts. Prior to the conference, we are offering two sessions focusing on risk management and special district duties and responsibilities for board members and staff. These will be held on Thursday, February 6th and will be followed by our welcoming reception.

The next morning, Mark Scharenbroich will kick off the conference with a presentation about how to make meaningful connections in both your professional and personal life. Throughout the day, the Exhibitor Trade Show will give attendees the chance to visit with exhibitors and sponsors and learn about their products and services. Friday will be filled with educational sessions, caucus meetings, and the Exhibitor Reception. Saturday will feature more breakout sessions, the SDAO Annual Business Meeting, and Awards Banquet. The day's festivities will wrap up with an improv comedy show brought to you by CSz Portland. The show (match) will feature two teams of professional players competing for laughs and points with a referee. We will close out the conference on Sunday morning with breakfast and raffle prizes.

I encourage you to register for the conference as soon as possible. If your district has not sent an individual to the conference in the last three years, your district is eligible for one complimentary registration.

We have emailed and mailed this offer to key contacts of member districts that qualify.

For registration, hotel information and conference details, please visit the conference website at www.cvent.com/d/chqzr1. If you have any questions, please contact our Member Services team at 800-285-5461 or MemberServices@sdao.com.

I hope to see you in Seaside!



We Are Here to **HELP**

Email us at help@sdao.com

Running a special district is no easy task. It seems that there's always something that comes up, and after turning to a quick Internet search, you find yourself more confused than before. Let SDAO help. When things aren't clear or you need assistance with an issue that's bigger than you anticipated, reach out to us. We are here for your pre-loss issues, technical assistance requests, human resources support, research needs, and anything else you may need help with.

Special Districts CONSULTING SERVICES

The Consulting Services Program has had a great year assisting and supporting our members. With the update and distribution of the Consulting Services Program brochure, we have received many calls from districts asking for assistance with management recruitment, organizational assessments, basic planning, and board trainings.

We recently wrapped up the SDAO regional board trainings, presented by Eileen Eakins and George Dunkel and held in Tigard, Newport, Redmond, Medford and Cottage Grove. The feedback from members that attended the trainings has been very positive. Eileen and George will be presenting together again at the SDAO Annual Conference in Seaside; so if you missed this training, make sure you attend their presentation in February.

It is our continued vision to be the premier choice and the first call by our members for exceptional consulting

services. We are ready to take your call and assist you with organizational assessments, management recruitments, basic planning, special projects and more. Even if you are not sure if we can help, please call or email us and we will be happy to point you in the right direction for services. We are here for you! And don't forget that we offer up to **eight hours of free consulting services** by one or more of our consultants. Some issues may require more time. After your first eight hours are exhausted, you will have the option of continuing at an hourly rate.

Our consultants are all experienced, professional practitioners who have worked in leadership roles in special districts throughout Oregon for a minimum of 25 years each. Their hands on experience provides them with a depth of knowledge, experience, and professional connections that will help members address troubling personnel, board, community, financial, and operational issues.



As we go into the new year, we would like to extend gratitude to all of our members. Thank you for making us the first call for your organization's needs. Whether it be for organizational assessments, management recruitments, basic planning, or any of your other special projects, we are happy to serve you now and in the future.

This year, the Consulting Services Program completed 25 Board Practice Assessments, 16 board trainings,

two organizational assessments, facilitated seven management recruitments, and assisted with many other special projects.

The new year will bring many changes for the Consulting Services Program. Stay tuned.

From all of us in the Consulting Services Program - thank you for allowing us to be a part of your everyday.



Meet Bob Keefer, *Senior Consultant*

How did you come to be a consultant for SDAO?

I served on the SDAO Board for 12 years and the Legislative Committee for 10, where I witnessed the great work SDAO does on behalf of special districts throughout Oregon. I wanted to be part of the team that would continue to do this great work. Upon retiring from the Willamalane Park

and Recreation District in 2016, I sensed that my 38 years in parks and recreation executive leadership experience could be used to help special districts address operational and planning issues. George Dunkel and Frank Stratton invited me to the team where I have been able to assist several park and recreation districts with executive director recruitment, succession planning, project planning, and executive director mentoring. I was also asked to develop an operation manual for the Consulting Services Program.

What excites you most about the work you do for SDAO?

Having the opportunity to create the “aha” moment for a district is what really excites me about my position. Providing clarity on an issue, giving advice on a project that assists the district to move from inaction to action, or just having

a board member state, “Thank you, we could not have done this without you,” really motivates my passion for this work.

Tell us about your life outside of your day job(s).

When I am not working, my life is centered around my family. My wife, Christi, and I have been married for 41 years and have two grown, wonderful daughters and four grandkids. They all keep me very busy. Outside of that, I enjoy playing golf, pickleball, and practically any other sport. Christi and I enjoy traveling, camping, and hiking. I serve on the Sisters Park and Recreation District Board of Directors, which keeps me involved directly in my profession and allows me to give back to my community.



INTERNSHIP GRANT PROGRAM

Application Deadline:
5pm on Friday, April 17, 2020

SDAO members are eligible to apply for a grant through the SDAO Internship Grant Program. The intent of this program is to assist districts 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.

Interns must be hired by the district as temporary employees to be in compliance with wage and hour laws relative to compensating student interns. A freshman through junior college-level student will need to be hired to qualify for funding of this grant. The maximum grant per district is \$3,000; the funding must be matched by the district by 50%. For example, you may be eligible to receive up to \$3,000 on your request for a project that will cost your district \$6,000 or more. You may be eligible to receive up to a maximum of \$2,100 on your request for a project that will cost your district \$4,200. SDAO may not fund all grant requests.

The SDAO Awards Committee will review each application to determine which projects are eligible to receive funding. **Funds will be disbursed by July 1.**

To be considered, your completed Internship Grant Program application must be received by SDAO by **5pm on Friday, April 17, 2020**. Submit your completed application by mail to SDAO, PO Box 12613, Salem, Oregon 97309; by e-mail to sdao@sdao.com; or by fax to 503-371-4781. Attach a separate sheet if necessary.

Download the Internship Grant Program application at <http://ref.sdao.com/grants/20internship.pdf>





NEW Professional Development Program

SDAO ACADEMY



Succession planning and preparing special district employees to take on management roles is becoming increasingly important with many managers beginning to retire. To help your district better prepare for the future of these leadership positions, we have developed a professional development program designed specifically for special district employees.

The SDAO Academy offers current, in-depth training and education opportunities in three specialty areas including district management, human resources and personnel management, and risk management and operations. Knowledge and skills in these subjects are critical elements required for success as a leader at a special district.

Program completion is based on receiving 100 credits of training. Once enrolled, SDAO Academy participants will have three years to complete the program.

Benefits of enrollment include:

- Better understanding of the regulations and risks associated with everyday operations
- Development of leadership and management skills
- Improvement of chances for promotion and advancement
- Building of confidence in skills and proficiency of job duties

Costs associated with attending trainings are the responsibility of the district. However, enrollment in the SDAO Academy is free of charge. We encourage you to visit www.sdao.com/s4/programs/sdao-academy.aspx to learn more about the program and download an enrollment form and self-tracking worksheet.

We look forward to seeing the future leaders of your district participate in the SDAO Academy.

If you have any questions, please contact SDAO Member Services at 800-285-5461 or email memberservices@sdao.com.

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Scholarship & Grant Fund

Programs and trainings designed to assist with the successful operation of a local government entity can often be cost-restrictive for many of our members. In September, the SDAO Board of Directors approved the formation of the SDAO Scholarship and Grant Fund to help districts with these costs. This new fund is designed to be a resource for members to utilize for education, training, and funding of various association-defined programs related to the operation of a special district.

Through the generosity of our donors and any profits generated from the SDAO Member Scholarship Golf Tournament, we are able to fund:

- SDAO/SDIS training registration fees for districts with minimal funds for education

- Outside educational opportunities for special district representatives such as conferences or trainings
- SDAO Internship Grant Program
- Other related programs and services

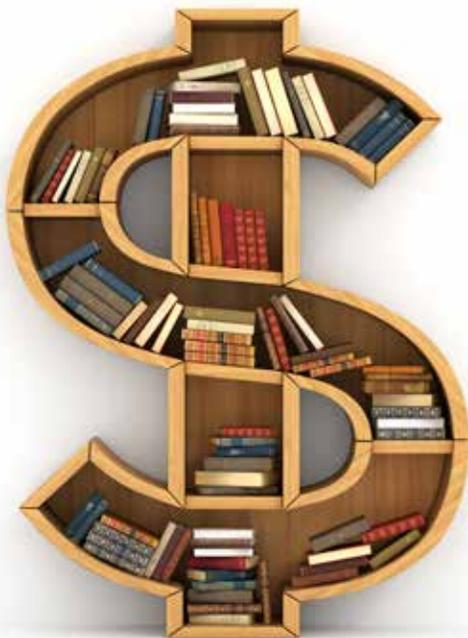
Active board members or employees of an SDAO member district can apply for a scholarship through the SDAO Scholarship and Grant Fund that may be used for any SDAO or SDIS course or approved outside educational opportunity such as affiliate conferences or trainings.

Selection Process

Applications will be reviewed by a staff committee five times per year. The committee will select the recipients based on pre-determined selection criteria. Scholarship recipients will be notified within five business days following the committee meeting. Meetings will take place one week following each deadline. For more information, please visit our website at <http://www.sdao.com/s4/programs/scholarship-fund.aspx>.

2020 Application Deadlines

- January 23**
- March 20**
- May 31**
- August 30**
- October 23**



SDAO Members *in the* news

Find additional news clippings online at www.sdao.com > Newsroom

Solar Panels Help Glide Firefighters Save Energy **KEZI.com | 11/17/2019**

The Glide Rural Fire Protection District now has 175 solar panels on top of their building to help them save energy. The entire system cost more than \$160,000 to install and was paid for by Pacific Power's Blue Sky program and Energy Trust Oregon. Fire officials said the 60.125 kW system will collect energy through the solar panels and provide more than 30% of the fire station's power during the winter. They also said the district put out \$40,000 to install a 20 kWh battery back-up system just in case of a major power outage.

Please visit <http://bit.ly/2OWdBcf> to read more.

Morrow County Health District Performs Well **East Oregonian | 10/19/2019**

The Oregon Office of Rural Health recently recognized the Morrow County Health District for outstanding achievements. The district's Quality Department received an award as a Top Performer

in quality reporting and improvement efforts. The Oregon Office of Rural Health recognizes Critical Access Hospitals in Oregon for their outstanding work as proactive leaders in ensuring they are prepared to meet and exceed quality measures.

Please visit <http://bit.ly/2RpH0xi> to read more.

Port Busy and Doing Well **Newport News Times | 11/21/2019**

The Port of Toledo is busy and doing well as the board of commissioners discussed upcoming projects at its regular meeting on Tuesday, Nov. 19. The port recently purchased and took delivery of a pre-engineered, 80 by 150-foot metal building, which will allow work on vessels all year long, as well as provide a contained area for sandblasting and painting. "We've been operating from a plan all along," said Port Manager Bud Shoemaker. "Ports in Oregon are required to have a business plan and an investment plan, too."

Please visit <http://bit.ly/2Ru2Srk> to read more.



wages to certain projects in enterprise zones and a host of water-related topics including a “101” on soil and water conservation districts, a review of the failing septic system loan program, drinking and wastewater issues surrounding the emerging concerns with Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl substances also known as PFAS, and “non-flushable wipes” to name a few.

On November 20th the Office of Economic Analysis (OEA) provided their second of eight quarterly revenue forecasts for the biennium. The forecast was presented to a joint meeting of the Senate Finance and Revenue and House Revenue Committees. The revenue outlook appears stable, but concerns remain that a national recession could occur next year. Another risk includes whether the newly enacted corporate activity tax will produce the estimated revenue that the state projected it would receive. The good news is that revenue continues to exceed expectations. No personal income tax kicker is anticipated to “kick” in 2021 and Oregon’s unemployment is still near 4%. Importantly, wage growth has brought Oregon’s median household income above the national average for the first time since 1979. Finally, the OEA has projected the 2019 personal income tax kicker credit will total just under \$1.7 billion. This money will be returned to taxpayers in the form of a credit on 2019 returns filed next year.

Democrats have made it no secret that they continue to want to pass new limits on the amount of carbon being emitted and place a charge on large industrial emitters. One of the looming questions about the upcoming short session is whether the Republicans, in both chambers, will show up. It is rumored that there are as many as five bills under consideration by the Democrats creating significant new limits and charges on carbon emitting fuels. Many will recall that Senate Republicans walked out during the last session for nine days, denying the Senate a quorum needed to conduct business due to fears of passage of the Clean Energy Jobs Bill, HB 2020. Since that time, House Republicans have dramatically changed their leadership and may be willing to deploy a similar strategy if their colleagues on the other side of the aisle don’t compromise.

During Legislative Days, two key members of the coastal caucus announced their intentions not to seek re-election. Sen. Arnie Roblan (D-Coos Bay) announced his departure from the Senate, and Rep. Caddy McKeown (D-Coos Bay) will not be returning to the House. Both legislators provided an influential and important voice to the Legislature and showed a consistent willingness to balance impacts of proposed legislation to their communities. Their departures are a significant blow to the moderate wings of both caucuses and will likely be a significant loss

to the power and influence of the coastal communities in and around Coos Bay.



This news was followed up by the announcement from Sen. Cliff Bentz (R-Ontario) of his pending resignation effective in late January in order to pursue the vacated seat currently held by U.S. Congressman Greg Walden. The announcement was expected, but not until after the short session in February.

In addition, several legislators are not expected to return after the 2020 session, including: Sen. Mark Hass (D-Beaverton) and Rep. Jennifer Williamson (D-Portland) who are both running for the open seat of Secretary of State; Rep. Lynn Findley (R-Vale) who will be running for Sen. Bentz’s open seat; Sen. Laurie Monnes Anderson (D-Gresham); Rep. Carla Piluso (D-Gresham); Rep. Jeff Barker (D-Aloha); Rep. Carl Wilson (R-Grants Pass); Rep. Sherrie Sprenger (R-Scio); Rep. Chris Gorsek (D-Gresham); Rep. Mitch Greenlick (D-Portland); and Rep. Greg Baretto (R-Cove).



Every town is an important part of the American story.

Make sure your town's story is told by responding to the 2020 Census—the count of everyone living in the United States. When you do, you'll also help your town get the most out of the American dream.

Responding Is Important for Your Community

Census responses provide data that can attract new businesses and the jobs that come with them. The data also informs where over \$675 billion in federal funding is spent each year in states and communities. That includes money for things like:

- Medicare Part B
- Special education
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
- Cooperative Extension Service
- Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant
- Water and waste disposal systems for rural communities

Responding Is Safe

Your personal information is kept confidential by law.

Responding Is Easy

To complete the census, answer a handful of questions online, by phone, or by mail. Choose the option that works best for you.

Every Person Counts

Whether it's funding in communities across your state or helping determine the number of seats your state will have in the U.S. House of Representatives—every count makes an equal impact.

For more information, visit:

2020CENSUS.GOV

**Shape
your future
START HERE >**

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**Census
2020**

SDAO

Board Member RECRUITMENT TOOLKIT

In order to help you recruit new board members, we have put together the SDAO Board Member Recruitment Toolkit. This toolkit is designed to assist you with recruiting board members to run for open board positions or fill vacancies. We have included the following sample resources for you to use to in your recruitments:

- Recruitment Checklist
- Sample Press Release – Board Vacancy & Election
- Board Member Duties
- Reasons to Become a Board Member
- How to Become a Board Member
- Sample Board Member Application

These materials have been created in Microsoft Word and can be downloaded from our website at www.sdao.com/s4/resources/board-toolkit.aspx. You can personalize these samples by inserting your district name, logo, or letterhead and filling in the information pertinent to your district within the body of the text. Also included are materials for board member orientation. After an individual is selected or elected, you can use these resources to introduce them to the district and their new role.

Special District Fact Sheets

Our new special district fact sheets can be used with the Board Member Recruitment Toolkit or on their own for general marketing purposes. These fact sheets are available for 16 of our special district types and can be downloaded from our website at www.sdao.com/s4/resources/fact-sheets.aspx. We will continue to work on developing more fact sheets with the goal of having each of our member types represented.



SDAO BOARD MEMBER

Spotlight

Kathy Kleczek



What role do you serve at your special district and how long have you been with them?

I am currently the Transportation Options Specialist at Sunset Empire Transit District (SETD). I recently transitioned from being the Board Chair after being a board member since being appointed in 2012. My position now enables me to increase the visibility and awareness of what the Transit District is all about and how it can contribute positively to the Northwest regional community. I get to help people learn about the many ways transit, carpools, vanpools, telecommuting, bicycling, and walking safely connects them to all the places they want to go in life!

How did you get involved with your special district?

In 2011, SETD was in disarray. Routes were being cut and employees laid off. The viability of the district was in question, and SDAO was asked to step in to help navigate and provided interim management of the district. During this time, I became involved to help represent riders from the southern part of the district who faced potential complete elimination of services. Regularly attending meetings and providing input on the importance of transit services to all areas of the district eventually landed me an appointment to a vacant position on the board.

Why did you seek to join the SDAO Board of Directors?

I see service on the SDAO Board as an opportunity to contribute, give back and further the goals of SDAO of representing more segments of diverse Oregon communities.

What excites you most about SDAO?

SDAO represents a large variety of communities and services that play an ever-increasingly important role in people's lives. Being able to help further the goals and impact that SDAO can have locally, regionally, and nationally is exciting to me because during these times of political partisanship, SDAO is making positive outcomes for many individuals. Libraries, 911, water and transit districts are just small examples of vital service districts that are invaluable to people, people who often do not even realize they are special districts.

How has SDAO helped you or your district?

SDAO has helped SETD immeasurably. Not only did the interim management provided by SDAO save SETD's "bacon", but since then, SETD engages in every opportunity to have SDAO involved in processes from board education to policy development to financial or legal advice and assistance. We love that SDAO is a resource on such a huge scale and variety of subjects.



Tell us about your life outside of your day job(s).

Outside of my day job with SETD, I also run an online clothing boutique and bartend at an upscale Mexican restaurant. When I am not working, I am not often found in one place. There always seems to be something to do, or something to volunteer to help with. Making frequent trips to Portland to watch nieces and nephews sporting or school events, as well as volunteering at Liberty Theater events in Astoria fill my weekends. I also will sneak the occasional quiet moment with a book or enjoy time walking on our amazing north coast beaches. The windier the better in my opinion...

Follow Us on **Social Media!**



Like us | Follow Us | Add us!

Connect with SDAO on social media to keep up-to-date with the latest company news, activities, membership benefit updates, and a range of useful resources.

Facebook - www.facebook.com/SpecialDistricts

Instagram - [@specialdistricts](https://www.instagram.com/specialdistricts)

Twitter - [@SDAO_Oregon](https://twitter.com/SDAO_Oregon)

*Providing reasonable, stable rates, and
broad coverage to Oregon's public entities*

SDIS Board of Trustees

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Vice Chair: Ted Kunze, Molalla RFPD #73
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Treasurer: Stacy Maxwell, Jackson County Fire District 3
Trustees: David Lindelien, Lane Transit District
Mike Jacobs, Tualatin Valley Water District
Harvey Hall, Northern Wasco County P.U.D.

Services

Background Checks
Claims Administration
Drug-Free Workplace
Management Consulting Services
On-site Loss Control Consultations
Pre-Loss Legal Services
Safety and Security Grant Program
SDIS Insurance Programs

Next SDIS Board of Trustees Meetings

Feb. 5 | 3pm | Seaside Civic & Convention Center

Apr. 8 | 1pm | Five Pines Resort, Sisters

Apr. 9 | 9am | Joint Work Session with SDAO Board of Directors | Five Pines Resort, Sisters



Workers' Compensation Premium Rates

By: Gina Wescott, WC Claims Manager

Oregon's workers' compensation rates are set by NCCI, the National Council on Compensation Insurance. NCCI gathers data and provides insurance rates for 32 states.

On January 1, 2020, Oregon employers will see an average decrease of 8.4% in pure premium rates. This is a total rate decrease of 45% from 2013-2020. NCCI reports that average wage replacement and medical costs for injured workers "are showing a long-term downward trend", and that "Oregon's lost-time claim frequency has generally been decreasing moderately over the past few policy years".

Oregon requires all insurers to report their claims and payroll data to NCCI. They do not require self-insured employers and groups to report.

SDIS has begun the process of collecting our historical loss data to provide to NCCI. We believe that without loss data from self-insured employers and groups, the loss data NCCI utilizes is not complete. SDIS' goal is to ensure premium rates are accurately assessed by NCCI. We expect to see rates impacted by our loss data at the 2021 renewal.



VIOLENCE

IN THE

WORKPLACE



By: Phil Wentz, SDAO Risk Management Consultant

The prevention of violence in the workplace is a critical component for all workers, employers and the public. Prevention is an ongoing task that requires the compliance of all involved parties.

OSHA defines violence as any act or threat of physical violence, harassment, intimidation, or other threatening, disruptive behavior that occurs at the work site. It ranges from threats and verbal abuse to physical assaults and even homicide.

Employer Responsibilities

Workers have a right to a safe workplace. They have the right to expect a work environment that promotes safety from violence, threats, and harassment. Anytime there is potential of or actual violence, the district should be in full communication with law

enforcement, your insurance agent and the SDAO claims staff. Be ready to provide all information on the situation from loss of property to damages to staff or patrons.

Employee Responsibilities

Employees can actively contribute to preventive practices by doing the following:

- Accept and adhere to an employer's preventive policies and practices.
- Become aware of and report violent or threatening behavior by co-workers or other warning signs.
- Follow procedures established by the workplace violence prevention program, including those for reporting incidents

It is the responsibility of all employees, volunteers and agents of the district to create and maintain a work environment free of workplace violence.

Below are important items to remember:

- To summon an immediate response to an emergency, every employee is encouraged to promptly dial 911 and provide relevant information. In order to diffuse the situation, the initial response may be the removal of the individual from the premises.
- All members of the district personnel shall notify their immediate supervisor of any act of physical, verbal or written aggressive behavior that they have witnessed, have received or have been told that another person has witnessed or received.
- Even without an actual threat, all personnel shall also report any behavior they have witnessed which they regard as threatening or violent when the behavior is job-related, when the act might be carried out in district facilities or vehicles, or when it is connected to the district's employment. Employees shall make this report regardless of the relationship between the individual who initiated the threat or threatening behavior and the person or persons who were threatened or were the focus of the threatening behavior.

Operational Preparation

Preparations for violent activities require pre-planning, event planning and post-event follow-up. Preparing staff, employers and the public helps ensure cooperation throughout the event. One consideration is to have counselors ready for people who are either involved or impacted by the event. It is also important to consider the following:

- People who have been a victim of violence themselves.
- People who suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder.
- Children and young people.

We have prepared the following checklists for your district to use for prior to, during, and after an event.

Pre-Event Checklist

- Adopt a workplace violence prevention program and communicate the policy to employees.
- Provide regular training in preventive measures for all new and current employees, supervisors, and managers.
- Support victims of workplace or domestic violence.
- Adopt and practice fair and consistent disciplinary procedures.
- Foster a climate of trust and respect among workers and between employees and management.
- Seek help from threat-assessment psychologists, social service agencies, law enforcement, and other outside sources when necessary.
- Ensure that CPTED (crime prevention through environmental design) policies are in place.

Event Checklist

- Work with local police to help define best practices.
- Determine if employees are following established protocol.
- Was 911 notified and was the police response adequate?
- What areas need to be strengthened with fencing or cameras?
- Was reunification successful and what areas may need evaluation?

Post-Event Checklist

- Notify claims department.
- Hire a restoration company for clean-up.
- Conduct a full evaluation with all first responders and appropriate staff to review the incident and make any changes necessary.
- Offer an employee assistance program (EAP) to all employees. This program has an intended purpose of de-escalating any potential volatile situation involving an employee or family member as it related to workplace violence.
- Should a traumatic or violent incident occur, offer a program to any employee involved in order to reduce post-stress syndrome.

- Encourage employees who are victims of workplace violence to report the crime to law enforcement. When feasible, the district will facilitate employee's reporting of workplace violence crimes to law enforcement.

Please remember that police officers control law enforcement and are in control during a violent event, and local fire agencies will oversee all fire events.

Additional Considerations

One ongoing way to help prepare staff and managers is to use table top exercises that help people understand respond to situations. Samples can be found at: www.ready.gov/business/testing/exercises

Additional information can also be found on the OSHA website at <https://osha.oregon.gov/pages/topics/violence-in-the-workplace.aspx>

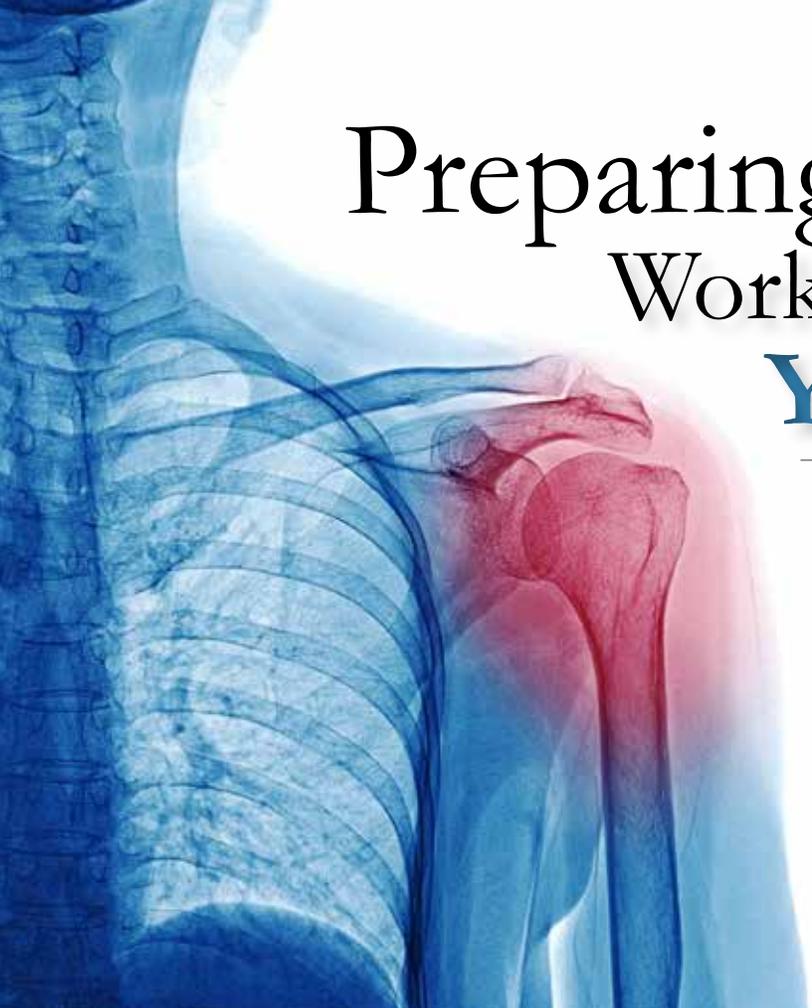
SDIS Employee Benefit Program Changes



Thank you, Chet, for 35 years of service to our program and Oregon's special districts!

If your district is enrolled in the SDIS Employee Benefits Program then you likely know Chet Weichman, our program marketing consultant. He has become a friend to many and someone that districts can turn to for help with navigating medical and dental insurance. Chet been a longtime supporter of Oregon's special districts and has been involved with the Special Districts Insurance Services program since its inception in 1985. He has played a critical role in building our employee benefits program to what it is today.

Beginning January 1st, Chet will no longer be providing marketing consulting services to the SDIS Employee Benefits Program. Although we are going to miss working so closely with Chet, we understand that this is his chance to focus on other projects with his insurance business and enjoy some more free time as well. Chet's insurance agency, Century Insurance, and his son-in-law, Danny Duggan, will continue to carry on as the insurance agent for many of our special district members.



Preparing for Injured Workers and Utilizing Your Resources

By: Dustin Karstetter, Return to Work Consultant

Looking ahead to the new year, SDIS would like to provide a few reminders of how our districts can prepare for and utilize available resources with an injured employee and open workers' compensation claim.

The best way to handle these situations is to perform sufficient pre-loss planning. The first and most important step is to ensure the district has a written return to work policy. The policy should outline an employee's responsibilities should they become injured, as well as identify what the district's role will be; namely that of providing transitional duty opportunities for the injured worker. Additionally, management should identify a list of tasks or job duties that could

be performed by an employee who has been given work restrictions due to a work-related accident or injury, along with a list of equipment that could be purchased to aid the worker in performing the identified tasks and duties.

Some of the recent purchases that have been made for injured workers to aid in their return to work include: ergonomic office equipment, software and hardware solutions, drones, ATVs, CPR training equipment, and touch-free restroom cleaning systems. SDIS can assist with these purchases through the EAIP (Employer At Injury Program), helping injured employees return to work quicker, thus reducing claim costs and burdens on our districts. In 2019,

these efforts resulted in the purchase of nearly \$120,000 in various equipment for injured workers to use during their recovery and for districts to have available in the future.

With 2020 upon us, our Return To Work Consultant, Dustin Karstetter, is poised to partner with districts on new claims, provide hundreds of thousands more dollars in benefits, and visit with our members. If you feel your district would benefit from an introductory discussion about our return to work program and benefits, or could use assistance in creating transitional duty opportunities for your injured employees, please don't hesitate to contact SDAO at 800-305-1736 and ask for Dustin.

Changes to Policies & Legislation

By: *Monica Harrison, HR Manager*

Recently there have been many changes to policies and legislation that all of our members need to be made aware of and be sure that they review, learn and update within their organizations accordingly. In addition, over the next couple of years, you can expect to see continuous changes and updates needing to be made that if not done, have a potential liability left open for your organization.

Below is a listing of some of the more immediate and impactful changes that you must be sure to review and adopt. **This is not an all-inclusive list and we encourage all our members to research and become educated on all of the various legislative changes that have occurred.** Review the 2019 Legislative Summary at <http://ref.sdao.com/legislative/19-leg-summary.pdf> for a comprehensive overview.

1. On September 24, 2019, the U.S. Department of Labor announced the final rule updating the earnings thresholds necessary to exempt executive, administrative and professional employees from the Fair Labor Standards Act's (FLSA) minimum wage and overtime pay requirements, and allows employers to count a portion of certain bonuses/commissions towards meeting the salary level. The new thresholds account for growth in employee earnings since the thresholds were last updated in 2004. **The final rule is effective on January 1, 2020.**

In the final rule, the Department is:

- raising the “standard salary level” from the currently enforced level of \$455 per week to \$684 per week (equivalent to \$35,568 per year for a full-year worker);
- raising the total annual compensation requirement for “highly compensated employees” from the currently enforced level of \$100,000 per year to \$107,432 per year;
- allowing employers to use nondiscretionary bonuses and incentive payments (including commissions) paid at least annually to satisfy up to 10% of the standard salary level, in recognition of evolving pay practices; and
- revising the special salary levels for workers in U.S. territories and the motion picture industry.

2. The 2019 Legislative Session passed a number of Human Resource related bills that require our members attention, including the following:

a. SB 479 – Requires the Establishment or Adoption of a Written Policy (with very specific policy provisions) to Prevent Workplace Harassment, Discrimination and Retaliation

In the past months our partners at HR Answers, Inc. have been conducting webinars and providing



a template policy for consideration. This policy is offered, without charge to those members who have their general liability insurance with SDIS (and are a part of the Advantage Plus Program with HR Answers). This new legislation goes into effect on January 1, 2020. Email HR Answers at info@hranswers.com for more information.

For members that do not have their general liability insurance with SDIS, please contact hr@SDAO.com to review this policy and ensure you are also compliant by January 1, 2020.

b. HB 2341 and HB 2593 – Reasonable Accommodation Pregnancy and Expression of Breastmilk

The Oregon Legislature recently passed House Bill 2341 (2019) and HB 2593 which provides additional employee protections related to pregnancy, childbirth or a related medical condition, including lactation. The law becomes effective **January 1, 2020**.

c. HB 2016 – Relating to Collective Bargaining

Employers must allow designated representatives of bargaining units reasonable time to engage in activities related to that designation. This time must not alter the terms and conditions of employment, such as

compensation or leave accruals, except that an employer may prevent the employee from working unauthorized overtime. Written agreements between employers and unions, which allow for release time for employees to serve as designated representatives and guarantee either their reinstatement or reemployment in substantially similar roles, can be negotiated and executed and will not be considered an unfair labor practice. Employers must also provide unions with reasonable access to represented employees, to include: the ability to meet new employees during orientations (within 30 calendar days of employment), to meet with existing employees at the workplace (during work or non-work time), the requirement to furnish the union with certain employee information and access to communicate with employees via the employer's email system.

Lastly, HB 2016 creates the requirement for an employee to authorize, via an agreement with a union, an employer to deduct union dues/fees, etc., from pay and remit them to the union; such dues/fees may also be remitted to a non-certified labor organization, if authorized by the employee. Such authorization may occur either by phone or in writing, including an electronic record or signature, and remains valid until revocation. Unions must furnish employers with a list of employees who authorized deductions.

d. SB 519 – Equal Pay Act Amendment

SB 519 amends Oregon’s Equal Pay Act, ORS 652.220, specifying that employees may be compensated differently when an employee is performing modified work in association with a compensable injury and/or performing modified work temporarily as a result of a medical condition. In the latter situation, the modified work must be authorized by a medical professional or the employer in a manner which does not discriminate. It also clarifies that pay differences for work of comparable character based on collective bargaining agreements are acceptable, as long as they include and are ultimately based alone the factors in the Act. SB 519 defines a system, as referred to in the factors, to be a consistent and verifiable method in use when a violation of the Act is alleged.

e. HB 2005 – Paid Family Leave

HB 2005 establishes a paid family (excluding sick child and bereavement leave) and medical leave insurance program, administered by the Oregon Employment Department. It amends OFLA to set limits on the amount of leave an employee can take under this program and OFLA to 18 weeks, only 12 weeks of which are generally payable, except in the instance of pregnancy disability, which may provide an additional two weeks of benefits.

For more information and helpful links about the above, please visit our website at www.sdao.com/S4/Resources/hr-resources.aspx.



TAKE AN **ACTIVE** PART IN YOUR Prescription Drug Benefit

To help control drug expenditure increases, you need to take an active part in understanding your prescription drug benefit. The following suggestions can help you save money for yourself as well as your employer.

- **Always request generic when available**—a generic drug is identical, or bio-equivalent, to a brand name drug in dosage form, safety, strength, route of administration, quality, performance characteristics and intended use—and can cost half as much!
- **Ask your pharmacist the full cost of the medication you are receiving**—this will help you understand the full benefit your prescription plan is providing.
- **Request an Explanation of Benefits report from your prescription benefit manager**—this report itemizes the prescription you’ve received, your copayment, and the remaining cost of the medication that was paid by your employer.



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DENTAL CARE: ORAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Did you know that poor oral health can lead to many seemingly unrelated medical conditions? In fact, oral bacteria and oral disease have been linked to a variety of serious illnesses, including heart disease, diabetes, stroke and pregnancy complications.

Importance of Oral Health

The following examples illustrate the relationship between your oral health and general health.

- Tobacco, alcohol and illicit drugs affect both your overall and oral health.
- Dry mouth, or a lack of saliva, increases your risk of tooth decay.
- Oral pain resulting in an inability to eat properly can prevent you from getting the nutrition your body needs to stay healthy.

Periodontal Disease

Oral health can often be used to diagnose underlying health issues.

- The advanced form of gum disease, called periodontitis, causes tooth loss and is also sometimes associated with cardiovascular disease, stroke and bacterial pneumonia.
- Pregnant women with periodontitis are at an increased risk for delivering babies that are pre-term and/or have low birth weight.

- Diabetics are more likely to develop periodontitis, and more severe cases of it.
- People who smoke or drink alcohol have an increased risk of periodontitis and other conditions, such as oral cancer.

What This Means to You

Given the potential link between periodontitis and systemic health problems, preventing periodontitis may turn out to be an important step in maintaining your overall health. In most cases, this can be accomplished by practicing good daily oral hygiene, including brushing and flossing and regular seeing a dentist for cleanings. Tell your dentist about changes in your oral health, including any recent illnesses or chronic conditions.

Also provide your dentist with an updated health history, including medication you use—both prescription and over-the-counter. If you smoke, talk to your dentist about options for quitting.

Article by The Partners Group



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MEMBER CALENDAR

- Jan. 1 **SDAO Offices Closed** – New Year’s Day
- Jan. 2 SDAO First Thursday Webinar: Harassment & Discrimination in the Workplace
- Jan. 20 **SDAO Offices Closed** – Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- Feb. 5 SDAO Board of Directors Meeting – Seaside
- Feb. 5 SDIS Board of Trustees Meeting – Seaside
- Feb. 6 SDAO Pre-Conference – Seaside
- Feb. 7 - 9 SDAO Annual Conference – Seaside
- Feb. 13 SDAO First (2nd) Thursday Webinar: RMIS/Insurance Portal
- Feb. 17 **SDAO Offices Closed** – Presidents’ Day
- Mar. 5 SDAO First Thursday Webinar: Hazard Communications

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