

California Service
Station &
Automotive Repair
Association

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CSSARA

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AUTO\$ENSE

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<http://www.cssara.org>

To be removed from our contact list, please call the CSSARA office.

**THIS INFORMATION IS PROVIDED BY OUR
NEW ASSOCIATE MEMBER:
SINGLE SOURCE**

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Holiday Party Notes

With the Holiday Season in full swing, many employers ask us about the “wisdom” of holding company parties. Employers generally want to know about the “risk” involved if an employee drinks too much at the party and/or misbehaves, or worse injures or kills someone on the way home.

There is always a risk involved in holding any company-sponsored function. Serving alcohol compounds the problems. According to one study, 36% of employers reported behavioral problems at their most recent company party.

These problems involved everything from excessive drinking to off-color jokes to sexual advances to fist fights. As a result, about 30% of employers now hold alcohol-free parties.

If you do hold a holiday party, you can greatly reduce your legal liability by observing as many of the following recommendations as possible.

- If possible, don't serve alcohol.
- Invite spouses and significant others so that there will be someone there to get them home safely if necessary.
- Always serve food if you serve alcohol, and always have plenty of non-alcoholic beverages available.
- If you do serve alcohol, do not have an “open bar”. Instead consider a cash bar or use a ticket system to limit the number of drinks.
- Let your managers know that they will be considered to be “on duty” at the party. Instruct them to keep an eye on their subordinates to ensure they do not drink too much.
- Consumption of alcohol lowers inhibitions, and impairs judgment. Remind employees that normal workplace standards of conduct will be in force at the party.
- Arrange for no-cost taxi service or have designated drivers for any employee who feels that he or she should not drive home
- Never, Never, Never, hang mistletoe!

Finally, an “office party” can be construed as a company-sanctioned office function so check your professional liability insurance and worker's compensation policies! Yes, injuries occurring at an office party may be applicable to your workers compensation policy.

Also employees need to know that your handbook, company policies, and company behavior are applicable during an office party.

After this is all said and done, have a great time!!