



Toolbox Talks

Setting Examples & Preventing Accidents Part 1

Setting Examples For New Employees

Setting a good example is not a "put-on," it's simply working safety into your daily routine at home & on the job. When we all work safely, everyone's job is safe & their future more secure. Working safely is a team effort. You look out for other workers & they look out for you. Taking responsibility for others is especially important when it comes to new & young workers. They need you to keep an eye on them & remind them how to work safely.

Think about your workplace from the new worker's point of view for a moment. Remember your own first day on the job. You'll see a busy place full of strange equipment, unfamiliar material, & complicated tasks. Everyone else seems to know what they are doing. **More than anything, you just want to fit in with the rest of the crew & look like you know what you are doing.**

New employees certainly benefit by seeing operations conducted the safe way. As you all know from experience, people new on the job take a while to adjust & to discover who they are in the overall set-up of the plant. New employees who have never held a job before, or were employed by a firm that had a weak safety program, probably will need considerable safety instruction. We'll attempt to give it to them, but naturally, they also observe & seek advice & information from fellow workers. **These early impressions of you & of safety operations will be at least partially formed through these contacts & observations.** On the other hand, newcomers formerly employed by a firm that emphasized safety will probably think more of you personally, if you measure up to the caliber of people they are accustomed to working with.

"Don't do as I do; do as I say" is a pretty tired expression, & it got tired because we have all repeated it many times, not just verbally but through our actions; **& actions speak louder than words.** When we leave our safety glasses resting on our foreheads rather than in place over our eyes, or when we kick an empty milk carton under a bench rather than pick it up, we're selling safety but it's a useless soft sell. Our actions are saying, "I believe in wearing eye protection but not in protecting my eyes; & I know trash can cause a tripping accident, but it isn't important enough to make me pick it up."

Maybe some of us feel we are already setting good examples for safety, but maybe this self-image isn't too accurate. Think just for a moment, isn't it strange that we always think about having the nice things happen to us & when we think about an accident, it's usually happening to someone else? **Accidents are a reality.** Make your personal safety just as real & you'll have a good chance of not becoming the other person to whom accidents are always happening.

Help the new worker settle in safely by following these points:

- Show them where to obtain safety materials & instructions on site or in the shop.
- Help the new worker get equipped, fitted, & trained with the appropriate protective clothing & equipment for the task at hand.
- Show your new co-worker the labels for any chemicals you are dealing with. Help them understand how to read them & what PPE is necessary to work with them.
- Point out the location of fire extinguishers, alarm boxes, & other emergency equipment.
- Make sure the new worker knows what to do in case of an emergency such as a fire.
- Communicate the importance of leaving machine guards in place to prevent accidental contact with moving equipment & stock.
- If you see anyone wearing loose clothing which could become caught in machinery, speak up.
- Make sure the new employee knows who to talk to about any safety concerns or questions.
- If you see the new person or any worker doing something unsafe, speak up. It's not interfering; it's looking out for the other worker.

We Know Better!

Most of us have the necessary knowledge & experience to do our jobs, & most of don't want to hurt ourselves or others. Why, then, do we often ignore our good friend "common sense" & set ourselves or others up for an accidental injury?

- **Carbon monoxide can kill - but we sometimes work in a closed garage with our automobile engine running!**
- **A bump on the head hurts - but we don't think about that for a minute when we walk under an overhead load!**
- **A circular saw can cut off a finger - but we go right ahead & operate a saw without a guard!**
- **There is a safe way to climb a ladder, which we use here at work - but we take a chance & fall from a ladder while painting our house!**
- **Excessive speed in an automobile may cause an accident - but we try it anyhow & wrap the family car around a tree!**
- **Radioactive fallout is dangerous - but we think nothing about leaving household poisons around where kids can get at them!**
- **It is dangerous for children to run out in front of cars - but we drag them across the street on the red light!**
- **It is important for teenagers to learn safe driving habits - but we violate a traffic law with our teenage son or daughter right in the car with us!**
- **A loose board on a stairway can trip someone - but we don't bother to report it!**
- **Grease & oil spills can cause a nasty fall - but we "forget" that we should cover these spills with oil absorbent material!**
- **Tools & parts can become falling objects or we can trip over them - but we fail to put them back where they belong!**
- **We know an unsafe condition when we see one - but we pay no attention to material or trucks in the aisles!**
- **We know an unsafe act when we see one - but we oil, adjust, or try to fix a machine without even bothering to stop it!**
- **We shouldn't take a chance when operating equipment - but we drive a forklift truck with the load carried high & try to turn a corner while going too fast!**
- **We can't fool safety devices - be we remove or fasten a machine guard so it won't give us the protection we need!**
- **It is dangerous for us to block fire-fighting equipment - but we pile boxes & cartons in front of fire extinguishers & store material right up to the underside of sprinklers.**
- **We should wear protective equipment - but we wear our goggles around our neck & leave our hard hat in our locker, our car, or on the shelf while at work.**
- **Horseplay causes a lot of injuries - but we blast Gus with an air hose just for the heck of it.**



Toolbox Talks

Setting Examples & Preventing Accidents Part 2

Preventable Accidents: What would you have done differently to prevent these situations?



1. An employee was riding a pallet on the forks of an industrial truck when his foot was caught between the pallet & a stationary object. The employee died of a reported embolism at a medical facility.
2. At approximately 9:00 a.m. on June 5, 2007, Employee #1 was working in & around a 5.5-ft deep trench in type "C" soil. Employee #1 had not had any training on working in or around trenches & could not answer any questions about soil types or when trench protection is needed. The trench collapsed, causing Employee #1 to suffer a broken collar bone. Employee #1 was hospitalized.
3. On June 11, 2007, Employee #1 & a coworker were unloading material from the bed of a truck. As Employee #1 opened the passenger-side door of the truck, a steel T-handle three roller fell from the cab. Employee #1 attempted to intercept the roller by catching it with his right pinky finger. However, his right hand became caught between the back end of the truck & the roller, causing the amputation of his right pinky finger.
4. Employee was working at a network junction box. He was pinned between his work van & the junction box after the vehicle rolled forward.
5. A work crew of 19 employees was hand digging an approximately .25 mile long excavation along the edge of a road. The excavation ranged from 28 in. to 32 in. deep. While digging, Employee #1 struck a gas line using a shovel & pickaxe. This gas line had not been marked & no one knew that it was there. The old gas line was marked & was located about two feet away from the new one that was struck. No one was injured.
6. March 23, 2011, a worker was killed after a cigarette lighter used to check the level of a 55-gal. drum of flammable liquid ignited the liquid's vapor & exploded. The worker died from burns & blunt head trauma.
7. On June 30, 2008, Employee #1 was part of a work crew consisting of a foreman, a lead man, & 4 laborers. The crew was assigned to unload 40-pound sandbags from a truck. The sandbags are used to support the installation of a 36" diameter natural gas pipeline. The ambient temperature at the time of the incident was approximately 110°F. The crew had water & ice to drink, & shade was provided by a shuttle bus at the worksite. Employee #1 was overcome by the heat at approximately 3:30 p.m. & was unresponsive to verbal instructions & physical stimuli & displayed signs of heat stress & a possible heart attack. Employee #1 was air- evacuated to hospital & passed away the following morning at approximately 9:30 a.m.
8. On September 8, 2005, Employee #1 was riding on the step of a backhoe at a worksite. The backhoe was still moving when he got down. The front wheel of the backhoe ran over his left foot. Employee #1 was taken to the hospital in for treatment of his fractured foot.
9. On August 26, 2005, Employee #1 was returning from a break, riding on the tailgate of a pickup truck going 25 to 35 miles per hour. He was facing the rear of the vehicle when he slid off the tailgate, struck his feet on the asphalt road, lost his balance & fell backward, striking his head on the pavement. Employee #1 suffered severe head trauma & was flown to a shock trauma center. At the time the report was written, he was in critical, but stable, condition.
10. Employee #1, having finished work for the day, was in the back of a truck driven by a coworker, headed to the job shack at the yard to pick up their paychecks. The coworker pulled into the yard at high speed & tried to power slide his truck on the mud. The truck didn't slide, & the sudden turn caused Employee #1 to be thrown from the back of the truck. He sustained a laceration on his head that required 17 stitches.
11. At approximately 3:00 p.m. on October 10, 1984, Employees #1 & #2 were refueling a forklift with gasoline from an open 5 gallon plastic bucket. Employee #2 lit a cigarette lighter 10 inches away from the open bucket. The gasoline vapors ignited & Employee #1 dropped the bucket, which still contained 2 gallons of gasoline. Employee #1 was engulfed in flames as he jumped off the forklift, sustaining burns over 60 percent of his body. In a signed statement, Employee #2, age 18, stated that he lit the lighter as a joke, trying to scare Employee #1. The plastic bucket, a completely open container, was not an approved safety can.
12. At approximately 7:30 a.m. on September 1, 2009, an employee attempted to jump into the cab of his truck as the truck began to roll backwards. He fell to the ground & was run over by the truck. The employee died.
13. At approximately 2:20 p.m. on June 12, 2009, Employees #1 and #2 were in a shop placing blocks under a large steel plate that was to be sandblasted on a flatbed trailer. The steel plate was suspended by a forklift on one side, and by a polyester sling attached to an overhead crane on the other side. When the sling failed, the plate fell. Employee #1 was struck in the head by a block and was killed. Employee #2 was struck above his eye by a block and was hospitalized for a laceration.

All information found at safetytoolboxtalks.com