

“THE CIRCLE OF SAFETY”

CONSUMER AWARENESS ADVISOR

News and Tips to Make Your Life Easier, Safer and Happier!

For Friends and Clients of Brown-Phillips Insurance

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Great April Fool's Pranks

****The Swiss Spaghetti Harvest**

In 1957 the respected BBC news show *Panorama* announced that thanks to a very mild winter and the virtual elimination of the dreaded spaghetti weevil, Swiss farmers were enjoying a bumper spaghetti crop. It accompanied this announcement with footage of Swiss peasants pulling strands of spaghetti down from trees. Huge numbers of viewers were taken in. Many called the BBC wanting to know how they could grow their own spaghetti tree. To this the BBC diplomatically replied that they should "place a sprig of spaghetti in a tin of tomato sauce and hope for the best."

**** The Left-Handed Whopper**

In 1998 Burger King published a full page advertisement in *USA Today* announcing the introduction of a new item to their menu: a "Left-Handed Whopper" specially designed for the 32 million left-handed Americans. According to the advertisement, the new whopper included the same ingredients as the original Whopper (lettuce, tomato, hamburger patty, etc.), but all the condiments were rotated 180 degrees for the benefit of their left-handed customers. The following day Burger King issued a follow-up release revealing that although the Left-Handed Whopper was a hoax, thousands of customers had gone into restaurants to request the new sandwich. Simultaneously, according to the press release, "many others requested their own 'right handed' version."

Check out more of these great pranks at www.museumofhoaxes.com

You've Lost Your Job.....What Comes Next?

1. **GET MAD.** Cry, grieve, throw things (safely), scream. Do it right away and get the initial feelings out of your system. You are entitled to do this. And then take a deep breath and take the next step.
2. **SHARE YOUR SITUATION WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS.** Do not take your anger and frustration out on them. Focus on as much good as possible. Make a conscious effort to keep this situation out of your mind for a while each day. Hug whenever you can. (Seven hugs a day keeps you emotionally healthy).
3. **DO NOT GO SHOPPING.** This is not going to help you feel better. If you don't already have a budget, do one right away. Obviously, there are going to be financial changes and challenges. Put all your credit cards away. Be frugal.
4. **APPLY FOR UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS AS SOON AS YOU CAN.** Preferably apply online since the employment offices are crowded and understaffed now. If you are lucky enough to have gotten severance pay and other benefits, hold off on applying for state benefits as long as you can. Be aware that your income is not going to be as much as it was.
5. **FIND A JOB LOSS SUPPORT GROUP.** You aren't the only one who is suddenly in this situation. And while your friends and family will be there for you, it's good to share thoughts and job-hunting tips with folks that you aren't emotionally connected to.
6. **START LOOKING AND APPLYING FOR JOBS RIGHT AWAY.** This is your 'new' job. Get up on time, dress for 'work,' and stick to a schedule. If you read the job opening sites on the internet, do that as part of your regular schedule. Get your name in at every temporary agency in your vicinity. Think outside your area of ability or expertise. Take some chances and explore new avenues.
7. **GO TO MEETINGS OF CLUBS YOU BELONG TO.** In other words, NETWORK! Religious institutions, fraternal organizations, volunteer groups are good places to let people know that you are on a job search. Do a brief resume and have it on a postcard that you can give people you talk to. Create a business card that lists your skills.
8. **STAY BUSY!** Maybe this is an opportunity to volunteer at your child's school (if you are usually a working parent), or at a community service organization. Think outside the box. Make an uncomfortable situation work for you. Keep the negative thoughts as far away as possible.

The Right Way To Lift...

Back injuries are the most common workplace injury. Approximately 25 percent of all on-the-job accidents reported each year involve back injuries – and usually happen when employees are lifting something incorrectly.

Back injuries from incorrect lifting are just as common around the home. So, whether at home or at work, the following tips can help you lift safely.

- When you lift, push and pull with your legs – not your arms and back. Bend at your knees, not your waist, to help keep your center of balance.
- Avoid lifting higher than your shoulder height.
- Men, tone down the testosterone and use a hand truck to move heavy stuff. Don't worry, she'll still love you.
- Turn with your feet, not with your hips and shoulders. Twisting can overload your spine and lead to serious injury.
- Carry objects close to your body and use both hands. Avoid a long reach to pick something up.

Back injuries can be debilitating, so stay on the safe side and lift correctly.

Living Green Affordably

It used to be commonly thought that “living green” meant spending more – buying organic foods, replacing appliances with those that save energy. Now, with the environment being one of the biggest concerns (along with everything else!) it's becoming a better choice to choose a greener lifestyle. In the long run, the price may be just right to “go green.”

Here are some tips to help you head in that direction. And if you need more ideas, the Internet is full of all kinds of information.

Start From Scratch. Think about making things from ‘scratch.’ Do what your grandmother did (I know, she didn't work outside the house), and start a pot of soup that will last a couple of meals, and put some in the freezer for lunches. Crock pots are wonderful inventions! If you have small children, read the story of “Stone Soup,” and see what happens. Learn to knit or crochet. Even high school kids are starting to relearn these crafts.

Stop Your House From Leaking. Nothing is gained by heating or cooling the outside. Check all the weather-stripping around windows and doors. You can use a candle or a feather to check around frames if need be – usually just holding your hand out will let you know if there is a draft. Use rolled up rugs if need be at the bottom of doors.

Update Your Appliances. If you are replacing major appliances, go for the ones with the Energy Star tags. They may cost a little more up front, but the savings are huge in the long run.

Power Strips. Spend a little more and get the surge protected strips. Individually plugged in appliances use electricity even when they are off. Plug small kitchen appliances in only when needed or plug them into a power strip and turn the whole thing off when they're not in use. Do you need the clock on the microwave or the coffeepot? If you have a clock on the stove, isn't that enough? Your computer is also an energy user even when you shut down. Plug your PC, printer, modem, other peripherals into a strip and then turn it off when not in use.

Clean On The Cheap. Make your own cleaning products. There are a number of internet web sites that have recipes for creating earth friendly concoctions to clean with. And vinegar and newspaper still works just fine for cleaning windows.

Compact Fluorescent Bulbs. These are constantly being improved, and are proving to be a good investment. Plus the price is coming down so the initial cost is not so inhibiting. And more shapes are showing up on store shelves so they can be used in more places.

Thank You! Thank You!

Thanks to all our clients who graciously referred their family, friends and associates to our agency:

*Scott Littlejohn, Jose Manuel Valls,
Celil & Birdal Yaman, Suat B. Meric,
Gulcan Onel, David Perkinson,
Hakan & Aysun Eskici, Fonda
Byerson, Cashondra Newson, Allen
James, Vivian Carey, Ertan Apaydin,
Venkatesh Ravi*

Are You The Client of the Month?

Well, you can be! By referring someone to our office for a quote, you will be entered in our monthly drawing for your choice of a \$50 Spa Finder gift certificate, or a \$50 gas card. In addition, you will be entered in our annual drawing for a 42" flat screen TV...just for telling others about us!

We will honor our winners here each month, so send us a referral, and watch for your name.

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www.BPQuotes.com

Spotlight on...



Brian Phillips! Brian is a SC native, and a graduate of University of South Carolina (Go Gamecocks!) He moved to Raleigh, NC in 2002 and took over the former Nancy Dixon Insurance Agency. Brian and Ashlee Phillips were married in July 2007. When he is not working in the office, Brian loves to play poker, watch football, and spend time with his family.

Client Of The Month...



Congratulations to Fonda Byerson, for sending a referral our way! Fonda won a \$50 gas gift card and is also entered in our annual drawing for a 42" flat screen TV. Thanks, Fonda!

"The staff is very professional and friendly." -Shelly L. Ewart,
Franklinton, N.C

Tell Others About Us and Win a Prize!

Refer a friend or family member, and you will be entered in our monthly drawing for your choice of a \$50 Spa Finder gift certificate or \$50 gas card. In addition, you will be entered in our annual drawing for a 42" flat screen television!! See our website at www.BPReferrals.com for more details.

We realize you have a choice—thank you for choosing Brown-Phillips Insurance!

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