

Dept. of Safety and Professional Services: June is National Safety Month

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MADISON, Wis. - Who isn't talking about safety right now? This concern for health and wellbeing—our own and our families', customers', and employees'—is the natural result of a global pandemic that has shuttered businesses, closed schools and campuses, and emptied museums, restaurants, and airports across the world. Indeed, safety would be top of mind right now even if it were not [National Safety Month](#), the annual National Safety Council awareness campaign to promote safety both in and out of the workplace, or Governor Evers had not declared June Safety Month in Wisconsin. In an incredibly short amount of time, safety has shifted from something most of us take for granted to a key consideration in nearly every decision.

While we might formally acknowledge safety efforts in June or bolster them during a sweeping public health emergency, safety is something that Department of Safety and Professional Services employees maintain and promote every day through our work across all divisions and from all five offices across the state. This includes the following:

- We ensure that applicants meet established minimum requirements for initial licensing or renewal for more than 240 different credentials. Before working with or receiving services from a licensed practitioner or business, any member of the public can [check the status](#) of any of our licenses on our website.
- We investigate complaints against license holders, and we offer administrative support to the professional boards that review the cases and, when necessary, issue discipline. Concerned members of the public can [file a complaint](#) or [check on past discipline](#) on our website.
- We enforce building codes to ensure that buildings are designed and built according to

minimum standards set by the state. We review plans, perform inspections, and resolve compliance violations to keep buildings safe for owners, guests, employees, and customers.

- We manage the [Enhanced Prescription Drug Monitoring Program](#), an award-winning database and dashboard that helps prescribers make informed decisions with every patient. The ePDMP has helped the state dramatically transform prescribing culture and patient attitudes toward opioids and other controlled substances.
- We inspect all sorts of mechanical systems, from boilers and elevators to roller coasters and ski lifts.
- We [regulate unarmed combat sports](#) to ensure safe competition for martial artists and safe venues for spectators and staff.
- We keep drinking water safe by issuing nearly a \$1 million in clean water grants to individual and small-business owners for repair or replacement of [private onsite wastewater treatments systems](#).
- We develop, implement, and oversee public-sector employee health and safety programming, which keeps teachers, fire-fighters, University of Wisconsin faculty and staff, and all other state employees safe and healthy at work. This team recently developed several PPE training modules for public-sector employees, such as water treatment workers or school nurses, who may have little or no recent experience with PPE but now need to wear it to do their jobs in the COVID-19 era. We also investigate related complaints, violations, and deaths.
- We administer the state's [fire prevention programming](#), which helps fire departments better serve their communities with education, outreach, safety and rescue services.

“Safety is in our name, and it is the foundation of all the work we do,” said Secretary-designee Dawn B. Crim. “We have a responsibility to protect the public, and we take that very seriously. And because of the work we do, Wisconsinites do not have to count fire exits or check for sprinklers before deciding to buy a theater or concert ticket or attend a wedding.

We know those activities are not happening now, but we expect them to return. And if COVID-19 ushers in changes to any codes, rules, or requirements, we will ensure that those are met as well.”

A fee-based agency, DSPS is self-sustaining and receives no general fund tax dollars for its day-to-day operations. With five offices and 250 employees throughout Wisconsin, DSPS collaborates with constituents and stakeholders across a wide range of industries to promote safety and advance the economy.