

LARM LIFE

NEWS OF THE LEAGUE ASSOCIATION OF RISK MANAGEMENT
WINTER 2019

Halsey Trail: A trail to Nebraska's National Forest

Health Watch - Is there an opioid crisis in rural Nebraska?





LARM Life is a publication produced by the League Association of Risk Management (LARM)

Michael Nolan
Executive Director
1919 S. 40th St. Suite 212
Lincoln NE 68506
402-742-2604
Please direct all questions, story suggestions and subscription queries to Diane Becker at diane.becker@larmpool.org (402) 314-6827 www.larmpool.org

LARM Staff:

- Tracy Juranek**, Customer Service Specialist 402-742-2604
- Elizabeth Becker**, Executive Administrative Assistant/Customer Service 402-742-2601
- Paige Buffington**, Workers Compensation Claims Specialist 402-419-3548
- Dave Bos**, Loss Control Manager 402-853-1055
- Fred Wiebelhaus**, Field Adjuster Supervisor/Loss control Assistant 402-440-9129
- Randy Peters**, Auto Field Adjuster/Loss Control Assistant 402-310-5356
- Diane Becker**, Communications Director 402-314-6827

Photos: Cover- Norfolk
Right: Top to bottom-Clarkson,
Taylor and Valentine





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NEWS FROM THE Executive Director



In this edition of the LARM magazine, you'll note an article summarizing the results of a survey done by LARM staff of LARM members concerning opioid use and related health issues in Nebraska. An additional graphic from the CDC is below.

We designed the survey as a result of information we have from directors of other pools in states that are currently seeing an opioid epidemic.

Though Nebraska doesn't seem to have a crisis to the extent that Arkansas or a few others have, the survey shows that there is a growing problem.

We can ignore the signs that show that opioid addictions are more common in our state than many people realize or we can be proactive and discuss ways to combat the problem now. As community leaders, we need to recognize that ignoring the issue may cause irreversible damage to our communities.

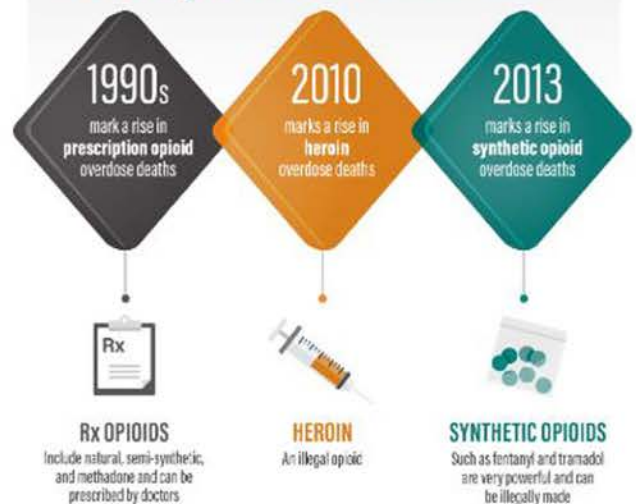
The LARM Board and staff will be deciding how to help members address this issue. We will keep you updated.

Stay safe and healthy in 2019!
Mike Nolan

RISE IN OPIOID OVERDOSE DEATHS IN AMERICA

A Multi-Layered Problem in Three Distinct Waves

399,000 people died
from an opioid overdose (1999-2017)



Learn more about the evolving opioid overdose crisis: www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose

“The best way to predict your future is to create it.” Abraham Lincoln



Halsey Trail

A great way to enjoy Nebraska year round is to walk or bike its trails. The Village of Halsey maintains a popular trail that runs two miles from the Village to the 90,000 acre Nebraska National Forest just down the road. Some of the thousands of visitors to the Forest each year use the trail as do local residents. Last year the Village applied for and used a Lean on LARM Safety Grant towards repairing cracks in the trail. Gary and Kay Cooper, shown above, moved back to Halsey after living in Fremont for years and walk the trail nearly every day. Linda Cowdin, the biker pictured below, is a member of the Village Board. "It's wonderful to have a trail that provides a safe surface for runners, walkers and bikers."



Is there an opioid

Is the national opioid crisis affecting communities in Nebraska? According to the survey done in the fall of 2018 by League Association of Risk Management (LARM) staff of LARM member communities in Nebraska, it is.

Efforts were made to survey an EMT or other emergency health provider in all the 163 LARM member communities. Fifty-six surveys were eventually answered that represented villages, Cities of the Second Class and Cities of the First Class in Nebraska.

The survey was set up after members of the LARM Board of Directors and staff attended a conference in the summer of 2018 in which there was a session on the national opioid crisis. After hearing about the devastating effects of opioid addiction on the state of Arkansas in particular, it was decided that LARM needed to look into whether there was an opioid problem in Nebraska; if so, study how it would affect workers comp and other insurance claims; and decide whether LARM needed to take a proactive approach in helping LARM member communities stop the growth of opioid addiction.

Representatives in these communities were asked in the phone survey whether they agreed, disagreed or weren't sure in response to 12 questions. The results showed that even smaller communities in Nebraska were already seeing some form of opioid addiction.

When asked whether it was fairly easy to be prescribed painkillers/other opioids in their community, 21 respondents agreed, 16 disagreed and 19 weren't sure. Eighteen respondents said they knew of people in the community who shared their painkillers with family members, friends, neighbors and/or co-workers. Twenty-three disagreed and 15 weren't sure.

Thirteen respondents said it was fairly easy in their community to purchase painkillers/other opioids from someone who was not a health professional. Twenty-four disagreed and 19 weren't sure.

When asked if the number of people in their community treated for opioid addiction had increased in the last five years, 21 respondents agreed, 12 disagreed and 23 weren't sure.

Of the 56 surveyed, 30 said they personally knew of people in their community who have been or are addicted to opioids/painkillers. Nineteen disagreed and seven weren't sure.

Twenty-seven respondents said they knew of members of their community who had been hospitalized because of an opioid addiction or overdose. Twenty-three disagreed and six said they weren't sure.

Most (38) agreed that people in their community use alternative options to prescriptive painkillers that include acupuncture, massage therapy, chiropractic manipulation or physical therapy. Five disagreed and 13 said they weren't sure.

Most (36) also said that people in their community stored prescription painkillers that were no longer needed in their homes. One disagreed and 19 said they weren't sure.

Thirty-one of the respondents said there were drop off points in their community to leave unused prescription drugs. Twenty disagreed and five weren't sure.

Nearly half of the respondents (27) said their law enforcement officers and paramedics were equipped with Narcan/naloxone to revive those suffering from a narcotic overdose. Twenty-three said they weren't and six weren't sure.

Twenty-one communities said the danger of opioid use and addiction was taught in their community/schools.

crisis in Nebraska?



Opioids, also known as opiates, are commonly prescribed painkillers that include hydrocodone, oxycodone, hydromorphone, oxymorphone, morphine and fentanyl.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in 2016 there were an average of 116 people who died every day from an opioid related drug overdose. It's estimated that 11.5 million people misused prescription opioids in that year.

Mike Nolan, LARM Director, said the opioid survey results were very helpful as LARM needs to be ready to address a possible opioid crisis which would translate into increased health problems, workers comp claims, property claims and the stress on municipalities in dealing with increased crime.

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Valentine Police Chief Dana Miller shows the naloxone carried by police officers in Valentine to be given to someone with an opioid reaction.

David Hunter, LARM Board member, has name drawn in bighorn sheep hunt



David Hunter, manager of the Auburn Board of Public Works and a LARM Board member, had his name drawn last summer in the Nebraska Game and Parks bighorn sheep permit lottery. His son, Greg, had entered his dad's name in the lottery each of the past four years as a Father's Day present. He was able to accompany his dad on the winning hunt December 10 at Fort Robinson State Park in northwest Nebraska.

The two of them were accompanied by Wildlife Commission staff as they hiked on the Pine Ridge. David used his .270 caliber rifle to harvest a full-curl bighorn sheep. The shot was made at 360 yards from a steep ravine that drains into Spring Creek. Wildlife staff estimate that the longhorn sheep ram was 8 1/2 years old and

nearing the end of its life. David said they are having the meat from the sheep processed and that he plans to have a taxidermist prepare a mount of the animal.

According to the Game and Parks Commission, this is the 25th bighorn sheep harvested in Nebraska since the Game and Parks' hunting program began in 1998.

David said he has hunted since he was a teenager but that this was hands down the best hunt he had ever had in his life and he encourages people to enter the annual permit drawings to help promote Nebraska wildlife conservation.

Pictured above is, from left, Greg and David Hunter with the harvested bighorn sheep ram.

Remembering Dick Pariset

Former Mayor of Beaver Crossing

It will be five years May 2019 that a tornado struck Beaver Crossing. Dick Pariset, Mayor at the time, passed away October 2018 but he is still remembered for his leadership five years ago. On May 11, 2014, Beaver Crossing was hit by an EF-3 tornado that damaged nearly every structure in the town of 403 residents.



Though no one was hurt, there was no power and tons of debris were scattered across the town.

“Dick took control. He brought his tractor in to keep the lift station going. Every morning for the next few weeks he’d have a community meeting to plan the agenda for the day and then at the end of the day we’d have a follow up meeting. The groups put their differences aside to put the town back together,” said Steve Vavra, then vice chair of the Village Board.

Pariset graduated from Beaver Crossing High School and, with his wife, Geraldine (Jerry), raised six children in Beaver Crossing. Besides serving as mayor, he raised Simmental cattle, had a pilot’s license, and was an active church member.

“Dick did an utterly fantastic job of keeping everything going during that time. He kept the towns people informed and tried to keep it business as usual in Beaver Crossing,” Vavra said. LARM staff worked closely with Pariset as the Village of Beaver Crossing were LARM insurance pool members at the time of the tornado.

In an interview with LARM staff in 2017 Pariset said that thanks to LARM, everything had been re-appraised as the village buildings were undervalued by \$1,700,000.

“LARM was phenomenal. We couldn’t have gotten things done like we did without LARM,” Vavra said.

“We were glad to be able to be there for Beaver Crossing and it was a privilege to work with a community leader like Dick,” said Fred Wiebelhaus, LARM Field Adjuster Supervisor/ Loss Control Assistant.

Photo at left is of John Davis and Pariset when talking to LARM staff in 2017.



Maybe Nebraska isn't for everyone



But risk management is...

Join us at the Norfolk Public Library in Norfolk NE

February 14, 2019 9:00 am to 3:30 pm CT

Learn with LARM Risk Management Seminar

Topics will include: Nuisance Abatement, Workers' Comp 101, Workplace Violence, Staking Your (Property) Claim, Ergonomics, Who's Minding the Money? and more

Sponsored by LARM in partnership with the Northeast Area Clerks' Association

LARM members and non-members are welcome.

This information will be useful for anyone who is interested in municipal safety and risk management: elected officials, city managers/administrators, city clerks, office staff, maintenance staff, law enforcement, fire departments

Register at <https://larmpool.org/conference.html> or fill out the form below. Please send \$25 per person before February 1, 2019 (It's \$40 per person after February 1) to LARM Seminar, 1919 South 40th Street, Suite 212, Lincoln, NE or call Diane Becker at 402-314-6827 or email diane.becker@larmpool.org



Name _____ Email _____

City or Village _____ Position _____

Address _____ City _____ Zip _____



Cedar Bluffs worker glad he took safety measures

Matt Baker, Village of Cedar Bluffs Utilities Superintendent and Water Operator, (shown at right) has learned from experience that taking safety measures is worth the extra time and effort.

Last summer he pulled on a pair of safety chaps before using a chain saw to trim tree branches in the Cedar Bluffs Park. At one point, the chain saw slipped from the branch and grazed across his leg. The reinforced chaps were nearly cut through but his leg was uninjured. "Sometimes it's not convenient to grab that extra pair of safety glasses or to put on chaps when it's 100 degrees out. It only takes a second, though, to suffer from a life altering injury which makes that time and effort look pretty minimal," said Dave Bos, LARM Loss Control Manager.

LARM wants to make more safety items available for communities so LARM members are encouraged to apply for the Lean on LARM Safety Grant which is available for up to \$500 in items that will assist in reducing or preventing injuries, property losses, workers' compensation claims and/or liability claims. LARM members can apply for a grant from October 1, 2018 to September 15, 2019. Each applicant must be a member at the time of submission and issuance of the funds.



The application for the safety items must be submitted and then approved by LARM before the items can be purchased.

In 2018 over 70 LARM members submitted and were approved for up to \$500 each in safety grant funds. Items ranged from playground surface materials to automated external defibrillators to body armor. Many members purchased much needed safety apparel, traffic cones, first aid kits and fire extinguishers.

To apply for and for more information about the Lean on LARM Safety Grant go to www.larmpool.org/leanonlarm.html

