

As April (Injury Prevention Month) comes to an end, we want to remind you that your safety is important every day of the year.

Toolbox Talks

Injury Prevention Month

Here's some basic knowledge you should know, from injury prevention to afterthoughts & regrets to knowing how to use everything in your First Aid Kit after an accident has occurred.

→ COMMON SENSE & ACCIDENT PREVENTION

Generally speaking, we are not *born* with common sense, we *acquire* it throughout life. Actually, common sense is really common experience--we learn about life from others' experiences as well as our own. Awareness of your environment, self-preservation, & concern for your fellow workers are all factors in good common sense. **Contrary to popular opinion, all workers can prevent themselves from getting hurt.** The easy way to avoid pain is to observe how others have taken risks & been injured, rather than learning the hard way--from your own injury. That's common sense! **The experts say at least 80% of industrial accidents are caused by unsafe acts on the part of employees--and not by unsafe conditions.** Although employers are required by law to provide a safe & healthful workplace, it is up to *you* to be aware of your work environment & follow safe work practices. By avoiding unsafe acts & practicing common sense, your work will go smoother, with less chance for accidents.

→ AFTERTHOUGHTS & REGRETS

How often have you said or done something & then later, reflecting on your action, thought to yourself, "How could I have done that?" Here are some afterthoughts which, unfortunately, too many of us have experienced:

- "That's how we've always done it before." (*before the accident occurred anyway.*)
- "I never thought that a little bolt dropped from that distance would cause so much bleeding." (*I should have worn a hard hat, I guess.*)
- "If I had taken that first-aid/CPR course, I probably could have helped him." (*& chances are, he would still be here.*)
- "I should have taken care of that board with the projecting rusty nails earlier." (*Now, I have to take off work to get a tetanus shot.*)
- "Wow, I never realized that a fire could get out of control so fast." (*If I'd called the fire department before trying to put it out myself, I might still have a place to work tomorrow.*)
- "I know they were always preaching that we should lift with the leg muscles instead of the back muscles." (*What the heck is a herniated disk?*)
- "For few more dollars, I could have bought safety shoes." (*That deep cut in the toe section ruined my new work boots, & this broken toe still hurts.*)
- "My safety glasses were in the tool box, but I was just going to grind off this one little piece." (*I wonder if they'll still let me drive with only one eye?*)
- "We were only going to use the scaffold for one day. I never thought a hammer would fall off the plank & strike someone." (*I had a hunch I should have taken the time to install the toe boards.*)
- "They always insisted that the tool rest should be no more than 1/8 inch from the grinding wheel. What difference does another 1/4 inch make?" (*I was lucky not to go blind when the chisel got wedged & the wheel exploded into a thousand pieces.*)

Any of this sound familiar? They say *hindsight* is the only perfect science-but *foresight* could have avoided these incidents, misfortunes, & regrets. Learn from others' mistakes & you'll have no regrets!

All information found at www.toolboxtopics.com

→ MAKE THE BEST USE OF YOUR FIRST-AID KIT

Are only Band-Aids & aspirin taken from the first aid kit most of the time--because you or your coworkers aren't sure how to use the other supplies? First-aid kits can be stocked with a variety of items, but most kits have a common assortment of supplies. As with any tool, you must know how to use these products to get the best results. In this safety meeting, typical supplies & their uses will be described, to help make this helpful "tool kit" most effective for you.

- **Absorbent Gauze:** Use these to clean a wound or to apply first-aid or antiseptic cream.
- **Adhesive Bandages:** Different sizes & shapes are provided to protect minor scrapes & cuts after they have been cleaned & medicated.
- **Adhesive Tape:** For securing wound dressings or giving additional protection over bandages.
- **Antacid Tablets:** For indigestion or heartburn.
- **Antiseptic Soap or Pads:** For cleaning skin or wounds.
- **Bandage Compresses:** Use these for applying pressure to a large wound or scrape that is bleeding. Place the compress over the wound & apply pressure to reduce bleeding.
- **CPR Mouth Barrier:** (*e.g.: Microshield*) For use as a mouth barrier in CPR.
- **Disposable Latex Gloves:** The First Responder to an injury should use this protection to prevent contact with an injured person's bodily fluids (blood, saliva, etc.).
- **Elastic Bandages:** For wrapping sprains & to help hold dressings or cold packs in place.
- **Eye Wash:** The wash bottles in a first-aid kit are typically small. Use them to rinse very minor contaminants from the eye. All other eye injuries should seek medical care.
- **First-Aid Manual:** A brief guide to emergency first-aid care.
- **First-Aid Ointment or Antiseptic Cream:** Apply this salve to wounds that have been cleaned prior to applying a dressing.
- **Gauze Roll:** Gauze is used to hold flat, non-adhesive bandages in-place prior to taping. It is not a bandage, because most gauze is not a sterile dressing.
- **Instant Cold Pack:** Place the pack on a sprain, fracture, or severe bruise to reduce swelling.
- **Microbial Hand Wipes:** For First Responders' clean-up after providing emergency care.
- **Pain Relievers:** (*e.g., Aspirin, Acetaminophen, or Tylenol*) For minor aches or pains, as the package directs.
- **Scissors:** For cutting clothing, tape, or bandages & providing a better fit around the wound.
- **Triangular Bandage:** Used to create a sling for supporting an injured hand or arm or as protection over a large dressing.
- **Tweezers:** For removing foreign bodies from minor injuries. **Not for use on eye injuries.**
- **Wound Cleanser Wipes:** Use these singlet wipes to clean minor scrapes or cuts before applying antiseptic & adhesive bandages.