



NSF SAFETY DEPARTMENT

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SAFETY & HEALTH NEWSLETTER



WHY PREVENT ACCIDENTS?

ACCIDENT PREVENTION: WHY IT IS IMPORTANT TO YOU



Why is it so important to prevent accidents? Do you view accident prevention as simply a way to avoid getting hurt? Do you work safely just because you want to? Perhaps you view accident prevention as a way of keeping your company happy or your supervisor off your back. Maybe you just do it because you have been told to.

Of course there are many reasons that a company wants its employees to work safely. But every one must have a more important reason to work safely than just because the company says to. They must have a personal reason. Your reason may be your family. What would they do if you were to get hurt. How about your hobbies? Would you still be able to enjoy them with a serious disability?



What you do for a living is nothing more than a means towards a goal that you have set for yourself. That goal may be the education of your children. You may plan to buy a home or a car. Maybe you want to get married after you have saved up enough money. Maybe your goal for now is just to make it to Friday night and going out on the town. Whatever your goals may be, they all generally tie back in some way to what you do for a living. And what you do for a living could be seriously derailed by an accident. All your goals can go up in smoke if you are injured and disabled.

A safety program is designed to help you reach your goals. It is not there just to make your work harder, or slower, or to meet some governmental guidelines. Safety and accident prevention programs are designed to PROTECT YOU so that you may reach your personal goals. When an unsafe act is pointed out to you, it is done so to help you by eliminating obstacles or job hindrances AND to insure that you get home all in one piece.

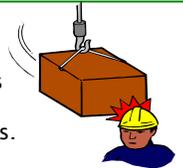


Every time you approach a project, every time you pick up a tool, every time you start a piece of equipment or machinery, think SAFETY. Look for what can go wrong and eliminate that possibility BEFORE your goals come to an abrupt end.

TAKE SAFETY PERSONALLY: MAKE IT APART OF YOUR LIFE GOALS. THINK SAFETY!



Construction Equipment Dangers



Construction Equipment used on construction jobs often creates dangerous conditions. There are few situations, which should be watched for at all times.

Any moving equipment such as skip loaders, backhoes, trenchers, cranes, hi-lifts, trucks, you name it, should be respected and avoided. Don't just assume that the operator sees you. You could wind up injured or worse. And don't depend on hearing a horn or an alarm to warn you that moving equipment is near. You may not be able to hear the equipment's alarm over other construction noise.

When you see that equipment is traveling backwards keep out of the way and stand clear until the operator has completed his maneuver. Never cut across the path behind any unit while it is backing. You could easily trip and fall under the equipment. For the same reason you should never ride on the running boards, steps or drawbar or any equipment, even for a short distance.

During backing, the operator should have the project foreman clear the area behind the unit and provide direction. No operator should back a piece of equipment into an area without someone clearing the area and giving signals.

Watch out for swinging counterweights on equipment such as cranes. There is often a pinch-point between the counterweights and some obstruction when the unit swings. Make sure there is enough room for workers to pass and if there is not -shut off the area to any access.



Never ride on or near material that is being transported by equipment. The load could shift and you can be thrown to the ground. Also, clearance may not allow for your position and you can be crushed between overhead or side obstructions.

If you must ride on equipment, make sure that all parts of your body are inside the unit, including your arms and legs. In addition, it at all possible, get off any portable scaffold or work platform while the unit is being moved. The time it takes to get off will be much less than the time lost if you fall or the unit tips over. Never walk alongside moving equipment. Keep in the clear in case it slides or turns, or the load shifts.

When you are working near equipment operating in the vicinity of power lines, don't touch or come in contact with the frame of the unit or the load cables. There is always the chance that the boom of the unit may hit the power lines. Warn the operator and the foreman any time you see this possibility and follow their instructions.

Don't walk under loads on cranes and hoists. Always take the path that avoids danger. Never clean, adjust, lubricate, repair or work on a machine that is in operation. Stop the machine before working on it and replace the guards as soon as it is done and before operation is resumed.

The safest this to do around construction equipment is keep away while the equipment is in operation. If you must be near the equipment, make sure the operator knows you are working nearby and stay alert. Keeping your mind on where you are in relation to the equipment will not only prevent injuries but could save your life.



Watch out when Welding

Gas fumes, radiation and shock may sound like characteristics of war, but these are just a few of the workplace hazards that welders face. Many welding operations expose workers to a variety of minor and severe injuries with both short-and long-term effects. These operations include metal arc procedures, cutting, gouging, brazing and soldering. Injuries from welding and cutting accounted for 18 percent of all workmen's compensation- claims for heat burns, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.



Watch for danger signs:

Below are some of the most common on-the-job hazards for welders, according to the American Welding Society.

- ✓ Gases and fumes are produced when metals are heated and form solid particles. They can cause skin and eye irritations, nausea, headaches, dizziness and respiratory ailments such as bronchitis.
- ✓ Chromium and nickel compounds have the same effect on the body as gases and fumes, but also cause dermatitis and skin rashes.
- ✓ Radiation, caused by the ultraviolet, visible or infrared light of welding consumables, damages the skin and eyes.
- ✓ Electric shock from equipment that is poorly grounded or installed, or improperly operated or maintained, can be fatal.
- ✓ Molten metal, slag or hot work surfaces can cause serious burns.
- ✓ Fires or explosions cause sparks which become lodged in clothing, cracks in floors or pipe openings.
- ✓ Noise produced by welding or cutting, a power source or a piece of equipment can cause full or partial, temporary or permanent hearing loss.
- ✓ The improper use of work-related equipment, such as power tools, power mechanical hazards for welders.
- ✓ Trips and falls may result from on- the-job activities, horseplay or poor housekeeping.
- ✓ Falling objects can kill or injure a worker.
- ✓ Confined spaces, such as small rooms, storage tanks, ship compartments or boilers, present the danger of fire, explosions and asphyxiation.

Take the proper precautions:

Welding is safe when you follow safe practices. The American Welding Society suggests you take the following preventive steps:

- ✓ Keep your head out of fumes.
- ✓ Provide proper ventilation to prevent overexposure to hazardous air contaminants.
- ✓ Provide respirators to supply fresh air to welders who work in confined spaces or with toxic metals such as cadmium.
- ✓ Maintain all welding and related equipment, cables and electrical connections to avoid electrical mechanically related injuries.
- ✓ Be aware of the correct use and limitations of all welding equipment
- ✓ Ground all equipment to avoid electrical accidents.
- ✓ Remove all combustible materials from indoor and outdoor work areas.
- ✓ Employ firewatchers, equipped with fire extinguishers, at welding jobs deemed risky, such as construction sites and special repair jobs. Require that a "hot work permit" be issued for some work places, especially near combustibles.

Protect your body:

In addition to following safe work practices, welders should wear flame-resistant, protective clothing. Leather garments, such as coats, pants, aprons, leggings and gloves offer durable, comfortable protection from burns, cuts and scrapes. Synthetic materials, considered, unsafe by many in the industry, are not routinely used. Recommended is good wool or cotton clothing, adequate leather gloves and high boots that protect from splatter," says Ken Brown, project research manager at Lincoln Electric Company in Cleveland. "Synthetic fibers are not absorbent and they're not flame resistant "

In addition, wear safety glasses or goggles at all times to shield your eyes from burns, flashes or glare. Welding helmets prevent head injuries. Ear- muffs or plugs reduce damage caused by excessive noise levels.

Train employees:

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration's Hazard Communication standard requires all employers to provide training. It is considered a key to the safety and well being of all workers. Training gives workers the knowledge they need to avoid many on- the-job accidents. "The first thing we cover is adequate welding safety," says Brown.



"Anyone who does any work, including the maintenance crew, should be instructed in safe procedures before a job is started."

Drive Defensively!



More than 41,000 people lose their lives in motor vehicle crashes each year and over two million more suffer disabling injuries, according to the National Safety Council. The triple threat of high speeds, impaired or careless driving and not using occupant restraints threatens every driver --regardless of how careful or how skilled.

Driving defensively means not only taking responsibility for yourself and your actions but also keeping an eye on "the other guy." The National Safety Council suggests the following guidelines to help reduce your risks on the road: ..



- Don't start the engine without securing each passenger in the car, including children and pets. Safety belts save thousands of lives each year! Lock all doors.
- Remember that driving too fast or too slow can increase the likelihood of collisions.
- Don't kid yourself. If you plan to drink, designate a driver who won't drink. Alcohol is a factor in almost half of all fatal motor vehicle crashes.
- Be alert! If you notice that a car is straddling the center line, weaving, making wide turns, stopping abruptly or responding slowly to traffic signals, the driver may be impaired.
- Avoid an impaired driver by turning right at the nearest corner or exiting at the nearest exit. If it appears that an oncoming car is crossing into your lane, pull over to the roadside, sound the horn and flash your lights.
- Notify the police immediately after seeing a motorist who is driving suspiciously.
- Follow the rules of the road. Don't contest the "right of way" or try to race another car during a merge. Be respectful of other motorists.
- While driving, be cautious, aware and responsible.
- Use of seat belt and air bag.

Air Bag & Seat Belt Safety Tips

Air bags and safety belts save lives. We should know especially those parents, need to understand how to maximize the lifesaving capabilities of these safety devices and minimize the risks. Not only for adult but same to those who have children back home.

KIDS RIDE IN BACK. Infants should NEVER ride in the front seat of a vehicle with a passenger air bag. Children, typically ages 12 and under, also should ride buckled up in the back seat.

CHILD SAFETY SEATS. Young children and infants always should ride in age- and size-appropriate child safety seats. The safety seat should be held properly in place by the vehicle's safety belts and the child should be correctly buckled in the child safety seat. A child who has outgrown a convertible child safety seat will need to ride in a booster seat for the vehicle's safety belts to fit properly.

WEAR BOTH LAP AND SHOULDER BELTS. The shoulder strap should cross the collarbone, and the lap belt should fit low and tight. The shoulder strap should never be slipped behind the back or under the arm -this is a dangerous habit, especially in cars with air bags.

Air Bags Work -They Save Lives

They do their job best when everyone is buckled and kids are properly restrained in the back seat.

Air bags saved an estimated 1,043 lives in 1998 alone. However, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reports that tragically 99 children have been killed or injured by the force of a deploying air bag. In many cases, the children were riding in the front seat either in a rear-facing child safety seat or "out of position" - either unbuckled, or not wearing the shoulder portion of the safety belt.

An air bag is not a soft, billowy pillow. Rather, to work effectively, an air bag comes out of the dashboard at rates of up to 200 miles per hour -faster than a blink of an eye. Drivers can entirely eliminate any danger to children from a deploying air bag by placing kids properly restrained in the back seat. With or without an air bag, the back seat is the safest place for children to ride.

As the number of motor vehicles equipped with air bags increases, the risk to kids riding in the front seat will also increase. That is why we must all work to educate people now that air bags save lives and work best when everyone is buckled and kids are in back, properly buckled up.

Drive safely!

