

# Daily Safety Focus

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## Master Your Anger

November - 1

How many times have you promised yourself you'll maintain your cool in "discussing" an issue and then found yourself losing it?

Despite our best intentions to "fight fair," it's easy to rise to another person's bait once the adrenaline kicks in. While it might feel good at the time to hold nothing back, guilt and depression will almost certainly follow after you have cooled off – especially if you have been arguing with someone you like.

When people are in pressure-cooker situations on the job, tempers can flare quickly. If you "lose it" with a boss, your job could be on shaky ground.

Understanding how anger works can help people resolve conflicts without saying things that take them past the point of no return, says Kathryn Munn, a London, ON-based lawyer who specializes in conflict resolution.

"We all have the tendency to perceive ourselves as the lead actor in a play and to analyze other people's behavior in relation to ourselves," says Munn. "We tend to see ourselves as innocent and good and those around us are either supporters or antagonists, good or bad."

People generally expect others to see things as they do and quickly become defensive when someone strongly disagrees.

"Anger generally arises after another emotion such as humiliation, pain, threat or fear," explains Munn. It commonly results from a feeling of having been put down.

"At the very beginning of the adrenaline rush, we may see things more clearly and our quality of judgment is actually increased." However, judgment flies out the window as the argument continues and tempers flare.

It's often said the definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting a different result. If doing the same thing isn't working, consider the following advice from Munn:

- Learn to fight fair and to deal with the problem, not the person. "Be hard on the problem and soft on the person," she says.
- The more secure you are about yourself, the less likely you'll feel under attack and become defensive when someone confronts you. Take a course or read some books on improving self-esteem.
- If you must speak out over an issue, think about how you are going to handle it before the words tumble from your mouth. Write down what you want to achieve.
- Avoid being rigid about what others should or shouldn't do to suit you. Remember, others think quite differently.
- Watch your body language during a "discussion." Breathe, relax and face the person head-on, maintaining neutral eye contact. Don't stare at the floor – or worse, at the other person.
- Ask open questions to find out what the other person expects from a situation, and then summarize that person's viewpoint (calmly) to make sure you've got it right. You're under no obligation to agree with another's viewpoint; only to calmly hear that person out. If you can't think of something valuable to say, don't say anything.
- If the discussion escalates and you find yourself getting angry, stop arguing and agree to meet at another time to discuss it after you've both cooled off.

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## A Good Safety Attitude

November - 2

You have been receiving advice about safety for years. You have listened to it, read it and watched television spots on it, but probably never thought about it much. You might even think, "Accidents can't happen to me".

Then a friend, who is in a hurry takes a shortcut, suddenly he/she has a devastating accident because of that shortcut, ends up costing an arm or a leg. Everyone is impacted – especially you.

You can see what it means to your friend - physical pain, emotional shock, and lost time. Things will be different. Physical therapy and rehabilitation are long and usually painful procedures with this type of injury.

In the aftermath, you notice your attitude has really changed. You make a point of staying alert to possible hazards. You take the extra time to use special personal protective equipment (PPE) and safety procedures. You are more willing to listen to suggestions that might protect you.

So what exactly are the elements of a good safety attitude?

### **FOCUS**

A good safety attitude means you stay focused on the task. How well are you concentrating on the job? If you have other things on your mind, you may be distracted. And if you are bored, an accidental slip is easy.

### **STRENGTH**

No, this doesn't mean muscle strength. What it means is the strength to do the right thing, even when you are under pressure to take shortcuts. A good safety attitude means you have the strength to stick with the procedures.

### **TIME**

A good safety attitude means taking the time to do things correctly and using the right PPE. Is saving a few minutes worth a lifelong injury? If you add up the life costs due to injuries, it is obvious that it is cheaper to do the job the right way the first time.

### **RESPONSIBILITY**

If you care about yourself and your co-workers, you will take responsibility even when a task "isn't my job". A good safety attitude means thinking of yourself as part of the team.

### **RISK**

We are all at risk. But you can weigh the risks of performing a job a certain way. A one in a thousand risk is not worth the possible cost. A good safety attitude means being smart and avoid taking unnecessary risks.

Having a good safety attitude affects everyone around you. Your home life and relations with others will be positively influenced.

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## Shop Talk

November - 3

It is all too common to hear about gruesome injuries on the job — objects propelled into the eyes, electrical shock and amputated fingers, to name a few. All of these devastating injuries can happen to you now if proper safety precautions are not taken.

Here are some easy reminders to keep you out of harm's way:

- Paying attention and using your mind is your greatest weapon against injuries. Always concentrate on the task at hand. Remember to be careful at all times. A second of inattention can result in injury.
- Never rush your work. Always work at a pace that is comfortable for you. When it comes to safety, your health is important.
- Keep your area clean to avoid injuries. This will not only help you avoid tripping hazards, but also protect you and the tools you are working with.
- Always be on the lookout for obstacles and potential hazards. Vapors and dust are two such dangers that are often overlooked. Proper ventilation is essential in order to avoid health hazards.
- Wearing the proper protective gear is an important step in protecting oneself from injury. Eyewear, hearing protection, respirators, and steel toed boots should be worn when necessary.
- Inspect every tool before using it to ensure it is in good working condition. If a tool is damaged, report it.
- Use the right tool for the job. Substituting one tool for another can lead to a serious injury to yourself or others.
- Wear appropriate clothing. Clothing that is too loose can become entangled in machines.
- Make sure that a power tool is unplugged before making any adjustments such as changing bits or blades. Just switching it off is not enough.

In combination with the above guidelines, special consideration must be given to power tools like drills and saws.

Here are some tips to help you stay safe:

- Make sure the tool is properly grounded with an approved three-wire cord and a three-prong plug. Otherwise, it must be double insulated.
- Never break off the third prong. If you find a plug which has been altered, have it replaced.
- Place the power switch in the "off" position before plugging the tool in.
- Take good care of the power cord. Do not tie it in knots. Always keep the cord distant from the working surface. This prevents a cord from becoming severed or damaged.
- Maintain your balance when operating a power tool. Do not overreach.
- Keep your hands away from the working end of the power tool. Do not reach over or under the material being worked on.
- Do not use excessive pressure when operating the tool. Let the power tool do the work.
- Do not carry the tool if it is running. Do not carry it with your finger on the trigger.

The above reminders are for your own protection and safety. Power tools are extremely useful for many kinds of work including cutting, drilling and grinding. Be sure to use them safely and remember to wear your personal protective equipment!

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## Why Safety Belts?

November - 4

To understand the value of safety belt use, it's important to understand some of the dynamics of a crash. Every motor vehicle crash is actually comprised of three collisions.

### The Car's Collision

The first collision is known as the car's collision, which causes the car to buckle and bend as it hits something and comes to an abrupt stop. This occurs in approximately one-tenth of a second. The crushing of the front end absorbs some of the force of the crash and cushions the rest of the car. As a result, the passenger compartment comes to a more gradual stop than the front of the car.

### The Human Collision

The second collision occurs as the car's occupants hit some part of the vehicle. At the moment of impact, *unbelted* occupants are still travelling at the vehicle's original speed. Just after the vehicle comes to a complete stop, these *unbelted* occupants will slam into the steering wheel, the windshield, or some other part of the vehicle interior. This is the human collision.

Another form of human collision is the person-to-person impact. Many serious injuries are caused by *unbelted* occupants colliding with each other. In a crash, occupants tend to move toward the point of impact, not away from it. People in the front seat are often struck by *unbelted* rear-seat passengers who have become high-speed projectiles.

### The Internal Collision

Even after the occupant's body comes to a complete stop, the internal organs are still moving forward. Suddenly, these organs hit other organs or the skeletal system. This third collision is the internal collision and often causes serious or fatal injuries.

### So, Why Safety Belts?

During a crash, properly fastened safety belts distribute the forces of rapid deceleration over larger and stronger parts of the person's body, such as the chest, hips and shoulders. The safety belt stretches slightly to slow your body down and to increase its stopping distance.

The difference between the belted person's stopping distance and the *unbelted* person's stopping distance is significant. It's often the difference between life and death.

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## It Can't Happen to You?

November - 5

Have you ever heard someone say "It can't happen to me"? Maybe you've even said it yourself. If we haven't said it out loud, most of us have at least thought it at some time or another. We think it just before we do something that is a little unsafe—or maybe quite a bit unsafe. We know better. We know the safe way to do it. But we take that chance. We are, in fact, saying "I know this could result in an accident, but it can't happen to me."

Why can't it happen to you? What makes you so special? Why take that chance? Sooner or later, the person who keeps saying "It can't happen to me" will wind up saying "If only I had ..."

- "If only I had worn my safety glasses, I wouldn't have lost my eye."
- "If only I had walked instead of ran, I wouldn't have tripped and broken my leg."
- "If only I had taken my ring off, I wouldn't have lost my finger on the machine."

The next time you find yourself saying "It can't happen to me," remember that anything can happen to anybody, anytime, if they act in an unsafe manner or are exposed to an unsafe condition. I'd like to tell you about a few actual work accidents that resulted in injuries and lost time. The people involved are people like you and me—but the difference is that their own personal "It can't happen to me" happened.

- A bartender cut her finger on a broken beer bottle when she reached into the beer cooler.
- An employee was frightened by the noise of a ruptured air line, so she started to run. She tripped and fell, spraining her neck and bruising her head and ankle.
- A police officer, while chasing two suspects, jumped over a low wall on a building under construction. He caught his foot on the wall, fell into a pile of bricks and construction materials, and sprained his leg.
- A janitor strained his back trying to get a power lawn mower he was operating out of some mud it had become stuck in.
- Highly flammable glue was mistakenly applied by an employee to a work surface. When he started his drill, the electrical sparks ignited the glue fumes and burned his hands and face.
- An employee in a restaurant suffered a head injury and knee lacerations when he slipped on a piece of lettuce.
- A cook broke a toe when he opened a freezer door and 10 pounds of frozen ground beef slid out and fell on his foot.
- A bookkeeper received burns to her left arm and side when a coffee urn she was disconnecting tipped over and spilled hot coffee on her.
- A truck driver injured his neck and back when he drove over a bump in the road and hit the top of the truck with his head.
- A truck driver jumped off a loading dock, landed on a soda can, and sprained her ankle.
- An employee was injured during horseplay in a bakery when someone threw a dough ball and hit him in the eye.

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- A stock clerk in a grocery store suffered a fractured rib when cans of soup he was stacking fell over on him.
- An employee injured his leg when he fell while running to the first-aid room to get help for another employee.
  
- A welder suffered a first-degree burn in her ear canal when she was welding and a hot spark flew into her left ear.
- An employee in an automobile dealership was hit by the car he was working on when he left it running in gear without fully setting the emergency brake. The car ran into him and fractured his leg.

All of us should remember that a person with an "It can't happen to me" attitude is dangerous. He or she may escape injury from unsafe acts or conditions, but may expose those around him or her to injury. So someone acting in an unsafe manner needs to be told about it. An unsafe condition needs to be reported. But don't leave the telling and reporting to somebody else. Take those necessary actions yourself. After all, safety is everybody's business.

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## Any Dog May Bite

November - 6

Why? Because a dog's teeth are his only arms.

Where? Most bites occur are on or near the dog owners property.

Here are some of the reasons dogs bite:

- ❖ Your seemingly innocent actions.
- ❖ Many bites occur when a dog is playing with a person.
- ❖ A dog that is sick or injured may bite anyone who comes near.
- ❖ When you're teasing, harassing, or confusing a dog it may bite.
- ❖ A dog that is cornered or frightened may bite.
- ❖ A confined dog in a fenced yard or chained up very close to his home may bite to protect it's home territory
- ❖ A mother dog with pups may bite.
- ❖ A dog that is chasing something or someone may bite at it or them (bikes, joggers, cycles, etc.)
- ❖ A dog that is fighting with another dog may bite anyone who interferes in any way, including the owner.

In a recent study, more than 79% of those people bitten knew the dog before they were bitten. Along with that more than half the people bitten are under the age of 15, with most being between 4 and 9 years of age.

In Ohio, the owner or keeper of the dog shall be liable for any damages or injuries caused by the dog. In a court of law the owner or keeper would have to prove that the victim was trespassing, teasing, tormenting, or abusing the dog on the owners property, for the owner or keeper would not be held responsible. The mailman, water, gas and electrical meter man have a right to be on your property in their job, as well as various other people.

Beware of dog signs may indicate to a court of law that the owner was aware of the vicious disposition of the dog, and may as such demonstrate the owner's negligence in his failure to properly confine the dog.

Some prevention tips for dog owners:

- ❖ Never let your dog or puppy bite or mouth the skin of a person, even if playing.
- ❖ If your dog is ill or injured follow the handling advice of your veterinarian.
- ❖ Do not allow your dog to growl or snap at anyone. If you fail to properly correct the dog it may become vicious.
- ❖ If your dog has not been raised around children or other people do not permit them to chase, corner or pick up the dog, especially if the dog is more than 4 months old.
- ❖ Never ask anyone to keep or care for a dog that they are afraid of.
- ❖ Never allow your dog to run with or chase people.
- ❖ Above all, never leave your dog out, unconfined, without proper supervision.

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- ❖ Do not pat or praise your dog when it shows fear or viciousness. Your patting may make the dog think that it's pleasing you.

## Preventing a bite:

- ❖ Do not run away from an advancing dog, back away one step at a time.
- ❖ Do not touch a sleeping or eating dog.
- ❖ Never tease a dog or reach into a vehicle or fenced yard to pat a dog.
- ❖ Try to stay calm, as your fear can lead to the dogs confusion or cause him to bite.
- ❖ Notice how your staring affects the attacking dog. If staring keeps him back, you might also try saying, "GO HOME", in a sharp commanding tone, or "SIT"

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## Why Take a Chance?

November - 7

Have you ever made a decision to break a safety rule? How long did it take for you to reach that decision? What did you gain by taking a chance? It only takes a moment to decide to break a safety rule, yet that one moment could change your life forever. This offers you an opportunity to think about your personal safety behavior, both on and off the job. We'll talk specifically about taking safety risks, your personal commitment to safety, and what you can do to keep that commitment strong.

Do you always work safely? Are you 100% committed to the safety of yourself, your coworkers, friends, and family? Are there times when your commitment to safety is not as strong as it should be? Have you been taking risks and getting away with it? Don't expect your luck to hold. No one ever plans an accident. An accident, by definition, is an unplanned event. No one wakes up in the morning and drives to work thinking, "I will have an accident today so I'd better buckle up." No one ever climbs to the very top of a ladder and knows for sure that they won't fall. That's why it's so important to have a personal commitment to safety; a commitment to do the right things to prevent an accident--or minimize the damage done in case an accident does occur.

What is gained by taking a chance? Think about a time when you've risked your personal safety. Have you ever bypassed lockout-tagout procedures? Have you ever driven a car after you had too much to drink? Have you failed to use fall-protection equipment because it was just too much trouble? What did you gain in that situation? A minute of time, an ounce of convenience? Now honestly ask yourself if those gains were worth it. Is a little bit of time or convenience really worth chancing electrocution, a car accident, or a bad fall? Don't sacrifice your healthy future by taking a chance. Every time you're tempted to take a chance with your safety ask yourself if it's really worth the risk. Your family and friends will thank you for making the right decision.

Keeping a strong commitment to safety is not easy. What interferes with your commitment to safety? Is peer pressure a problem? Do your peers think it's silly to take time for safety? You can set a safe example for your peers. Consider taking a stand for safety. By committing to safety 100% of the time, you can help reverse the peer pressure that sometimes causes unsafe behavior. Keep up this exemplary behavior. Someday you may find that the old peer pressure has given way to something new--the respect of your peers earned by setting a safe example.

It's normal for your commitment to safety to fluctuate. Sometimes it's strong, at other times it's weak. Unfortunately, it tends to be strong just after a close call, or perhaps for a few days after you hear of an accident. Then the commitment wanes, only to be strengthened again by another tragedy. Simply recognizing this pattern can help you avoid it. Think about your work habits. Have there been times when you're more likely to take a risk? How about those times when you've been extra careful? Did the strength of your safety commitment depend on an outside event--like another person being involved in an accident?

You can keep your commitment to safety strong by remembering the commitment is for you. If you allow things that happen to other people determine the strength of your commitment, it is likely to fluctuate a lot. You can always learn from things that happen to other people, but to keep your commitment strong all the time, stay focused on your personal safety and those things that you do, that affects it.

Having a personal commitment to safety and keeping it strong are more important than any safety program, procedure, or rule. In fact, programs, procedures, and rules depend on a strong personal commitment to safety. Ask yourself where you are with your own safety attitude and behavior. Are you 100% committed to safety, 100% of the time? You are? Great! Need some improvement? Promise yourself to work on it--and keep that promise. You'll be glad you did.

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## Start and Finish Safely

November - 8

There's a start and a finish to just about everything, including your daily job activities.

Traditionally, home-style philosophers have placed great value on good beginnings with such phrases as "getting off on the right foot" and "getting up on the right side of the bed." Good endings come in for about as much attention through such sayings as "all's well that ends well" and "last but not least."

Getting off on the right foot in your job each day is important not only to your personal success but to your safety, as well. The same goes for the end of the day. A good ending is a key part of the overall safety picture.

When you come to work in the morning, there should be more to starting your job than just routinely turning on a machine or beginning a particular operation. First, take a safety survey. What shape is the area in? Are there any slippery spots on the floor? Are there any tripping hazards around?

How about checking those vehicles for potential hazards. It takes just a minute to survey your work area, and it's time well invested. A minor adjustment at the start may prevent a major problem later on.

Conditions change quickly, and from the time you left the scene the day before, there may have been alterations to the area as you remembered. When it's quitting time, you still play an important part in the safety cycle. The condition in which you leave your area or equipment will have a bearing on the safety of people who follow you on the next shift and on your own safety when you report the next day.

Just don't quit abruptly at the end of the day. This is as poor a practice as starting your job before a brief survey of the situation. First of all, make sure your job is really finished—all trash, tools and other items off the floor or vehicles and in their proper places.

Always pick up all trash, scrap, and other waste, and deposit it in the proper receptacles. Take time to eliminate any slipping hazards by wiping up grease or water. If there's any unusual condition that could be hazardous, make sure you communicate it.

Quitting time is time to take the safety of other into consideration, especially the safety of those who will be in the area before you return. The area in which you work and the equipment you use are very important factors in your welfare. Take care of them and pass them on to the next person in a condition that will contribute to the safety and well being of both of you.

Of course, there's a lot more to job safety than beginnings and endings. There's that important period in between, too. Nevertheless, a bad start or finish can ruin a whole day.

Try to maintain a cool, steady pace. Prepare yourself mentally when you arrive at work in the morning, and be cautious toward the end of the day when fatigue may take over. Remember that safety doesn't punch a time clock. It has to be on the job for every shift—24 hours each day.

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## Take Safety Personally

November - 9

With all the emphasis on safety programs, safety training, and safety rules, it's easy to forget that when you come right down to it, safety is a personal matter. Let me explain a little.

When I see someone operating a hammer with their safety glasses hanging around their neck, I may very well holler at them in less than musical tones to get them up where they belong. And when Jack attempts to bypass the safety device on his power tools, I'll address him in no uncertain or gentle terms. Should either of them take my comments personally?

The answer is both "no" and "yes." It's "no" in the sense that I'm not attacking either of them as a person, only criticizing a particular behavior. But it's "yes" because the reason is concern for their personal safety.

And when each of you makes safety his or her own personal goal, this will be a safer workplace for all of us. It takes the same kind of responsibility you accept and exercise when you're driving. You know you have brakes, and you have them regularly checked, but in heavy traffic or bad weather you don't rely totally on the brakes—you make it a point to drive more slowly and be even more watchful than usual. In the same way, even when your machine guards and safety glasses are in place, you can't assume that means you don't have to exercise care and caution. A Successful Formula When you take safety personally and add a generous portion of positive thinking, you have a good formula for safety success. By positive thinking, I mean a combination of attitude and objectives. It means first of all believing that your actions count and can prevent accidents and preserve safety. Then it means knowing the difference between safe and unsafe actions and being determined always to choose the former.

Here are some expressions of positive thinking with regard to safety:

- I am responsible for my own health, safety, and well-being.
- I am also my brothers' and sisters' keeper in the matter of safety on the job.
- Accidents can and will happen unless I do my part to prevent them.
- There is always a best—safest—way to do any job, and that way is the only right way to do it.
- It is only common sense to follow the work rules and practices designed to promote the health and safety of myself and my co-workers.
- Before starting any job, I will check carefully to be sure there are no hidden hazards that require special protective measures.
- When protective equipment is called for, I will wear it; when special procedures are required, I will follow them.

If there's one thing I hope you'll take out on the floor with you from this session, it's this: In our ongoing battle against accident and injury, two of our most powerful weapons are positive thinking and taking safety personally.

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## Defensive Driving

November - 10

Defensive driving does not require a high degree of special training. The characteristics of a defensive driver are the same characteristics that apply to many aspects of our lives. Let's look at the four most important requirements for defensive driving.

### Knowledge

Defensive drivers take time to educate themselves about safe driving techniques. They know how to recognize hazards and avoid collisions. They know the traffic laws in their area. This knowledge helps them know how to act correctly and quickly in traffic situations. They also know how to properly maintain their vehicles in a safe operating condition.

### Alertness

Defensive drivers are alert, both to traffic conditions and how their mental and physical conditions may affect their driving. They pay attention to the traffic situation to the front, sides and rear, glancing in rear – and sideview mirrors many times a minute. They give all their attention to the task of driving.

### Foresight

Defensive drivers know that their worst enemy is the unexpected. They never assume the other driver will do the right thing. They anticipate hazards by scanning the road to size up the traffic situation as far ahead as possible. In this way they are able to prepare for hazards rather than simply react to them. They practice long-range foresight by keeping their vehicle well maintained, by checking them before driving, and by always wearing a safety belt.

### Judgement

Good drivers use common sense and knowledge to make decisions wisely and quickly. They maintain control of their behavior, resisting the temptation to make risky maneuvers to get somewhere faster.

Can you think of other aspects that make a good defensive driver?

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## Job Briefings

November - 11

Job briefings are not only an important aspect of our daily work habits, they are also mandated through OSHA. In 29CFR1910.269 (c) it states, we the employer shall ensure that the employee in charge conducts, a job briefing with the employees involved before they start each job. You noticed it said each job and not just at the beginning of each day.

The only time just one daily job briefing is needed, is when all the jobs are similar in nature. This would pertain to production workers on an assembly line. In our line of work there are no two jobs that are similar.

Our company policy states that whenever it becomes necessary to replace the person in charge and/or a worker during an on going job, a new briefing must be conducted. It also goes on to state that, if the status of a job changes, work is temporarily stopped, or unexpected conditions arise a new job briefing is required. It is also important that everyone on that job is involved in this briefing.

The following Five Steps are to be utilized in each briefing, no matter if you're working alone or in a group.

1. All Hazard Associated with the job. This includes all hazards physical, mechanical & natural.
2. Work procedures involved, proper tools needed, clearances, hold offs, what each individual will be doing and where they will be doing it from, etc.
3. Any special precautions or unique situations particular to that job, any mechanical limitations etc.
4. Energy source controls, proper tagging, grounding, clearances etc. Clear and concise communications with dispatch.
5. Proper PPE, safety glasses, hard hats, face shields, rubber gloves, etc. Is any special PPE's required for this particular job?

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## Working Together

November - 12

Have you ever wondered who writes the rules? The safety rules, that is? Has it ever occurred to you that maybe those people who wrote the rules just don't have a clue as to what's really going on out in the field, or out in the plant or in the world for that matter?

Well let's take a look at these people who wrote the rules: It was the guy we've all heard about who cut two of his fingers off after he wired up the guard on a circular saw. He was helped by the machinist who didn't have the time to go back to the lunchroom for her safety glasses and lost an eye when the bit broke in the drill press. They both got advice from the fellow who had his head split open by a falling hammer because he just plain didn't like to wear hard hats.

I think you get my point here. If not, then let me put it another way: Each and every safety rule came about because someone was hurt, maimed or killed. Their misfortune contributed to our knowledge of how accidents happen and how to avoid them. Rules came into being in order to help you avoid a similar accident or injury.

Our company is very interested in your safety. It has provided you with the tools, equipment and working conditions that will help you do your best. But in return, the company expects certain thing from you. It expects your cooperation in abiding by the rules, in assisting your fellow workers with a willing attitude, by helping your supervisor by following their instructions and by your valuable comments and suggestions. It also looks for your cooperation by maintaining your physical fitness to perform your job, by not showing up sick or under the influence of drugs or alcohol, and by getting the proper rest at night.

Cooperation or working together with our company creates a win-win situation created that benefits everyone involved. The most obvious benefit is a safer and more productive work place. A somewhat less obvious, and some would mistakenly say a selfish or greedy benefit, would be more money for the company. Let's take a look at this "money" benefit.

There is no doubt that if a safer and more productive work place is created, then the company stands to make more money. There is less down time due to accidents, insurance rates decrease, operating cost are lower and profits are up. But what happens when profits go up? The company becomes more competitive. It can now sell its products, be it through construction or manufacturing, for less. Being more competitive means more work for you, more tangible benefits like profit sharing, or raises, paid vacations, holidays. Simply put, healthy employees insure a healthy company and a healthy company means happy employees.

So you see, safety rules benefit everyone. By working together with your company and fellow employees to ensure a safe working environment, you are, in many ways, ensuring your own physical and financial well being. It is not just a tired old phrase to say SAFETY FIRST. In fact it's the only phrase that makes sense when it comes to getting the job done, on time, under budget and, most importantly, a happier, healthier you when it's complete.

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## Safe Backing

November - 13

Safe backing of a vehicle to many seems like a common, ordinary task. Think about how a vehicle is designed, it is designed for forward movement. That is where our unobstructed view is concentrated. Unlike going forward, when we have to back we generally concentrate on our mirrors, thus leaving room for errors.

Let's take a look at where we were. In 1998, 15 of the 36 total mishaps in the Western Region were backing accidents. This equates to 42% of all vehicle accidents happened while moving backwards. In 1999 we had 11 backing mishaps out of 24 vehicle accidents, this gave us a 46% of all mishaps. In 2000 we finally started to get the idea. This region experienced only 2 backing mishaps out of 17. We have turned the corner on backing accidents, and found the ways to eliminate them.

While concentration is the key to backing any vehicle, there are other aspects of backing that are just as important. First off in the accident and prevention handbook there are references to a few of these. #1 on any list, is to avoid unnecessary backing. If you must back, then do it upon your arrival. This is when the surroundings are fresh in your mind.

Secondly, get into the habit of parking so when you are ready to leave you can simply pull forward. Even if you must go around the block looking for another place to park instead of a space you will need to back out of. When working alone and you must back proceed slowly and cautiously. Looking in all your mirrors for any changing conditions.

Probably the most important is when two or more employees are present one of the employees must aid the driver/drivers when backing any vehicle. While this has improved greatly in the last couple of years, there are still times when that passenger does not get out of the vehicle. We need to make that concentrated effort in order reverse this habit and practice.

And finally, if you have been stopped, before you proceed in backing up, get out and visually check behind your vehicle. Making sure no one pulled up between your mirrors or into a blind spot.

These methods are not new to anyone. They are the same tried and true methods that have been around for a long time. We should always practice safe backing or look for ways to eliminate it altogether.

# Daily Safety Focus

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**Talk About Safety!**

**November – 14**

Whether you call it safety coaching or a pre-shift meeting - talk to your co-workers about safety. Talk about why safety is a cooperative effort, and how your lives could depend on everyone working safely. Talk about how to avoid injuries, and how to keep people aware of their safety habits. Sharing safety information is important to everyone's well being.

**But, how do you discuss safety when the person has an "I know-it-all" attitude? How do you deal with the person who ignores your suggestions, or says your comments are stupid? It's not easy. But if you can "talk up" safety with your fellow workers, you might prevent a serious incident one day. Try these tips:**

- Emphasize the positive. When you see a safe action, congratulate the other person.
- Keep your comments cheerful and productive. Most people will reject a negative remark, even if it has a valid point.
- Avoid aggressive confrontations in front of other co-workers. A quiet one-on-one conversation will usually have better success.

Frequently you will hear someone say "but this is the way we have always done it" as a reason for not changing the way they work. The person may really be thinking "I'm uncomfortable with the new ideas; I prefer to keep my same old routine."

But our old work habits are not always the safest way. For instance, we now realize that certain chemicals are a hazard to our safety, so we use the proper respiratory equipment and PPE (Personnel Protective Equipment). to protect ourselves. A few years ago, workers did not know the long term effect of many products. They seldom, if ever, wore PPE. Now that we have better information, we know we should protect ourselves. Our new work habits are safer.

**But sometimes, despite all your good intentions, your co-worker will persist in unsafe actions. What should you do then?**

- Talk over the problem with your co-worker's work buddy. Maybe that person can find a better way to change the person's unsafe habits.
- Make a point of communicating your concerns to your supervisor. Just ignoring unsafe behavior won't make it go away.

**How should you react if someone tells you that you are working unsafely?**

- Don't get angry, even if the person shouts at you. Concern for your safety caused your co-worker to yell.
- Don't brush off the other person's advice. Your co-worker has your best interests at heart. It takes a lot of courage to tell fellow workers they are doing something unsafe.

**There are other ways that you can talk about safety to your fellow workers. For instance:**

- When starting a task that will impact the work of other people, talk to them first. Tell them what you are assigned to do. Let them know if it includes a lockout and tagout of equipment, and about how long the job should take. Communicate the hazards to others by putting up warning signs and installing barricades.

The most important point of safety coaching is to speak up when you notice a co-worker doing something dangerous. Don't let the person remove a guard on operating machinery. Don't let your co-worker enter a confined space without the proper procedures and equipment. Don't just shake your head and turn away when someone breaks your company's safety rules. Speak up now!

You can make a difference to the overall safety of your work place. Give positive feedback to your co-workers, watch out for their safety as well as your own, and don't be afraid to speak up if you see a safety infraction.

# Daily Safety Focus

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## The Hazards Of Hand Tools

November – 15

If you've ever smashed your thumb with a hammer or gouged your palm with a screwdriver, you'll know hand tools can be hazardous.

Some injuries can be very serious. Loss of vision caused by a particle striking your eye is one common hazard associated with hand tools. Using the wrong hand tools can even cause electrical shock or explosions.

- Choose the right tool for the job. Using a screwdriver as a crowbar or a wrench as a hammer is asking for an injury.
- Use good quality tools. When purchasing tools for your own use, don't purchase on the basis of low price alone. Cheap tools can break easily, causing injury.
- Choose tools designed to prevent injuries caused by repetitive stress and impact. These ergonomically designed tools are made so they can be used without excessive twisting or bending of the wrists or excessive pressure on your hands.
- Keep the tool in good condition. Store it properly in a tool chest to avoid exposure to extreme temperatures, moisture and corrosive chemicals. Blades should be sheathed or guarded to keep them from getting broken and to prevent injuries. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for maintenance procedures such as oiling it regularly.
- Obtain training for using tools. Don't use tools for which you have not been trained.
- Carry tools correctly in a tool box or tool belt to prevent injuries. Make sure the blade or point is protected and the tool is secured so it cannot fall. Never carry a sharp tool in your pocket. Do not carry tools by hand when you climb a ladder. Use a tool belt, or hoist them up after you.
- Dress for safety when using hand tools. Wear eye protection whenever you use a tool, which could throw particles, such as a hammer or chisels. Wear safety shoes to protect you from falling tools and other objects. Gloves may be required for protection from rough surfaces you are working on.
- Whenever possible, use a clamp or vise to secure the object you are working on.
- Keep cutting tools sharp. Dull knives cause more injuries than sharp ones because of the force required to do the cutting.
- When sawing, use slow, deliberate strokes to maintain control of the saw and the object being sawed.
- Check regularly for signs of wear and damage to tools. Make sure handles are secure on hammers and files.
- When striking with a hammer, avoid off-center blows. Strike the head of the hammer squarely on the surface.
- Never hold an object in one hand while using a screwdriver on it in the other hand.
- Never use "cheaters" to extend a wrench handle, because it can break or slip off.

Choose the right tool and use it the right way. Otherwise, hand tools can be hazardous.

# Daily Safety Focus

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## Heed These Hints Before You Saw

November – 16

What do a VCR and a chain saw have in common? Not much, except for the fact many people will try to figure out their operation without glancing at the owner's manual. While you can live without correctly operating your VCR, the same might not be true if you try to play lumberjack without a twig's worth of chain saw safety knowledge.

You needn't even have a saw running to gash your skin with its razor-sharp chain. Fire it up and the stakes rise to potentially painful levels.

Whether you are a weekend firewood gatherer or use a chain saw in the course of your job, observing the following tips by chain saw safety expert Carl Smith could save your life:

- Chain saws must be operated with two hands. If one hand is removed to start a saw in mid-air, or for any other reason, the operator is not in control of the tool. "You've also got to have your thumb wrapped around the handlebar at all times, to keep control of the saw in case of kickback," he says.
- Don't use a chain saw while standing on a ladder. Smith says a doctor placed a 20-foot extension ladder in the box of his pickup truck, climbed it and fired up his chain saw in mid-air (a definite no-no). He fell and the rapidly-spinning chain caused serious muscle and nerve damage to one arm, literally cutting short his career as a surgeon.
- It's not wise to go out on a woodcutting trek alone, but if you do, at least tell someone where you will be and when you'll be home. Carry a field dressing in your shirt pocket — not under your safety head gear. Also ensure that a suitable first aid kit is readily available.
- If you take the family, keep them well clear of your cutting area. Smith says a man who was showing off with a chain saw ended up felling a tree onto his wife and baby, killing both. Because a falling tree can knock other trees over like dominos, Smith says no observer is safe unless he or she is standing at least 2.5 tree lengths away.
- Many needless injuries have occurred when a child or dog startles a chain saw operator and the rattled person pivots upon the other person, lethal chain saw in hand.
- Before making the first cut, plan out a primary and alternate escape route in the event a tree starts falling in your direction. You should never run straight backward from a falling tree, because it can "outrun" you. Flee at a 45-degree angle, keeping your eye on the tree at all times. Never turn your back on it.
- Never cut a standing tree all the way through. Always leave at least one inch of "holding wood" intact and then move at least 12 feet away, preferably behind a boulder or tree, until it has fallen.
- Wear the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), regardless of where you are using your chain saw. Necessary items include eye protection, ear protection, pants with leg protective pads sewn in, gloves and safety shoes. A chain saw needn't be running to cause injury. Using a scabbard on the blade will prevent a nasty cut.
- Never operate a chain saw while under the influence of alcohol or medications that affect coordination, balance and reaction time. Also take frequent breaks, because fatigue can cause injury in the blink of an eye.

# Daily Safety Focus

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## Safety In Your Home and Workshop

November – 17

This Safety Topic is a reminder to put safety first around your home! Many of the industrial-oriented safety topics can be applied to the home. Interestingly enough, safety principles such as lock-out/tag-out and hazard communication can help to prevent injuries from occurring at home. Read on for more ideas about hazardous materials and electrical safety around the home!

Most everyone's garage, workshop, basement, kitchen, and bathroom contains hazardous materials. Read the label on most any household-use chemical and you'll see a warning statement. Be sure to follow the label's instructions for using the material. There may be need for ventilation when using the substance. It may be important to keep the material at a certain temperature, away from extreme heat or cold. Keep in mind that mixing certain substances together (e.g., bleach and ammonia) can cause dangerous reactions.

Keep hazardous materials away from children at all times. If the unthinkable happens and the material is ingested, call poison control immediately, even if the label gives first-aid information. Have the container handy so you can provide accurate information to poison control.

Practice hazard communication at home. Don't remove warning labels from hazardous materials or place materials in an unlabeled container. If you allow older children to work with you, make sure you tell them of the hazards of these materials. Providing this information will start them on the right track to safety.

Electrical hazards may also be present in the home or workshop. Inspect your electric wires, appliances, and power tools frequently and have them repaired if necessary. Avoid the temptation to modify a power cord, plug, or outlet to accommodate outdated tools.

Overloaded circuits present another problem. If you find your outlet receptacles are few and your electric needs are many, invest in an upgrade of your home's electric service. The investment is well worth eliminating the risk of electric shocks, fires, and damaged tools and appliances.

Principles of lock-out/tag-out can be applied at home to isolate energy sources and prevent inadvertent start-up of equipment. When working on electrical equipment, wiring even changing a lightbulb shut off the electricity. Don't risk a shock. Other applications of lock-out/tag-out include turning off equipment such as lawn mowers, shredders, and snowblowers before you service them. This is especially important if the equipment has become jammed and you are trying to dislodge an object.

Today's Safety Topic has provided suggestions for safety around the home. The home is full of potential dangers, but with a little common sense and a lot of commitment these dangers can be eliminated. Practice safety at home and on the job. You'll be setting a great example for the rest of the family to follow!

# Daily Safety Focus

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## Eye Injuries Occur In An Instant

November - 18

An eye injury can happen in an instant, but the results can last for the rest of your life.

Think what it would be like to be blinded in a workplace accident, just because you decided not to put on your eye protection. You would regret the decision for the rest of your life.

A seemingly minor burn or a cut can be disastrous when it involves your eyes. A piece of metal flying off a grinder might be barely noticed if it strikes another part of your body. But if it strikes your eye it could cause permanent vision impairment. A chemical splash on your skin might cause a painful burn but it may eventually heal. If that splash went into your eyes, you might never see again.

These injuries can be prevented, by working safely and wearing the required Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for the eyes.

**The eyes are subjected to many kinds of dangers at work. Here are just some of them:**

- Small particles in the air
- Projectiles, from processes such as grinding and cutting
- Blows and impact
- Cuts
- Vapors
- Hot or molten material
- Splashes of chemical substances such as corrosives
- Certain light rays such as those from welding
- Equipment, or even excessive sunlight.

Enlist your supervisor to help choose the right kind of eye protection for your work. You might require safety eyeglasses with side shields, or protective goggles. You could need filtered lenses to keep out harmful rays. You might require a face shield to cover all of your face, or a hood to cover your entire head. You may have to wear a combination of these types of eye protection. It all depends on what sort of work you will be doing and the kinds of hazards you will face.

It is also important to get the right fit. Your supervisor can help you out here as well. Correct fit will ensure the safety eyewear protects the way it should and it will encourage you to wear your eye protection when you should.

Today's safety eyewear is available in many styles and frame colors and looks as good as regular eyewear. But that's where the similarity ends. Safety glasses and street glasses are not interchangeable. Safety eyewear is made of special material designed to resist impact.

Don't forget about the importance of using safety eyewear off the job as well. Eye protection is required for many jobs at home, such as woodworking and using caustic cleaning products. Many kinds of sports also require eye protection.

Never lose sight of the importance of eye protection. Obtain the correct safety eyewear, and remember to wear it.

# Daily Safety Focus

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## Carbon Monoxide Can Be Deadly

November - 19

Carbon monoxide, or CO, is an odorless, colorless gas that can cause sudden illness and death. Carbon monoxide is found in combustion fumes, such as those produced by cars and trucks, small gasoline engines, stoves, lanterns, burning charcoal and wood, and gas ranges and heating systems. Carbon monoxide from these sources can build up in enclosed or semi-enclosed spaces. Breathing it can poison people and animals in these spaces.

The most common symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning are headache, dizziness, weakness, nausea, vomiting, chest pain, and confusion. High levels of carbon monoxide ingestion can cause loss of consciousness and death. Unless suspected, carbon monoxide poisoning can be difficult to diagnose because the symptoms mimic other illnesses. People who are sleeping or intoxicated can die from carbon monoxide poisoning before ever experiencing symptoms.

### Who's at Risk?

All people and animals are at risk for carbon monoxide poisoning. Certain groups -- unborn baby, infants, and people with chronic heart disease, anemia, or respiratory problems -- are more susceptible to its effects. Each year, more than 500 Americans die from unintentional carbon monoxide poisoning, and more than 2,000 commit suicide by intentionally poisoning themselves.

You can prevent carbon monoxide poisoning by taking simple precautions to make sure that:

- all fuel-burning appliances are properly installed, maintained, and operated;
- furnaces, water heaters, and gas dryers are inspected annually by a qualified service technician;
- fireplace chimneys and flues are checked and cleaned every year;
- unvented fuel-burning space heaters are used only while someone is awake to monitor them and doors or windows in the room are open to provide fresh air;
- automobile exhaust systems are routinely inspected for defects; and
- automobile tailpipes are routinely inspected for blockage by snow during the winter months.

### Remember:

- (1) never use a gas range or oven to heat a home;
- (2) never use a charcoal grill, hibachi, lantern, or portable camping stove inside a home, tent, or camper;
- (3) never run a generator, pressure washer, or any gasoline-powered engine inside a basement, garage, or other enclosed structure, even if the doors or windows are open, unless the equipment is professionally installed and vented;
- (4) never run a motor vehicle, generator, pressure washer, or any gasoline-powered engine outside of an open window or door where exhaust can vent into an enclosed area;
- (5) never leave the motor running in a vehicle parked in an enclosed or semi-enclosed space, such as a closed garage.

Knowledge is the key to preventing carbon monoxide poisoning. In most cases of unintentional poisonings, victims did not realize that carbon monoxide was being produced or building up in the air they were breathing. Carbon monoxide can be easily and cheaply detected in the home; several relatively inexpensive carbon monoxide alarms are available. Consider placing a carbon monoxide alarm on each level of your homes and in your bedrooms.

# Daily Safety Focus

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## Paying Attention

November - 20

Inattention or distraction is any action or condition that might divert the driver's attention away from either the road or full control of the vehicle. For example, using a cell phone; applying make-up; or spilling a drink can take your attention away from the road.

Even a driver's emotional state can cause inattention or distraction, such as anger; aggression; or preoccupation with personal, work or family problems.

Driving in poor weather conditions is stressful for drivers, and stress is a distraction. Consider staying off the roads when weather is bad, or if you're already on the road, find a safe spot to pull off.

Fatigue is distracting. Make sure you're well rested before you hit the road, especially if you're driving a long distance. On long drives, make frequent stops to stretch your legs and get some fresh air. If you're tired pull off and rest.

**Here are some common sense tips that can help drivers keep their minds and eyes on the road:**

- Never apply make-up, or shave while driving.
- Use care if you're drinking hot beverages while driving - get a spill-proof mug. Eating while driving can also be a distraction.
- Don't allow conversations with passengers to draw your attention from what's happening around you.
- If you're looking for an address, or trying to view scenery, pull off the road at a safe location.
- If a stinging insect enters your vehicle, pull off the road at a safe location before you try to remove it.
- For drivers who smoke, use care when lighting your cigarette. If you drop your cigarette, pull off the road at a safe spot before trying to find it.
- Being unfamiliar with a vehicle's equipment and console can be a distraction for drivers. If you're driving a new vehicle, take a few minutes to familiarize yourself with its features. Be sure you know how headlights, windshield wipers, and other safety equipment work before you hit the road.

Cell phones

- Pull off the road at a safe location to use your cell phone, or have a passenger take or give a message on your behalf; even hands-free phones can be distracting.
- Don't dial the phone or try taking notes while you are driving.
- Most cellular phone services provide customers with voicemail; if your phone rings while you're driving, let it go to the voicemail.

A driver's performance behind the wheel can be influenced by mood, state of mind, stress level or other emotional states. Operating a motor vehicle when distracted or preoccupied means you're not fully in control of the vehicle. Drivers need to focus on the task at hand, not what's on their mind, if they want to avoid a dangerous situation.

# Daily Safety Focus

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## Black Ice

November - 21

Black Ice -- It is not the name of the latest rap group. What it really is, is an age-old winter phenomenon that has sent many a driver skidding and sliding down what looked like a dry road.

"What we call black ice is frozen water -- either from sleet, rain or melted snow -- that freezes as a sheet and is not visible as ice," says Glen Hetzel, safety specialist with Virginia Cooperative Extension at Virginia Tech. "The road looks the same as it always does, which is why it's so hard to detect, especially if you've been driving for awhile."

What can a person do to prepare for black ice?

"My advice is to look for signs of ice other than on the roadway," Hetzel says. That means looking for ice on windshield wipers or sideview mirrors, on road signs, trees or fences along the highway. If ice is forming on any of those things, it's possible that it may be on the road as well.

Then again, ice may not have formed on anything but the road. For example, it may have been a warm day during which the snow melted and then froze as ice after the temperature dropped at night. In other cases there will be ice in shaded areas, such as cuts through hills and along banks, before there will be ice on the open roads. "If you suspect there could be black ice on the pavement, you may want to test for it by gently wiggling the car a little bit or by applying the brakes lightly to see if there's any change in the feel of the road," Hetzel explains.

Black ice is also one of the winter hazards that four-wheel drive cannot overcome. "Some of us get complacent because we have four-wheel drive," says Hetzel. "However, you need to be just as careful as the motorist who has a rear-wheel drive vehicle when it comes to ice on the roadway."

Another good tip for winter driving is to listen to the radio for reports on the temperature outside. "When the roads have been wet and the temperature drops below freezing, ice can form quickly," he adds.

"If you are a person who must drive frequently in winter weather, it is a good idea to install an outdoor thermometer in the car," Hetzel suggests. "This will allow you to monitor the outside temperature. These thermometers are available at auto supply stores."

This is also the type of weather when it is especially important to watch for those signs that remind drivers that bridges freeze before roads. "These signs tell you there is a bridge ahead and give you time to slow down so you have better control just in case there is ice on the bridge pavement," Hetzel notes.

# Daily Safety Focus

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## Avoiding Deer on the Road      November - 22

Because there's no changing a deer's behavior near roads, these tips are provided to drivers to help reduce collisions:

First and foremost, always wear your seat belt. Most people injured in car/deer crashes were not wearing their seat belt

Slow down—especially where deer-crossing signs are posted. So many times reports of collision are from people who were in a hurry to go somewhere. If you spot a deer anywhere near a road, immediately decelerate as safely as possible. Remember, the often travel in-groups so there may be others that you don't see. Besides, a standing deer can suddenly panic and dart in any direction. Use your horn to scare the deer away from the road.

Drive defensively—especially if you see a deer. Expect the deer to do the unexpected—like run right out in front of your car. And often deer travel in pairs or threes, so if you see one cross the road ahead there's likely another about to come out, too.

Be especially wary during spring and fall. In March and April, roadsides have some of the first greenery of the year available to hungry deer. After harvest, a farmer's cut field can provide a smorgasbord of snacks for a deer herd. And breeding activity in November and November prompts deer to move around more than usual. Contrary to local lore, there are not more deer along roadsides only during deer hunting season.

Dawn and dusk are the most dangerous times. Low-light hours are when deer are moving most. Nights are especially hazardous because it's hard to see roadside deer until they dash into the headlights. The majority of car-deer incidents happen on two-lane, rural roads between 6:00pm and midnight, especially during the months of November, November and December.

Watch the side of the road, especially near woods. Whitetails regularly travel along river and stream banks or wooded bottomlands—places where motorists usually see deer-crossing signs. While driving in these areas, expand your field of vision beyond the road to see the road ditches and wood edges where deer might be standing.

Deer warning gadgets don't work. Several studies have shown that whistles and other devices attached to vehicles fail to scare or warn deer. People want to drive 60 miles per hour with some device to scare deer off roadways so they don't have to slow down. It's wishful thinking.

Use your lights. Drive with lights on during overcast days and use high beams at night whenever possible. Though headlights from a speeding vehicle tend to confuse whitetails, the reflecting light from their eyes helps drivers to see the animals.                      (Continued)

# Daily Safety Focus

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Don't dodge a deer only to lose control and smack another vehicle. Sometimes hitting a whitetail actually turns out to be your best option. It's not pretty, but it sure beats getting rear-ended, driving into a ditch or getting hit by a truck!

## **What To Do If You Are Going To Hit A Deer**

Slow down, and grasp the steering wheel firmly, with both hands

Brake hard, without locking the wheels and skidding

Steer straight and stay in your lane. Do not use extraordinary measures to avoid the deer. This could put you in greater danger by crossing lanes into oncoming traffic or by hitting things like telephone poles.

## **What To Do If You Hit A Deer**

First, stop the car safely, making sure you and any passengers are not hurt

If possible, move the car to the right shoulder and turn on the hazard lights

Do not approach the deer. You could be injured or forced into traffic by a thrashing animal.

Report the crash to the police and your insurance company as soon as possible.

Do not attempt to kill an injured deer or take it before a police officer issues you a highway killed deer permit. Illegal possession of a deer is a misdemeanor punishable by jail, and/or a fine plus the loss of future hunting privileges.

# Daily Safety Focus

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## Preventing Slips, Trips, and Falls

November – 23

Did you know that slips, trips, and falls are second only to automobile accidents in causing personal injury? On stairways alone, falls result in almost two million disabling injuries yearly. There are thousands more minor injuries caused by slips, trips, and falls each year. Most alarming of all is the fact that industrial falls cause over 1000 deaths each year. Today's Safety Topic discusses what can be done to prevent slips, trips and falls. Most of the suggestions in this article can be used on the job and at home.

Slips occur when there is too little friction between a person's feet and the walking surface. Many factors can cause a slip. Ice, oil, water, cleaning fluids, and other slippery substances are probably the most obvious causes. However, the flooring may be inappropriate-perhaps it is a slick material-or the person who slips may not be wearing proper shoes. To prevent slips, avoid walking in areas which pose slipping hazards if at all possible. Always promptly clean up spills of slippery substances. Better yet, prevent the spills in the first place. If an area is a chronic problem, re-route foot traffic in order to avoid it. If flooring is a problem, replace it or coat it with a non-slip surfacing material. Always follow our company's safe shoe policy. Most safe shoe policies require a slip-resistant sole.

Trips occur when a person's foot contacts an object and they are thrown off balance. The main cause of tripping is obvious--anytime something is in a walkway it could cause someone to trip. Another culprit is an object which projects into the walkway--perhaps material stored low on a shelf. Poor lighting and uneven walking surfaces also cause tripping. Prevention of trips is simple but does require diligence. Keep objects that could cause someone to trip out of the way. Repair uneven flooring and install proper lighting if required.

Falls can be caused by a number of things. Slips and trips frequently result in a fall. Falls also occur for other reasons. Improper use of ladders and scaffolding can result in a fall-usually a very serious one. Falls also happen when people climb objects without using fall protection equipment. Don't risk serious injury by taking shortcuts. If you are working on a ladder, scaffold, or other elevated platform, make sure you know the requirements for using them safely. Always use fall protection equipment when it is required.

Slips, trips, and falls cause numerous injuries every day. But they are among the easiest hazards to correct. Take the time to look around your worksite for these hazards and work to prevent them. Take care not to cause any slip, trip, or fall hazards as you go about your daily activities. Don't let a slip, trip, or fall keep you from enjoying all that life has to offer.

# Daily Safety Focus

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## Chainsaw Safety

November 24

Any tool powerful enough to slice through wood can do the same to human flesh, so chainsaw injuries are often serious. Before you operate a chainsaw, make sure you read and understand the operator's manual and make sure you have the right chainsaw for the job. The instruction manual should describe the saw's capabilities. If you rent a saw, be sure to get a demonstration of how it works, including its safety features. Then make sure your saw is sharp, properly tensioned, and in good condition.

When you're going to use a chain saw, wear protective clothing which includes a hard hat, safety goggles, gloves to give you a good grip, hearing protection, steel-toed shoes with nonslip soles, and trim-fitting clothes that won't get caught in the chain.

Start your chainsaw according to the manual's direction. Clear the work area so the chain won't touch anything but the wood you want to cut and place the saw on a level surface; never rest a saw on your. Stand to the side of the saw so you won't follow the cut through into your leg and stand on the uphill side of your work so it won't roll into you. Hold the saw parallel to the ground with your left arm straight for better control and to reduce the chance of the saw pushing into you if it kicks back.

Keep both hands on the saw while its running. Work slowly, don't rush. Let the chainsaw do the work; never force it. Avoid cutting above mid-chest height. Never attempt to cut a tree with a diameter greater than the length of the chainsaw blade and watch for branches that may spring back as you cut. Always be aware of what is in the saw's downward path after the cut. It's a good idea to take frequent breaks from cutting so you don't operate the saw when you're tired. Although some chainsaw injuries are caused by operator error, kickback is the greatest cause of chainsaw injuries. In kickback, the upper chain "grabs" in the wood or an obstruction and forces the saw backward, causing operator to either lose control of the saw or lose balance, bringing the saw into contact with the body. Some chainsaws have chain brakes that are designed to instantly stop the saw after kickback. While these don't prevent kickback, they can reduce the severity of injury from it.

Carry the saw below your waist, with the engine off and guide bar pointed to the rear, so if you trip the saw drops behind you.

If your saw is electric, make sure you use an extension cord that's approved for outdoor use and don't use the saw in a damp environment. Fuel gasoline-powered chainsaws outdoors, being careful not to overfill or spill the fuel. Never refuel a hot saw. Let it cool down first, and have a fire extinguisher nearby.

It's dangerous to work alone with a chainsaw. Have a companion within calling distance, but keep bystanders and helpers at a safe distance from operation so that they will not be injured by the saw, flying chips, sawdust or by what you're working on.

# Daily Safety Focus

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## Be An Extra-Safe Driver

November 25

Those who drive for a living would be the first to agree it can be mighty dangerous out there on the crowded roads. Although the common factors of inexperience, recklessness, and aggressive driving contribute to many vehicle accidents, it doesn't explain why so many professional drivers get into accidents. A driver may be trained, experienced, and competent behind the wheel, but the very flood of vehicles competing for space on the roads today presents added danger to all drivers. Even the very best drivers must learn to operate their vehicles with life-saving EXTRAS.

Drivers should take extra care of their vehicles' maintenance by keeping them in good operating condition. Before getting behind the wheel, do a simple walk around the vehicle to insure that tires are properly inflated and have good tread, check that lights are clear and working, and see that windshields are clean and wipers blades are sharp.

Once inside the vehicle, drivers should take the extra time to check the gas gage, adjust the mirrors, seat, and seatbelt to a comfortable position and, if it's an unfamiliar vehicle, locate the lights, brakes, and wipers. Horns, flasher lights, and other warning devices are not just accessories but vital parts of the extra safety built into any vehicle, so make sure they operate properly.

On the roadways, be extra careful by driving defensively. Following the rules of the road can help you concentrate on what you should be doing...driving. Stay out of the other vehicle's blind spot and avoid tailgating. Instead, keep a safe distance from other drivers by maintaining that extra safety cushion of driving space between your vehicle and those around you. As an extra precaution, know the condition of the weather and road and drive only as fast as those conditions allow.

Be extra cautious by staying alert and expecting the unexpected. Watch out for and anticipate other drivers, pedestrians or children on or near the road. Safe drivers scan constantly for hazards, predicting how they may be affected by a hazard and pre-determining how to avoid or reduce them.

The ever-changing variable of the road and other vehicles can make drivers instantly vulnerable to accidents. If drivers don't practice these life-saving extras on the road, they might personally discover why vehicle deaths and serious injuries now total more than all the wartime wounded and fatalities since 1776.

# Daily Safety Focus

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## One Good Turn Deserves Another

November 26

Good drivers know how to make good turns. Turns made with safety and skill are an important part of successful driving.

Here are some reminders about making safe turns when driving a motor vehicle:

- Scan the roadway and intersection ahead, as well as the traffic behind and beside you.
- Observe and understand the road signs governing turns. Know the various shapes and colors for road signs.
- Watch for lights regulating turns at intersections and mid-block locations. Turn lanes may have special lights allowing you to safely turn across the on-coming lane.
- Be aware of the layout of traffic islands used to control vehicle turns. These islands can be raised surfaces with curbs, or merely painted markings.
- Properly position your vehicle in the correct lane well ahead of the turn.
- Reduce your speed as you approach the turn.
- Signal well in advance, but not so far ahead that your signal could be misinterpreted for another possible turn.
- Turn only when it is safe to do so. Yield to other pedestrians and vehicles in the intersection as necessary.
- Postpone your turn if you cannot get into the correct lane or if traffic is too heavy. Drive on to the next intersection to make a safe and legal turn.
- Use the hand-over-hand steering method to complete the turn rather than keeping your hand in just one place on the steering wheel. This gives you better control of the steering wheel.
- As you enter the traffic on the new street, accelerate to the speed of the traffic. Get in the correct lane and make sure your turn signal is off.
- Be considerate of other drivers making turns. Give a little – to ensure the safe and smooth flow of traffic.
- Don't stake your life on someone else's turn signal. For all you know, the driver may have forgotten the signal is on and have no intention of turning. Never pull out or turn in front of a vehicle signaling a turn until you are sure the vehicle is turning and the driver sees you.

**Transport trucks and other large vehicles have extra challenges when it comes to turns. Here are some reminders:**

- Whenever possible, turn from the proper lane. If you must go over lane lines or center lines to turn, make sure you can do so safely without interfering with traffic.
- When turning to the right, proceed far enough forward so the off-track wheels do not run over curbs and sidewalks and the trailer does not strike power poles, hydrants, lamp standards and other obstructions.
- The need to swing out to negotiate a turn may invite a smaller vehicle to squeeze around the corner, so be alert.
- Long loads may swing out when negotiating a corner. Drive to minimize excessive swing.

If you are driving a smaller vehicle and encounter a large truck trying to make a turn, give it plenty of room. It may have to swing into your lane. If you refrain from crowding, the truck driver will be able to complete the turn quickly and safely and everyone can go on his or her way.

# Daily Safety Focus

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## Go Slow When Shoveling Snow

November 27

You wake up one morning to the heaviest snowfall of the season. You have to shovel the car out of the driveway. When you arrive at work, no one has even cleared the snow away from the entrance, so you reach for a shovel again, even though your back is hurting and you feel slightly dizzy. What should you do if moving to southern California is not an option?

Stop and think before you tackle these heavy jobs. Studies have shown shoveling snow can be as rough on you as a maximum-speed workout on a treadmill. Every year people die of heart attacks when they over-exert themselves while clearing snow. Back injuries and strained muscles are also common injuries from this task.

For those who are out of shape or already have heart problems, the combination of heavy work and cold temperatures can bring on a heart attack.

### **Here are some tips for safer snow shoveling:**

- Get your doctor's okay for snow shoveling before you attempt it if you know you are out of shape or have a history of heart trouble.
- Dress in layers so you can shed some clothing if you get too warm.
- Don't rush into the job. Start slowly to give your body a chance to warm up.
- You may be tempted to shovel quickly until the job is done so you can return to the comforts of indoors. Instead, work at a slow pace.
- Stretch every few minutes and take breaks every 15 minutes or so. Drink water on your breaks to replace fluids lost through sweating.
- If the snow is deep or heavy with moisture, scoop some off the top and then go back for a second load.
- Maybe you don't have to do all the shoveling in one day. If the snowfall is moderate, you may be able to tackle half the driveway one day and the other half the next.
- Use safe lifting techniques for snow shoveling. Bend your knees, not your back. Lift the shovel by straightening your legs.
- Keep your feet apart to improve your balance.
- Keep the load close to your body.
- Do not twist your body to toss the snow aside. Turn by moving your feet, and toss straight ahead.
- Choose the right kind of shovel for the job. While steel shovels are sturdy, they are also heavy. Aluminum and plastic models are lighter but less durable. To remove powdery snow you can push a large shovel shaped like a plow. Wet snow requires a shovel designed for lifting.
- For the safety of passersby, never leave a snow shovel where it can become a tripping hazard.

If you must shovel snow, do so safely. Remember the risks, and take your time!

# Daily Safety Focus

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## Protection from Winter Sun

November 28

When faced with a hot, sunny day at the beach, most of us recognize the need for sunglasses and sunscreen. When faced with the same kind of day at work, most workers also recognize they need protection from the sun's harmful rays. But what about winter sun? How many people consider winter sun to be harmful? Unfortunately, few take precautions necessary to ensure their protection from the winter sun.

Like sunshine in the summer, winter sunshine contains two types of radiation that are dangerous to you: ultraviolet-A and ultraviolet-B. You require protection from both.

**Here are some tips that will protect you from the winter sun's radiation.**

### **Wear Sunglasses**

When it comes to your eyes, the winter sun can be blinding – literally.

Overexposure to ultraviolet rays can damage the retina which contains photo-sensitive cells in the back of the eye that allow you to see.

Winter sun reflecting off snow is more blinding than summer sun reflecting off water. If bright enough, it can easily cause a temporary, but very painful condition called snow blindness. Snow blindness occurs when the surface of the eye is sunburned. Other types of eye damage have been linked to overexposure such as growths, cancers, and cataracts.

Dark lenses alone do not ensure protection from the sun. You need to protect your eyes from ultraviolet radiation, not just the sun's brightness. If the lenses are extremely dark, but lack proper protection, this will cause even more damage. The damage occurs when the pupils of your eyes open wider to accept more light and allow more harmful rays to reach the retina.

If you wear regular eyeglasses or contacts, you should talk to your eye doctor about the right kind of eye protection for you.

### **Wear Protective Clothing**

Did you realize that a wide-brimmed hat can cut in half the amount of UV radiation that reaches your eyes? There is also special protective clothing available that will filter out all of the sun's harmful rays.

### **Wear Sunscreen**

Just like the summer sun, overexposure to winter sunlight will give you a sunburn. Sunscreen will filter out the harmful rays and allow you to work in the sun without threat of sunburn. A sunscreen with a SPF rating of 15 or higher should be suitable for most skin types.

It's just as important to protect yourself from the winter sun as it is when you are headed to the beach. Protecting your eyes and skin will ensure that you don't cause long-term damage or time off work. Best of all, it will allow you to enjoy your time in the sun.

# Daily Safety Focus

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## Winter Sports Safety

November 29

Stay warm and dry when you are enjoying winter sports this year. If you become chilled, particularly if your clothing is damp, you run the risk of hypothermia. Hypothermia can be fatal. It occurs when the body's core temperature drops. Normally, the body maintains a constant inner temperature in spite of outside circumstances. Extreme chilling can interfere with the body's temperature control mechanism. When the internal temperature drops, damage begins to occur to the body's organs, including the brain. A coma or death can result.

Hypothermia is a common cause of death when a person falls into cold water. In winter conditions, hypothermia can result from even a brief immersion into water. Wet or damp clothing, or a cold wind, can also result in a dangerous lowering of the body's temperature.

### **Follow these guidelines to prevent hypothermia during winter outdoor activities:**

- Dress warmly in layers of clothing, which can be added or removed as the temperature changes. Dressing too warmly, however, can also cause hypothermia if a person gets sweaty and then chilled.
- Much of the body's heat loss is from the head. Cover your head, hands and feet.
- Stay dry. Carry extra socks, gloves and other clothing if there is a chance of your clothing getting wet.
- Carry a lighter or matches and a candle so you can start a fire if you are stranded.
- Tell someone where you are going and when you plan to return so you can be rescued if something goes wrong. Stick to trails when skiing or hiking.
- Be prepared for winter survival when you set out on a motor vehicle trip. Make sure the vehicle is adequately fueled and in good condition for winter travel. Carry warm clothing and a well-stocked survival kit.
- You and your companions should keep an eye on one another for signs of hypothermia — excessive shivering, drowsiness and slurred speech. In severe cases, the person will lose consciousness.
- Treat hypothermia by getting the victim warm and dry as soon as possible. If there is no shelter available nearby then build a fire for warmth.
- Get the victim to medical help immediately. This is crucial in the case of severe hypothermia, such as that caused by falling into water. Be careful moving the person because rough handling can disrupt heart rhythms. Do not rub the person's skin in an attempt to increase circulation.

While you are enjoying outdoor winter activities stay warm and dry to avoid hypothermia

# Daily Safety Focus

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## Prevent Cold Stress Injuries

November 30

Winter weather is just around the corner, but did you know cold stress, or "hypothermia," can occur any time of year? In fact, most cases of cold stress develop in air temperatures between 30 and 50 degrees Fahrenheit. People who are exposed to lower temperatures are at risk for injuries ranging from frostbite to serious loss of body heat, which could result in brain damage or death. Today's safety topic discusses what you can do to protect yourself from cold stress injuries.

**Dress warmly, in layers.** Preserving an air space between the body and the outer layer of clothing will help retain body heat. Choose fabrics such as cotton or wool, which insulate but also allow sweat to evaporate. It is especially important to protect the feet, hands, head, and face. These parts of the body are farthest from the heart and are the hardest to keep warm. Almost half your body heat can be lost through the head, so cover it up as well.

**Keep dry.** Wetness greatly increases the chance of cold stress. Always have extra clothing available if there is a chance you could get wet. Keep your feet dry, they are very susceptible to frostbite.

**Take a break.** You may think it's wise to keep on working in cold temperatures. After all, working makes you break a sweat and you feel warmer. Nevertheless, if you become fatigued during physical activity, your body loses its ability to properly retain heat. This causes rapid cooling which can quickly lead to cold stress. When you take a break, be sure to replace lost fluids and calories by drinking warm, sweet, caffeine-free nonalcoholic drinks and soup.

**Eat right.** A proper diet provides your body with the nutrients it needs to withstand cold stress. A restrictive diet may deprive your body the ability to work well in cold temperatures.

**Don't work alone.** In cold-stress prone environments, a buddy system should be used if offered in your particular job. Look out for one another and be alert for the symptoms of cold stress.

**Learn what to look out for.** The effects of cold stress may not be apparent to its victim. The first symptoms of hypothermia are uncontrollable shivering and the sensation of cold. The heartbeat slows and may become irregular, and the pulse weakens. As the condition worsens, severe shaking or rigid muscles may be evident. The victim may also have slurred speech, memory lapses, and drowsiness. Cool skin, slow, irregular breathing, and exhaustion occur as the body temperature drops even lower. This is a serious condition requiring immediate medical attention.

Frostbite can occur without accompanying hypothermia. Frostbite occurs when the fluids around the body's tissues freeze. The most vulnerable parts of the body are the nose, cheeks, ears, fingers, and toes. Symptoms of frostbite include coldness and tingling in the affected part, followed by numbness; changes in skin color to white or grayish-yellow, initial pain that subsides as the condition worsens, and possibly blisters. Frostbite can cause irreversible tissue damage and requires immediate medical attention.

When you work in lower-temperature environments, always be alert for the possibility of cold stress. Follow these guidelines to help protect yourself from injury. Remember, it doesn't have to be freezing for cold stress to occur. Take steps to protect yourself.