



Toolbox Talks

True Stories: Preventable Accidents Part 1

Injured on Your Day Off

**Man sustains serious head injury in industrial accident
Worker was picking up his paycheck on his day off.**
Springfield News-Sun- October 5, 2012
By Mark McGregor

A man was in intensive care at a Dayton hospital with a serious head injury after an industrial accident at a Springfield block and brick plant Friday afternoon.

Springfield Concrete Block & Brick Owner Robert Anderson said that off-duty employee Matthew Clay's head was pinned between a break in a wall where the company rolls products out of the building and a stacked load of cinder blocks being rolled out.



It was not immediately clear how or why his head may have been in the area, police said. "We don't know whether the victim intended to enter the building again between those blocks or just sticking his head in to try to say something to his friend who was operating the blocks on the rail," Springfield Police Sgt. Barry Eggers said.

Clay, 25, of Pleasant Twp., was reportedly at the business, 1100 Mitchell Blvd., on his day off to pick up his paycheck.

"It's my understanding that they routinely go in and out of there, but they do it on the (left) side; it's 12 inches wide. But the side he was on is half that width," Eggers said. "I don't know if this young man knew that because he's only been here two weeks or if he's just hoping to say something quickly and get out of the way."

"I don't even know what he was trying to do," Anderson said. "I've been here since '67 and never had anything like that happen."

There is nothing worse than getting injured while at work . . . except maybe getting injured at work when you're not on the clock & there just to pickup your paycheck. This recent news article from Springfield, Ohio highlights that industrial workplaces can be a dangerous place whether you're working inside the facility or just coming in to pickup your paycheck for the week. We don't know all the details of the incident yet but several things stick out from this article.

It seems obvious from the photograph that this would not be a safe entrance to the facility as you are going through a narrow opening that is lower than the typical door, roller conveyors on the walking surface & large objects coming through the opening occasionally. However the article also says that people routinely utilized it to go in & out of the facility. Bad habits & risky behavior are definitely at play.

Also the article indicates that the injured person had only worked at the facility for two weeks. Did he not know the danger? Had he never seen loads of blocks come through the opening? Did he learn from coworkers this practice?

This brings to light that when dealing with new employees your actions are in the spotlight. They are like sponges & want to absorb everything they see veterans say & do so they too can perform a good job. What type of example are you setting? Think about that as you work today and look at each task you do. Are you doing it safely? Are there dangers? Would I want to teach someone that I care about that this is the way to do the task? All important questions to ask ourselves.

Anger: Just One Letter Short of DANGER

If you have angry workers in your department or you yourself are angry, you may end up reporting more injuries on the job. A recent study by the Annals of Family Medicine found that high levels of anger increase the risk of injury. Angry people are more likely to sustain injuries serious enough to require emergency medical care, & the risk is higher for men than women, says lead author Daniel Vinson of the University of Missouri.

The study, in the Annals of Family Medicine, found that nearly 32% of all the patients reported being irritable just before they were injured, 18% reported being angry and 13% reported being hostile.

Anger more than quadrupled a person's odds of being injured, while being hostile increased those odds **sixfold**. For men, Vinson says, the link was particularly clear. Another study that followed 100 drivers for two weeks linked episodes of anger with "near accidents". Two additional studies found that angry people were more likely to have car crashes or sustain football injuries.

There is little doubt that anger can be a contributing factor in workplace injuries, but what do you do about it? Here are some tips:

- **Consciously determine to be calm.** Don't react, think! Remember your goals & respond appropriately. Choose to remain calm!
- **Communicate.** When someone upsets you, tell them. Calmly talk to them about how you feel about their words or actions. Learn to express yourself better -- clear & composed. Choose to!
- **Remove yourself.** Get away from the scene until you can respond without anger. Your success will not happen overnight. Take it one step at a time, one day at a time. Remember to relax. Relaxation exercises or music can be helpful. Keep in mind you can reach out to someone you trust for help. Choose to!
- **Frequently take time for yourself.** Do something you enjoy like walking in the park, swimming, reading, or seeing a feel-good movie. Do something nice for someone you admire. It's okay to feel good about yourself. Choose to!
- **Look for the positives.** Don't dwell on the negatives. "Don't sweat the small stuff." Don't worry about things that are out of your personal control. This is difficult, but an attitude & behavior that can be learned!

I Just Wanted To

Helena Independent Register - 2/3/2012 BUTTE — *Why did a sober, middle-aged man lead Butte police on a dangerous, high-speed chase through Butte and on the interstate early Thursday? "I just always wanted to do that," he said, according to the Butte police report. John C. Hughes, 55, is accused of trying to evade a police patrol by driving at high speeds through Butte and on the interstate just to see what it would be like, police reported. Hughes likely found out it involved severe tire damage, because police used "stop sticks" to deflate his tires during the chase in order to get him to stop, according to the police report. Hughes was arrested without further incident and faces a misdemeanor charge of reckless driving while eluding police. Investigators say Hughes wasn't intoxicated and they didn't find drugs or other contraband in his vehicle. Sheriff John Walsh said the man allegedly told officers afterward that he always wanted to see what it would be like to be in a chase with police. "That's the first time I've ever heard of anything like that," the sheriff said*



Toolbox Talks

True Stories: Preventable Accidents Part 2

This article from a recent Montana newspaper & the actions of this driver makes you scratch your head & say, "What? ... He just wanted to!"

Not quite as obvious, but the same thing can be said of our actions when it comes to safety. Each of us get rushed or hurried or just complacent & take short cuts that aren't safe & may cause us to have an injury. Things like not locking equipment out, not wearing the proper PPE for the task, skipping the safety checklist. You know what they are, as you've probably stopped at some point & made a conscious decision to forgo following the safe way to do it. That's what this Montana driver did. He decided he just wanted to "do it", so he did. Now many of you may think it's no big deal as he didn't get hurt during the incident. The key to this is no one got hurt THIS TIME.

The scenerios are endless as he was doing what he wanted on the high speed chase. The police could have crashed, someone could have walked out in the road, he could have lost control due to the stop sticks, etc. The fact is, he not only put HIS life in jeopardy, but the lives & well being of all those in the community.

The same applies to you when you make those conscious decisions not to follow the safety procedures. You may think it will only affect you, however the risks you take can impact your coworkers & the community in ways that may not be obvious or haven't occurred before. Think about that before you make that decision next time & do it the safe way.

Lawyer Plunges 24-Stories to His Death

[UPI, Toronto] July 1993 - *Police said a lawyer, demonstrating the safety of windows in a downtown Toronto skyscraper, crashed through a pane with his shoulder and plunged 24 floors to his death.*

A police spokesman said Gary Hoy, 39, fell into the courtyard of the Toronto Dominion Bank Tower early Friday evening as he was explaining the strength of the building's windows to visiting law students.

Hoy previously had conducted demonstrations of window strength according to police reports.

Peter Lawyers, managing partner of the firm Holden Day Wilson, told the Toronto Sun newspaper that Hoy was "one of the best and brightest" members of the 200-man association.

The above story from many years ago has become legend. It has been featured in television shows such as "1000 Ways to Die" & "Mythbusters" & also earned Mr. Hoy a Darwin Award in 1996.

Many of us hear this story & think: "Well, he was flirting with disaster by running straight into the glass over & over again & he probably got what he deserved", & that is a fair opinion. **But what about you?**

What type of things do you do over & over again . . . taking a chance that "it won't happen to you"? Do you:

- Reach into moving equipment?
- Not wear specific PPE for the task?
- Not lockout equipment before servicing?
- Drive a forklift with your view obstructed?
- Keep your safety glasses on your head rather than your eyes?

All information found at safetytoolboxtalks.com

- Take shortcuts?
- Use broken tools?
- Work on live electrical circuits without protection?
- Use faulty extension cords?
- Get up on an unguarded platform without fall protection?
- Remove machine guards or tape up safety limit switches?

Think about it. Each of those things has led to the death of someone in the past year at their workplace. Until you make the decision to eliminate those at-risk behaviors that you do, you are playing roulette with your limbs, your life, & maybe even a coworker's life.

Today is the day to stop ramming your body against the window.

Injured Disneyland Worker Still Critical After Space Mountain Accident

October 10, 2012 9:14 AM ANAHEIM (CBSLA.com) — *A Disneyland worker remains hospitalized in critical condition after he was struck by a Space Mountain roller coaster. The 68-year-old machinist was working on the attraction after park hours on Oct. 3 when he was accidentally struck by one of the ride vehicles, which can reach speeds of up to 30 miles per hour, park officials said.*

He suffered head, chest and back injuries and was transported to a local hospital where he is listed in critical condition.

"Our thoughts and prayers are with our cast member and his family. On behalf of his fellow cast members, we offer our heartfelt wishes for a full and speedy recovery," Disneyland Resort spokeswoman Suzi Brown said.

According to Brown, the ride didn't malfunction and was back in operation the next day. The California Division of Occupational Safety and Health and local authorities are investigating the accident.

Fatal Laceration?

Atlanta Journal Constitution – February 24, 2012 – *A federal agency is investigating the death of a worker at a Savannah recycling plant, who died after a chain of events that began with a cut to his hand.*

Authorities say the worker died Tuesday after a Sunday accident at Southern Metals Recycling's plant on Tremont Road.

Michael Day, owner of the temporary staffing firm StaffCo, tells The Savannah Morning News that 26-year-old Fernando Aburto cut his hand while stripping insulation from wire at the plant.

Day said the worker then fainted at the sight of the blood, hit his head on concrete and was taken to a hospital.

Day said StaffCo provides workers for Southern Metals Recycling. The recycling company referred questions about the matter to StaffCo

Although not an everyday occurrence, we must understand that these types of escalations are a real possibility. Even the slightest injury can escalate. Things like infection are perhaps the biggest potential complication that can occur from a cut. Although typically not fatal, failure to clean & dress even the most minor lacerations can lead to infections that may indeed become life threatening.

The key to this topic is to treat each & every injury as one that could escalate beyond the first look. If you are a first responder take all the precautions necessary to ensure that the injury isn't escalated.