

# LAGNIAPPE



**LOFTON**  
SECURITY  
SERVICE



## Monthly Employee News

April 2016

### Refueling Safety By: Steve Ham, Lofton Safety Services



Spring is in the air, and along with spring is maintaining a beautiful lawn. Lawn mowers, blowers and even some trimmers run on fuel. All internal combustion engines run on some type of fuel. Always remember that when you are refueling your yard equipment, you're dealing with flammable liquids, which form vapors that can easily catch fire or explode. Before dispensing any flammable liquid, be sure the area is well ventilated. The golden rule is: Never Smoke Around Flammable Liquids. Put all smoking materials out well in advance of any refueling.

The second rule to remember is to let that small engine cool off before you start refueling. This is hard to do because the engine always seems to run out of

fuel in the middle of what you are trying to get done, but a hot engine and flammables may cause a flash fire or explosion. A few minutes to let the engine cool down could prevent serious injury or even a fatality.

When dispensing flammable liquids, make sure to use only approved storage containers. Use an approved fuel container to store flammables. Never use glass bottles or plastic milk jugs - they are not approved. The container should have a self-closing lid and a label describing the contents. When dispensing from large storage tanks or at a fuel pump, the same safety rules apply. Shut the motor off prior to filling the fuel tank or container.

Practice fuel safety at all times (at home and on the job). When at work, follow your employer's rules and report fuel spills to your supervisor immediately. Know where proper fire extinguishers are located (try to have one with you while refueling) and how to use the extinguisher correctly. Your life may depend on it!

### Referral Bonus Program

Do you have a friend that is looking for a job? Could you use extra cash? Well, you can earn extra cash and help a friend through Lofton's referral bonus program\*.

Lofton will pay you a bonus for each individual you recommend who is sent out on assignment. That's right! You can earn a bonus for each person you refer to Lofton Staffing, Lofton Security, Lofton Energy or Lofton FlexMed Services.

All you have to do is make sure you have your friend put your name as the referral on their online application (or pick up a Referral Form from the payroll window to remind them). Once your referral is placed on assignment and completes 40 hours, you get a bonus! Of course, your friend will have to meet the minimum job requirements and be able to pass a drug and background check.

#### Bonus Table

Technician (Engineering, Lab or Process Operator); Secretary / Administrative Assistant - **\$100.00**

Clerical - **\$70.00**

Light Industrial (General labor, skilled labor, warehouse, etc) - **\$50.00**

Security Officers - **\$50.00**

Remember, your friend must complete 40 hours on assignment for you to qualify for a bonus. Refer as many friends as you like; it's extra money without the extra work!

\*Applicable State & Federal taxes will be withheld.



### What's Happening This Month

**April 1**  
April Fools' Day

**April 18**  
Tax Day (Delayed)



Washington D.C. is celebrating Emancipation Day on April 15, so you have 3 extra days to file your return.

**April 22**  
Earth Day



**April 27**  
Administrative Professionals Day

Become a fan of **Lofton Staffing, Lofton Security, Lofton Energy, or Flex Med**. Stay on top of current job openings, get great tips on job hunting, and stay in contact with some of your Lofton friends!



## Are You Listening? By: Glenda G. Lofton, Ph.D.

It is said that President Lyndon Johnson kept a sign on his desk when he was a senator that said, "When you're talking, you aren't learning." King Solomon, reported in the Bible to be the wisest man that ever lived, expressed a similar idea when he stated, "Let the wise listen and add to their learning" (Proverbs 1:6). Despite the excessive dependence on the internet and texting, listening is still viewed as a primary communication tool that is essential to personal, professional, social, and family success. Yet few people have been taught to listen. Research suggests that most adults listen at an efficiency level of about 25%. Back in the 80's when I was working to improve teaching and learning, I was impressed by the work of Montgomery who speculated that knowing how to listen could double the efficiency of American business. Like others, he suggested specific techniques to help us become better listeners, such as (a) looking at the person talking (b) asking open-ended questions (c) responding with simple acknowledgment statements (d) clarifying or summarizing, and (e) listening beyond the words for the feelings, emotions, and reactions of the speaker.

Stephen Covey back in 1989 included listening as one of the Seven Habits of Highly Effective People in his #1 national best seller by that name. He concurred with Aristotle

(384-322 B.C.) who stated, "We are what we repeatedly do," meaning that our character is a composite of our habits. The good news is that habits are learned and can be changed, but it requires time and commitment. Habit 5



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addresses listening, but Covey takes listening a step further with the term empathic listening. "To be really effective in the habit of interpersonal communication," he noted, "you cannot do it with technique alone." At the heart of interpersonal communication is (a) having character that inspires openness and trust and (b) abiding by the principal: Seek first to understand, then to be understood, the habit of communication. Typically, Covey pointed out, we seek first to be understood. We listen not with the intent to understand but with the

intent to reply, to control, to manipulate. We're either speaking or preparing to speak—"reading our own autobiography into other people's lives." In contrast, empathic listening gets inside another person's frame of reference, to see the world as he or she sees it, to understand how he or she feels.

This is not always easy. In a personal note at the end of his book, Covey shares his belief that as human beings, we cannot perfect ourselves. Improvement comes as we align our lives with God's principles. Then the time we take to deeply understand the people we live and work with brings tremendous dividends in open communication and interdependence. Our differences are no longer stumbling blocks but stepping stones to creative solutions and alternatives. When we're listening, we're learning and growing stronger together.

NOTE: When Tommy read this, he said, "I totally agree, but I like that great philosopher, Bette Midler, who said, "That's enough of me talking about me. Let me listen while you talk about me."

## Louisiana State Tax Changes - Effective April 1



Numerous changes to Louisiana's tax laws, passed this year during a special session of the Louisiana Legislature, take effect on Friday, April 1.

Taxes affected by the changes include the state sales tax. Acts 25 and 26 of the 2016 First Extraordinary Session of the Louisiana Legislature remove or restrict certain exemptions from the 4 percent state sales tax, make certain new transactions taxable, and add a penny of sales tax to certain taxable transactions.

Beginning April 1:

- A new one-cent sales and use tax takes effect, increasing the state sales tax from

four cents to five cents; the extra penny remains in effect until June 30, 2018, in most cases, but expires on July 1, 2016, for manufacturing equipment and machinery.

- Most current exemptions and exclusions on the 4 percent state sales tax are eliminated; all exclusions will be restored by July 1, 2018.
- An automobile rental tax, which had expired, is reinstated on gross proceeds at the rate of 2.5 percent (state) and 0.5 percent (local).
- A hotel tax, with revenue flowing to local governments, is expanded to include residential locations such as houses, apartments and condominiums.
- Sales made in Louisiana by dealers outside the state (such as over the Internet) are subject to the collection and remittance of sales and use tax.
- The excise tax on cigarettes increases to \$1.08.
- The excise tax on alcoholic beverages increases to:
  - Liquor - \$0.80 per liter
  - Sparkling wine - \$0.55 per liter

Still wines with 14-24 percent alcoholic volume - \$0.35 per liter

Still wines with more than 24 percent alcoholic volume - \$0.55 per liter

Malt beverages - \$12.50 per barrel

Low alcoholic content beverages - \$12.50 per barrel

- A discount for accurately reporting and remitting excise taxes on certain tobacco products is reduced from 6 to 5 percent.
- A discount for accurately reporting and remitting excises taxes on alcoholic beverages and beer is reduced from 2 percent to 1.5 percent for low-content beverages; and from 3.3 percent to 2.5 percent for high-content beverages.
- Membership fees or dues paid to a non-profit, civic organization which provides access to clubs or the privilege of having access to amusement, entertainment, athletic, or recreational facilities are subject to state sales tax.

For more information, go to

[www.revenue.louisiana.gov](http://www.revenue.louisiana.gov). Click the main banner...New Sales Tax Rates.