

Toolbox Talk

Accidents Part 1

7 Common Accident Causes:

Consider this statistic: 80 out of every 100 accidents are the fault of the person involved in the incident. Unsafe acts cause 4 times as many accidents & injuries as unsafe conditions.

Accidents occur for many reasons. In most industries people tend to look for "things" to blame when an accident happens, because it's easier than looking for "root causes," such as those listed below. Consider the underlying accident causes described. Have you been guilty of any of these attitudes or behaviors? If so, you may have not been injured...but next time you may not be so lucky.

1. Taking Shortcuts: Every day we make decisions we hope will make the job faster & more efficient. But do time savers ever risk your own safety or that of other crew members? Short cuts that reduce your safety on the job are not shortcuts but an increased chance for injury.

2. Being Over-Confident: Confidence is a good thing. Overconfidence is too much of a good thing. "It'll never happen to me" is an attitude that can lead to improper procedures, tools, or methods in your work. Any of these can lead to an injury.

3. Starting a Task with Incomplete Instructions: To do the job safely & right the first time, you need complete information. Have you ever seen a worker sent to do a job, having been given only a part of the job's instructions? Don't be shy about asking for explanations about work procedures & safety precautions. *It isn't dumb to ask questions; it's dumb not to.*

4. Poor Housekeeping: When clients, managers, or safety professionals walk through your work site, housekeeping is an accurate indicator of everyone's attitude about quality, production, & safety. Poor housekeeping creates hazards of all types. A well-maintained area sets a standard for others to follow. Good housekeeping involves both pride & safety.

Note: At no time shall empty food or beverage containers that could lure rodents be left behind on any customer's premises. Throw your trash away properly or take it with you!

5. Ignoring Safety Procedures: Purposely failing to observe safety procedures can endanger you & your co-workers. **You are being paid to follow the company safety policies - not to make your own rules.** Being "casual" about safety can lead to a casualty!

6. Mental Distractions from Work: Having a bad day at home & worrying about it at work is a hazardous combination. Dropping your 'mental' guard can pull your focus away from safe work procedures. You can also be distracted when you're busy working & a friend comes by to talk while you are trying to work. Don't become a statistic because you took your eyes off the machine "just for a minute."

7. Failure to Pre-Plan the Work: There is a lot of talk today about Job Hazard Analysis. JHA's are an effective way to figure out the smartest ways to work safely & effectively. Being hasty in starting a task, or not thinking through the process can put you in harms way. Instead, Plan Your Work & then Work Your Plan.

'It is better to be careful 100 times than to get killed once.'
Mark Twain

First Aid Tip:

These are simple objectives to administer when providing First Aid to an injured person until professional help arrives.

- Make sure you & the victim are not in any danger
- Maintain individual breathing
- Maintain blood circulation
- Prevent continued loss of blood
- Prevent or treat for shock
- Contact the nearest Medical Services as soon as possible

Note: If the face is red, raise the head.
If the face is pale, raise the tail.



Toolbox Talks

Accidents Part 2

A Little More On Shortcuts:

What is a shortcut?

The dictionary defines it as:

A path between two points that is faster than the commonly used paths.

A method to accomplish something that omits one or more steps.

Everyone takes a shortcut at one time or another. You cross the street between intersections instead of using the crosswalk or jump a fence instead of using the gate. But in many cases, a shortcut can involve danger. If you have the habit of taking dangerous shortcuts, break it. At work, it can be deadly.

Some of us are fairly meticulous about following safe work practices, but because a job "will only take a minute," we use an unsafe method or tool. For example, not putting on our PPE because the job will only take a minute, or not putting the machine in ESP because an adjustment will only take a second.

Even if the job will only take a few minutes, it isn't worth risking your safety & health for those few minutes. Wear personal protection to safeguard your body parts. Use proper, well-maintained equipment. Don't improvise to save time. Ladders, steps, & walkways are built to insure your safety, as well as for your convenience.

The safest way isn't always the shortest way, but it's the surest way.

Rushing is one of the main causes for taking shortcuts. No task is that important that it can't be done safely. Yes, we all have goals & objectives to meet, but more importantly, that we meet them the same way we started . . . with all our parts intact.

Frustration is another cause for taking shortcuts. We get frustrated with machines, people, processes, & rather than stopping & thinking, we just do it. *We get so wound up in the moment, that we don't look at the things that are important.*

All information found at www.safetytoolboxtalks.com

It Won't Happen To Me. Basically, most of us are just thinking about getting the job done, & we tend to rationalize the risk of getting injured. We think to ourselves that we have done this job many, many times this way & nothing bad has happened. Therefore, nothing bad will happen to us today. On an intellectual level, we realize there is a potential danger, but decide that the risk of being injured is low. Because we have not been injured so far, we actually think of ourselves as being very safety conscious. We know the right way to do it, we realize that it is hazardous to do it this way, but what we are really thinking to ourselves is *"it won't happen to me."*

A Little Too Much Confidence:

It's good you feel confident about your job. You take pride in your ability to do your work quickly & well. However, there is such a thing as overconfidence - when you forget about the hazards & fail to use safe work practices. No matter how long you have been on the job, & no matter how skilled you are, you must remember the basic safety precautions. *Don't get complacent!* Experienced workers have paid dearly for carelessness. They have been electrocuted because they failed to lock out the power when doing electrical repairs. They have been killed in falls from heights when they failed to hook up fall arrest gear. They have lost limbs while operating the same saws or punch presses they have used for years. They have been disabled in vehicle crashes while driving familiar routes. All workplaces & tasks have certain hazards & risks. As a long-time worker, you can still fall victim to a careless accident.

How do you avoid overconfidence when it comes to safety matters? Here are some suggestions: **Stay aware of the hazards.** Remain alert & focus on doing the job safely. **Follow the recommended safe work practices at all times.** Do not take shortcuts. **Wear your Personal Protective Equipment - every time.** Pay attention during safety meetings.

You may have heard it all before, but a reminder never hurts. Set a good example for others around you, & never let overconfidence compromise your safety.