

Daily Safety Focus

July 2013



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Eye Protection: Safety Glasses

July 1

If your job involves hazards from dust, flying objects or particles that may strike you from in front, you should be using some form of safety glasses. If you normally use a face shield in operations such as grinding, you also need to wear safety glasses under your face shield. The good news about safety glasses is that you can now get them in attractive styles that are at home in both the workroom and the boardroom.

Most Optometrists stock several different varieties of safety glasses:

What Makes Them "Safety" Glasses?

Resistance to impact is the main difference between safety glasses and regular glasses, which often look just like them. The American National Standards Institute (ANSI), which sets standards for safety glasses, requires them to withstand the impact of a quarter inch steel ball traveling 150 feet per second. You can't depend on your prescription glasses for this kind of protection. Frames stamped with the imprint "Z87" meet stringent standards for strength and heat resistance.

Kinds of Safety Glasses

It is important to remember that standard safety glasses protect against impact from the front only. For this reason the safety glasses provided need to have side shields to provide limited protection from the sides for tasks such as sanding, buffing, blowing dirt and debris. When hazards come from above and below as well as the side, as in lathe work or other high speed cutting and shaping operations, goggles can be used instead of glasses or a face shield can be worn over the safety glasses.

Care and Use

Your safety glasses are designed to protect you from accidental injury. They will not withstand repeated impact or abuse, however. Inspect them regularly for scratches, cracks or other wear and replace them if they are scratched, bent or uncomfortable. Scratches not only interfere with your ability to see what you're doing - a hazard in itself; they can also weaken the structure of the lens and its resistance to impact. Taking care of your glasses and, above all, using them, will help you "look" your best on the job.

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Fireworks Safety Tips

July 2

To help you celebrate safely this Fourth of July, the Consumer Product Safety Commission and the National Council on Fireworks Safety offer the following safety tips:

- Always read and follow label directions.
- Have an adult present.
- Buy from reliable sellers.
- Use outdoors only.
- Always have water handy (a garden hose and a bucket).
- Never experiment or make your own fireworks.
- Light only one firework at a time.
- Never re-light a "dud" firework (wait 15 to 20 minutes and then soak it in a bucket of water).
- Never give fireworks to small children.
- If necessary, store fireworks in a cool, dry place.
- Dispose of fireworks properly by soaking them in water and then disposing of them in your trashcan.
- Never throw or point fireworks at other people.
- Never carry fireworks in your pocket.
- Never shoot fireworks in metal or glass containers.
- The shooter should always wear eye protection and never have any part of the body over the firework.
- Stay away from illegal explosives.

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Protecting Workers in Hot Environments

July 3

Many workers spend some part of their working day in a hot environment. The hot conditions they often face poses a special hazards to their safety and health.

HEAT STRESS CAUSES BODY REACTIONS

Four environmental factors affect the amount of stress a worker faces in a hot work area: temperature, humidity, radiant heat (such as from the sun or a furnace) and air velocity. Perhaps most important to the level of stress an individual faces are personal characteristics such as age, weight, fitness, medical condition and acclimatization to the heat.

The body reacts to high external temperature by circulating blood to the skin which increases skin temperature and allows the body to give off its excess heat through the skin. However, if the muscles are being used for physical labor, less blood is available to flow to the skin and release the heat.

Sweating is another means the body uses to maintain a stable internal body temperature in the face of heat. However, sweating is effective only if the humidity level is low enough to permit evaporation and if the fluids and salts lost are adequately replaced.

Of course there are many steps a person might choose to take to reduce the risk of heat stress, such as moving to a cooler place, reducing the work pace or load, or removing or loosening some clothing.

When the body cannot dispose of excess heat, it will store it. When this happens, the body's core temperature rises and the heart rate increases. As the body continues to store heat, the individual begins to lose concentration and has difficulty focusing on a task, may become irritable or sick and often loses the desire to drink. The next stage is most often fainting and death is possible if the person is not removed from the heat stress.

Heat Disorders

Heat stroke, the most serious health problem for workers in hot environments, is caused by the failure of the body's internal mechanism to regulate its core temperature. Sweating stops and the body can no longer rid itself of excess heat. Signs include (1) mental confusion, delirium, loss of consciousness, convulsions or coma; (2) a body temperature of 106 degrees F or higher; and (3) hot dry skin which may be red, mottled, or bluish. Victims of heat stroke will die unless treated promptly. While awaiting medical help, the victim must be removed to a cool area and his or her clothing soaked with cool water. He or she should be fanned vigorously to increase cooling. Prompt first aid can prevent permanent injury to the brain and other vital organs.

Heat exhaustion results from loss of fluid through sweating when a worker has failed to drink enough fluids or take in enough salt or both. The worker with heat exhaustion still sweats but experiences extreme weakness or fatigue, giddiness, nausea, or headache. The skin is clammy and moist, the complexion pale or flushed, and the body temperature normal or slightly higher. Treatment is usually simple: the victim should rest in a cool place and drink an electrolyte solution (a beverage used by athletes to quickly restore potassium, calcium, and magnesium salts). Severe cases involving victims who vomit or lose consciousness may require longer treatment under medical supervision.

Heat cramps, painful spasms of the muscles, are caused when workers drink large quantities of water but fail to replace their bodies' salt loss. Tired muscles -- those used for performing the work -- are usually the ones most susceptible to cramps. Cramps may occur during or after working hours and may be relieved by taking liquids by mouth or saline solutions intravenously for quicker relief, if medically determined to be required.

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Fainting (heat syncope) may be a problem for the worker unacclimatized to a hot environment who simply stands still in the heat. Victims usually recover quickly after a brief period of lying down. Moving around, rather than standing still, will usually reduce the possibility of fainting.

Heat rash, also known as prickly heat, may occur in hot and humid environments where sweat is not easily removed from the surface of the skin by evaporation. When extensive or complicated by infection, heat rash can be so uncomfortable that it inhibits sleep and impedes a worker's performance or even results in temporary total disability. It can be prevented by resting in a cool place and allowing the skin to dry.

PREVENTING HEAT STRESS

Most heat-related health problems can be prevented or the risk of developing them reduced. Following a few basic precautions should lessen heat stress.

1. A variety of **engineering controls** including general ventilation and spot cooling by local exhaust ventilation at points of high heat production may be helpful. Shielding is required as protection from radiant heat sources. Evaporative cooling and mechanical refrigeration are other ways to reduce heat. Cooling fans can also reduce heat in hot conditions. Eliminating steam leaks will also help. Equipment modifications, the use of power tools to reduce manual labor and personal cooling devices or protective clothing are other ways to reduce the hazards of heat exposure for workers.

2. **Work practices** such as providing plenty of drinking water -- as much as a quart per worker per hour -- at the workplace can help reduce the risk of heat disorders. Training first aid workers to recognize and treat heat stress disorders and making the names of trained staff known to all workers is essential. Employers should also consider an individual worker's physical condition when determining his or her fitness for working in hot environments. Older workers, obese workers and personnel on some types of medication are at greater risk.

3. Alternating **work and rest** periods with longer rest periods in a cool area can help workers avoid heat stress. If possible, heavy work should be scheduled during the cooler parts of the day and appropriate protective clothing provided. Supervisors should be trained to detect early signs of heat stress and should permit workers to interrupt their work if they are extremely uncomfortable.

4. **Acclimatization** to the heat through short exposures followed by longer periods of work in the hot environment can reduce heat stress. New employees and workers returning from an absence of two weeks or more should have 5-day period of acclimatization. This period should begin with 50 percent of the normal workload and time exposure the first day and gradually building up to 100 percent on the fifth day.

5. **Employee education** is vital so that workers are aware of the need to replace fluids and salt lost through sweat and can recognize dehydration, exhaustion, fainting, heat cramps, salt deficiency, heat exhaustion, and heat stroke as heat disorders. Workers should also be informed of the importance of daily weighing before and after work to avoid dehydration.

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12 Drivers Errors

July 4

Do you know the 12 driver errors - or bad habits - which cause more than two-thirds of highway accidents?

1. **GOING TOO FAST.** Its a simple fact of physics. The faster you go, the less time you have to react to emergencies, the harder you hit and the greater your chances of death or serious injury. Speeding is responsible for 30 percent of all fatal crashes.

2. **GOING TOO SLOW.** Although drivers seldom get ticketed for this, it's a major irritant and danger to other motorists.

3. **TAILGATING.** Following too close is a dangerous habit. Motorists don't realize that, at 60 miles an hour, it takes the average vehicle from 120 to 160 feet to stop. If you are being tailgated, look for a change to move over.

4. **BAD PASSING.** Keep right except to pass. When you do pass, do it smoothly and progressively. Then, move back over as soon as you can clearly see the vehicle you just passed in the rear view mirror. One good rule is to be sure that you can see both headlights of that vehicle before pulling right again. Also, pass only in the left, and never use the shoulder.

5. **FAILURE TO USE TURN SIGNALS.** You can prevent an accident if other drivers know what you're going to do well in advance of turning or changing lanes.

6. **POOR LANE DISCIPLINES.** Stay in your lane. Don't ride the center line, drive from side to side, zigzag through traffic, bully your way into another lane or hog the fast lane. When changing lanes, look before you leap. Even with your mirrors adjusted properly, you can't see everything. So, look over your shoulder for a last-second check.

7. **NOT ALLOWING A MERGE.** We do a lot of lane merging today at entrance and exit ramps, three lanes down to two, two lanes to one and so on. When it is the other driver's turn, to merge, let him or her in. The simple act of courtesy is the most logical way to move traffic.

8. **FAILURE TO YIELD.** That triangle sign means what it says. It doesn't mean hit the gas, come to a complete stop or muscle your way into traffic.

9. **IGNORING RED LIGHTS AND STOP SIGNS.** Stopping for red lights and stop signs is the most basic rule of driving. A red light or stop sign means stop completely. Yellow means caution. If you have the time and distance to brake when the light changes to yellow, do it.

10. **BLOCKING AN INTERSECTION.** This is selfish and inconsiderate. Try to anticipate the traffic flow and never drive into an intersection when you know there is no chance to make it across before the traffic light changes. If you have blocked a pedestrian crosswalk, don't back up. People might be walking behind you.

11. **BAD MANNERS.** This includes a multitude of sins such as cursing, obscene gestures, excessive honking, loud stereo, refusing to merge, littering and many other actions of rudeness or selfishness. Courtesy and consideration makes driving safer and more enjoyable.

12. **IGNORANCE.** This trait can be fatal. Make sure that you know all the traffic laws, signs and markings, Once you know them, obey them.

These commonly seen driving errors can be deadly, whether they are committed alone or combined with physical distractions which drivers can come across on the roadway. Stay focused on your driving, and don't take a chance with bad driving habits.

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Portable Ladders

July 5

Portable ladders are one of the handiest, simplest tools we use. Because of their effectiveness, ladders are used by many different people to perform many different tasks. Although ladders are very uncomplicated, planning and care are still required to use them safely. Each year in the U.S., accidents involving ladders cause an estimated 300 deaths and 130,000 injuries requiring emergency medical attention.

Ladder hazards

Ladder accidents usually are caused by improper selection, care or use, not by manufacturing defects. Some of the more common hazards involving ladders, such as instability, electrical shock, and falls, can be predicted and prevented. Prevention requires proper planning, correct ladder selection, good work procedures and adequate ladder maintenance.

Prevention tips:

- Do not hand-carry loads on a ladder.
- Do not try reaching so far that you lose your balance; move the ladder.
- Non-skid feet or spurs may prevent a ladder from slipping on a hard, smooth surface.
- Do not stand on the ladder's top three rungs.
- A damaged side rail may cause one side of a ladder to give way.
- The base should be spaced 1 foot away for every 4 feet it reaches up.
- Ladders used to reach a walking surface or roof must extend at least 3 feet beyond.
- Extension ladders need both locks holding to prevent overloading a rail.
- Step ladders should be securely spread open. Never use a folding step ladder in an unfolded position.
- Electrical shock can occur with metal or wet wooden ladders. Not only is the shock itself dangerous, but it can cause falls resulting in injury.

Ladder selection

Portable ladders are designed as "one-man" equipment with the proper strength to support the worker as well as his tools and materials. Ladders are constructed under three general classes:

- Type I **Industrial** — Heavy-duty with a load capacity not more than 250 pounds.
- Type II **Commercial** — Medium-duty with a load capacity not more than 225 pounds (suited for painting and similar tasks).
- Type III **Household** — Light-duty with a load capacity of 200 pounds.

Ladder maintenance

Wood ladders should be protected with a clear sealer varnish, shellac, linseed oil or wood preservative. Wood ladders should not be painted, because the paint could hide defects. Check carefully for cracks, rot, splinters, broken rungs, loose joints and bolts and hardware in poor condition.

Aluminum or steel ladders should be inspected for rough burrs and sharp edges before use. Inspect closely for loose joints and bolts, faulty welds and cracks. Make sure

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the hooks and locks on extension ladders are in good condition. Replace worn or frayed ropes on extension ladders at once.

Fiberglass ladders should have a surface coat of lacquer maintained. If it is scratched beyond normal wear, it should be lightly sanded before applying a coat of lacquer.

Helpful hints

- When working on cylindrical objects like poles and columns, the top rung of portable ladders can be replaced with chain or rope to reduce rocking.
- Aluminum ladders are very corrosion-resistant, but exposing them to fertilizer can cause damage.

Ladder inspection checklist

Use this list to remind yourself of what you should look out for in order to prevent accidents.

General	Needs repair	O.K.	Date repaired
Loose steps or rungs (considered loose if they can be moved at all with the hand)?			
Loose nails, screws, bolts, or other metal parts?			
Cracked, spilt, or broken uprights, braces, or rungs?			
Slivers on uprights, rungs, or steps?			
Damaged or worn non-slip bases?			
Step ladders			
Wobbly (from side strain)?			
Loose or bent hinge spreaders?			
Stop on hinge spreaders broken?			
Loose hinges?			
Broken, split, or worn steps?			
Extension ladders			
Loose, broken, or missing extension locks?			
Defective locks that do not seat properly while extended?			

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Tornado Season not in the Mid west any more!

July 6

When a tornado strikes will you be ready?

Surviving the storm means taking precautions before the storm!!

There are four basic steps to tornado safety:

1.When a TORNADO WATCH has been issued, conditions are right for a tornado. Look out for dark, often greenish skies, large hail, wall clouds and the loud roar of the wind. Be prepared to take shelter and keep informed of the latest storm conditions. Conducting regular tornado drills and designating areas as a shelter will enable you to safely take cover without confusion. Also have disaster supplies on hand.

2.A TORNADO WARNING means that a tornado has been sighted and confirmed in the area. When a warning is issued...take cover IMMEDIATELY!

3.Go to the center of the basement or areas that have been designated as TORNADO SHELTERS. Always take shelter at the lowest level of the structure that you are in and if possible cover yourself with a mattress or beneath tipped over furniture. Interior hallways and closets are considered safe areas if you cannot locate a basement or get to the lowest level. Stay away from the windows and use arms to protect head and neck. Mobile homes and cars are unsafe places to be during a tornado and should be considered for shelter only as a last resort.

4.If you are out in the open and cannot seek shelter inside, lie flat in the nearest ditch or depression. If you are in a car, abandon it for a ditch; do not try to outrun the storm. There are many myths surrounding one of nature's most violent storms. Becoming aware of the facts can save your life.

Myth: Windows should be opened to equalize pressure and minimize damage.

Fact: Open windows allow damaging winds to enter the structure. Leave windows closed.

Myth: Low pressure with a tornado causes buildings to explode as the tornado passes overhead.

Fact: Violent winds and debris slamming into buildings cause most structural damage.

Myth: Areas near rivers, lakes, and mountains are safe from tornadoes.

Fact: No place is safe from tornadoes.

Myth: Tornado's only occur during the spring and summer months.

Fact: Tornado's can occur at anytime of the year. In our area they are more likely to occur between the months of June and June.

After the storm is over:

Listen to the radio or television to get the latest emergency info.

Help injured or trapped persons.

Look for electrical system damage – if you see sparks or broken or frayed wires, or if you smell hot insulation, turn off the electricity at the main fuse box or circuit breaker.

Clean up spilled dangerous liquids immediately.

Use the telephone for emergency calls only.

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Remember, being prepared increases your odds of survival!!

Defensive Driving

July 7

When you're at the controls of any vehicle, it is important to remember that defensive driving is a full-time job. The most dangerous mile you have to drive is the one directly ahead of you. Anyone can drive perfectly for 10 feet or 100 feet or even one mile, but it takes a real professional to drive perfectly for 100,000 miles or more. To be a professional driver there are many things you must observe and practice.

A safe driver is not merely someone who has been lucky enough to avoid accidents, but is one who drives defensively and looks out for others. But today's driving standards demand more skill, knowledge and decision-making ability.

Drivers who are safety-conscious have developed good habits and practice them daily. Every time they get behind the wheel, their driving record is on the line. They must drive like a professional and be prepared mentally and physically.

If you are a driver who has a safe attitude about your driving, you will be able to drive with a sense of security in inclement weather, on difficult roads and through heavy traffic.

In addition, to be a good driver you should respect all traffic laws and be courteous to others. Don't be in a big hurry--you're just asking for trouble. When bad weather affects driving conditions, you must adjust your driving time and habits. Driving on wet or slippery roads is not the same as driving on dry surfaces. The number of traffic accidents and cars running off the road during rainy weather could be reduced if drivers would anticipate the slippery road conditions and adjust their driving habits.

Stay a safe distance from the vehicle in front of you--one vehicle length for each 10 mph. Start stopping sooner. Apply your brakes the instant you see a hazard developing, but apply them gradually so you don't go into a spin or grind to a stop so quickly that you risk a rear-end collision. Defensive driving is driving to prevent accidents, in spite of the incorrect actions of others or adverse weather conditions. ANTICIPATE driving hazards and know how to protect yourself from them. Be alert while driving by keeping your mind free of distractions and your attention focused on driving; alertness involves watching and recognizing accident-causing factors instantly. The professional driver has foresight, the ability to size up traffic situations as far ahead as possible. The driver must ANTICIPATE traffic problems that are likely to develop and decide whether these developments could be dangerous.

Many drivers fail to understand why they were given a "preventable" for an accident when they were not legally at fault. A "preventable accident" is one in which you fail to do everything you reasonably could have done to prevent it. Even though the driver cited with a "preventable accident" did not violate any traffic laws, the professional driver should have seen or anticipated the incorrect actions of the other driver in time to take actions to prevent the accident from happening. However, you may also learn the valuable lessons that near-misses offer and make the necessary adjustments in your driving habits.

As a defensive driver you must operate your vehicle in a manner to avoid contributing to an accident or being involved in a preventable accident.

Awareness of the vehicle's limitations is essential; pre-trip checklists and inspections can familiarize you with the vehicle and point out things that might need attention.

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Close Calls

July 8

When you notice a red light glowing on the dashboard of your car, you recognize it as a warning, to let you know that your engine is overheating or that there's another problem.

A near accident is a warning too: for example, when you're driving down the highway at a good clip and another car pulls out in front of you, it's necessary to hit the brakes or execute a quick maneuver to avoid an accident.

Chances are that you'll be pretty hot under the collar at the other driver's action, but if you're smart, you won't let anger overpower your safe driving habits. You'll also make a mental note to be more alert and watch for cars approaching the highway from side roads. This could save your life next time.

A near accident in the workplace is a warning or an indication that something is wrong. Perhaps a machine isn't operating correctly, or materials aren't stacked properly, or someone has acted in an unsafe way. Close calls or near accidents on the job should also be converted into safety precautions.

Let's consider some typical accidents that could have been avoided if the close-call warning had been heeded. *

A worker trips over a two-by-four and fractures an ankle.

A secretary slipped on some trash and grabbed a metal file cabinet in an attempt to break the fall, pulling the cabinet over on top of her.

***Suggestion: Using real examples from your own operation can have great impact.**

It's fairly certain that the proper handling of earlier near accidents could have prevented the real thing from happening in these cases. The two-by-four, loose tile, and trash on the floor had probably caused other employees to step aside to avoid tripping or may even have caused stumbles that didn't result in injury. And how many near misses were there involving some kind of powered industrial truck and a machine?

Chances are, there were several, yet in all of these cases and doubtless in many others no one heeded the warnings. Nothing was done to correct the situations, and accidents resulted.

Making Our Own Luck

We can't go through life depending on luck to keep us healthy. We have to make our own luck, as the saying goes - by acting in a safe manner and taking proper precautions.

An actual accident isn't hard to remember. You may still have the pains or scars to remind you. Someone burned as a child doesn't need a slap on the wrist to

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promote caution thereafter. But as we've noted, a near accident is often forgotten, with no benefits resulting from the experience.

How can we turn a close call into a contribution to safety? First, recognize it as a warning. Next, correct the situation or remove the hazard that caused the near accident. If it can be handled routinely, do so, but in any case report it to your supervisor. This lets him or her plan how to keep the same situation or hazard from arising at some other time or place.

Constant safety awareness on everyone's part is the most important factor in accident prevention. It's what makes us recognize a close call as a warning. So what do you do when a stack of boxes tips over, the handle on a tool snaps, or a ladder slips and, fortunately, no one is hurt? After taking a moment to feel thankful, you take action to prevent what could be a harmful accident next time.

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Asleep at the Wheel

July 9

Although it is difficult to determine just how many accidents are caused by drivers who fall asleep at the wheel, it is estimated that motorists who travel between 4 and 6 a.m. are 10 times as likely to have an accident than someone driving in early evening or mid-morning.

An American research group recently concluded that 13 percent of the approximately 40,000 motor vehicle fatalities each year are caused by tired drivers or drivers who actually fall asleep.

These statistics are difficult to pinpoint because accidents caused by drowsiness are sometimes described as something else, such as inattention or misjudged speed or distance.

Other investigations also showed that sleep-related accidents were three times more likely to result in serious injury or death. The impact in such accidents is generally much stronger because sleeping drivers do not brake or swerve to prevent the collision.

Oddly enough, studies show that another common time for sleep-related accidents is early afternoon. Researchers say that many sleep-related accidents that occurred between 1 and 4 p.m. involved drivers who worked and slept for irregular hours. According to researcher sources, the body's 24 hour clock is naturally set to expect sleep twice a day - at night and in the early afternoon.

People who feel sleepy in the afternoon often attribute it to having had lunch when, actually, the body expects to sleep at that time. So, unless you have an afternoon siesta, you could find your eyelids sagging after lunchtime.

Drivers must constantly be aware of their surroundings while at the wheel. If you are already tired when you begin a trip, the monotony of a roadway will only make you sleepier.

If you frequently drive during early morning hours, there are precautions which you should take to keep yourself awake as well as protect yourself from other sleepy drivers.

A drifting vehicle with decreasing speed might indicate a sleeping driver. Most sleep-related accidents involve one car hitting a barrier, tree or other object, and there are usually no skid marks because the driver didn't brake.

Some things that you can do if you feel sleepy are to roll the window down, turn the radio up and even sing or talk to yourself. While these measures could increase your alertness, you should get off the road quickly if you still feel sleepy.

Drowsiness erases drivers' awareness and muscle reaction, which drastically affects the ability to operate a car. Falling asleep is a terrible hazard - not only to yourself, but also to other motorists around you.

It's a good idea to get some rest before embarking on a long trip to avoid falling asleep at the wheel. Take the proper precautions, and make sure that you are fully awake and alert before getting behind the wheel of a motor vehicle.

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Having a Healthy Back

July 10

Your back is the main support structure of your entire body. Along with your muscles and joints, it allows you to move (sit, stand, bend, etc.) and to bear weight. But the back is also a delicate, finely balanced structure that can be easily injured if it is not cared for properly. Knowing the basics of back care can make the difference between a healthy back and an aching one!

A Healthy Back

The back (or spinal column) is composed of 24 moveable bones called vertebrae. Between each vertebrae is a cushion-like pad called a disc that absorbs shock. These vertebrae and discs are supported by ligaments and muscles that keep the back properly aligned in three balanced curves. When any of these various parts becomes diseased, injured or deconditioned, back problems and pain are almost certain to follow.

A Balanced Back

A healthy back is a balanced back--your cervical (neck), thoracic (chest) and lumbar (lower back) curves are all properly aligned. (You know your back is aligned properly when your ears, shoulders and hips are "stacked" in a straight line.) A healthy back is also protected and supported by flexible "elastic" discs and well-conditioned muscles.

An Aching Back

A number of physical conditions, such as curvature of the spine (scoliosis), arthritis and herniated (ruptured) disks, can cause back pain, but the majority of backaches are due to poor posture and weak supporting muscles. Improper posture places excess stress on the spinal column. Over time, poor posture can lead to sudden or recurrent back pain. Weak muscles contribute to, and are often responsible for, poor posture since they cannot adequately support the spinal column.

Preventive Back Care

Once you understand how your back works, and what can go wrong, you're ready to start taking care of your back--for the health of it. By using proper posture (when you sit, stand, lift, recline and move) and by exercising the muscles that support your back, you can prevent the most common causes of backaches. The result is freedom from back pain and a stronger, healthier back.

Preventing back injuries is a major challenge to employers. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), more than one million workers suffer back injuries each year, with back injuries accounting for one out of every five workplace injuries and illnesses. One fourth of all compensation indemnity claims are a result of back injuries. This problem produces pain and discomfort to employees, and can have a dramatic change in their productivity and lifestyles.

A BLS survey shows that four out of five of these injuries were to the lower back, and that three out of four occurred while lifting. This survey shows the importance of reducing back injuries caused by lifting. Although no approach has completely eliminated such injuries, a substantial portion could be prevented by incorporating an effective control program, along with an ergonomic analysis and design of work tasks.

OSHA is considering ways to help prevent lifting injuries. The agency requested public comments on October 2, 1986, to help in its research on manual lifting. They are looking at two major categories: engineering controls and administrative controls.

Engineering controls are used to redesign the workstation to minimize lifting hazards. Administrative controls include carefully selecting and training workers so that they can perform their jobs safely.

Suggested administrative controls include:

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- Strength testing of existing workers, which one study showed can prevent up to one-third of all work-related injuries by discouraging the assignment of workers to jobs that exceed their strength capacities.
- Physical conditioning or stretching programs to reduce the risk of muscle strain.
- Training employees to utilize lifting techniques that place minimum stress on the lower back.

How to Lift Safely

Before lifting, take a moment to think about what you're about to do. Examine the object for sharp corners, slippery spots or other potential hazards. Know your limit and don't try to exceed it. Ask for help if needed, or if possible, divide the load to make it lighter. Know where you are going to set the item down and make sure it and your path are free of obstructions. Then follow these steps.

If you must turn while carrying the load, turn using your feet-not your torso.

To place the object below the level of your waist, follow the same procedures in reverse order. Remember, keep your back as vertical as possible and bend at the knees.

Conclusion

Using proper lifting techniques can help prevent downtime due to avoidable back injuries. With a little practice, precautionary methods such as these can become good daily habits that could help prevent back injuries-both on and off the job.

Remember, no approach will completely eliminate back injuries. However, a substantial portion can be prevented by incorporating effective administrative controls and engineering controls.

To evaluate a worker's lifting habits, consider the following variables: frequency of lifting, duration of such activities, and type of lifting, as well as the worker's state of health, body size, age and general physical fitness.

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Stinking Thinking

July 11

Too bad safety trainers can't read our minds. If they could, they might be able to point out some dangerous thoughts that lead to accidents and injuries.

At least we can check on our own dangerous thinking. Do you ever think any of the following thoughts?

- I've been doing this job my way for years and haven't had an accident yet.
- There's no point putting the machine guard on - I'll just have to adjust it again soon.
- I'll skip the safety glasses because I am just going to be grinding for a few seconds.
- If I really step on it, I can beat this light.
- I'll just light a match and see...
- What's all the fuss about confined spaces? Gas testing is for wimps.
- I'll clean this up later on.
- Why tag this cracked ladder - it's obviously damaged?
- I'll just stack this stuff in front of the exit. It will be picked up in a while.
- I'll just pour a bit of the solvent into this old coffee cup.
- Why bother locking it out - this adjustment will only take a moment?
- Anyone who can drive a car can drive a forklift.
- The next shift will notice that it's overheating - why bother with it now?
- These cigarette butts look cool enough; I'll just dump them in the wastebasket.
- Why close the drawer on that filing cabinet; I'll only have to keep opening it?
- If I stand on the top of the stepladder I can reach it.
- I'll just reach under the blade to grab it.
- I've been working around this stuff for years and haven't gotten sick yet.
- I'll leave this on the stairs so I'll remember to take it when I go down next time.
- Why wear my seat belt - it's just a few blocks?
- That's safety - it's not my responsibility!
- I've only had a few drinks - I'm okay to drive.
- If I ignore this pain in my hands, it will eventually go away.
- Why tell him; he's a contractor, not an employee of our company?
- I don't have any shaded glasses - but I'll just turn my head away when he strikes the arc.
- This overhead shelf looks like a good place to stash this hammer.
- If I stack one more box on top of these, I can move all of them in one trip.
- I'll just store this stuff under the safety shower - nobody ever uses it anyway.
- There must be something wrong with this gauge. The pressure couldn't have gone up that much.
- This must be safe. If there were anything dangerous about it, someone would have mentioned it to me.
- Fall arrest equipment is for goofs.

- Why ask somebody how to do this job? I don't want them to think I'm stupid.

These are the kinds of thoughts which lead to accidents and injuries to ourselves and to other people. For some people these are the last thoughts to go through their minds.

Daily Safety Focus

Don't Spoil Your Summer Fun!

July 12

Don't take a vacation from safety! Summer activities have many hazards, so don't let an accident spoil your fun.

Here are some reminders for summer recreational safety:

- When traveling - whether to a nearby lake or across the country - drive safely. Allow enough time to drive within the speed limit and to rest frequently. Wear your seat belt and insist everyone does the same.
 - Wear the appropriate Personal Flotation Device in a boat. You can be thrown into the water unexpectedly if the boat collides with another watercraft or an underwater object, or if a sudden storm swamps the vessel. Even in the summer, lakes and rivers can be cold enough to cause hypothermia leading to death.
 - Don't mix alcohol with water sports, boating or driving. Fatal collisions, diving accidents and drownings are too often the result of alcohol consumption.
 - Protect your skin from exposure to the sun. Sunbathing can be an unsafe activity because it can lead to skin cancer without proper protection. Wear hats and clothing to protect your skin when outdoors, and apply sunscreen.
 - Drink water frequently to prevent dehydration and heat illness. Soft drinks and coffee do not count because they can actually deplete the body's supply of fluid.
 - Get in shape before trying strenuous sports. If you don't, the result can be strained muscles or worse injuries. Warm up slowly, and take the time to cool down after your workout.
 - Wear the right gear to prevent injuries. Helmets and pads are necessary for rollerblading. Sturdy boots with ankle support help prevent hiking injuries.
 - Never use a candle or a heater in a tent. The result can be a fire from which there is no escape.
 - Prevent forest fires to protect lives and property. Build a campfire only where permitted, and make sure it is completely out before you move on.
 - Keep your eye on the weather, so you can get to shore or shelter before lightning or winds put you in jeopardy.
 - Protect your personal security at all times - on the road, in parking lots, at parks and campgrounds. Most people are there to have a good time just like you, but a few will prey on unwary vacationers. Lock your doors and stay alert. Know where your family members are at all times when you are traveling away from home.
 - Eat a nutritious diet, and get enough sleep and rest. Good health habits will help you stay alert, strong and able to ward off accidents.
- The summer season is a time to escape from your everyday concerns and really enjoy life. Just be sure to take safety with you!

Daily Safety Focus

Forget About Luck

July 13

Safety is not a matter of luck; it has to be taken seriously. To begin with, you should understand that accidents don't just happen. Yes, sometimes we are lucky enough not to get hurt, even when we do things that we shouldn't do—like standing on the top rung of the ladder or trying to adjust a machine that hasn't been de-energized, let alone locked out.

But we can't and shouldn't count on luck. We are too valuable to our families, our friends and ourselves, to trust our lives and limbs to plain dumb chance. Here are a few thoughts to keep in mind that will help us take safety seriously and make the effort to stay safe.

Observe and Obey Warning Signs

Every day we see safety signs in and out of the workplace that tell us that something may not be okay to do. The next time you see a sign that you may have passed many times without paying attention to, try reading the words. Think about the caution that the words convey. Then ask yourself if there might not be a very good reason that the warning sign has been posted. There probably is, so why not take the warning?

Many of us retain the somewhat childish habit of rejecting advice given to us by someone in authority. We know better, of course, because we aren't children anymore, but that can be a hard habit to break. Break it we must, though, if we take safety seriously, since we are not only valuable human beings, but, like all human beings, we are vulnerable. A warning is worth paying attention to.

Be Willing to Ask for Help

Another thing we don't really like to do, like listening to others, is relying on others for help. But sometimes, in order to stay safe, we have to accept the fact that we can't do a particular job all alone. We have to say to a co-worker, "Will you give me a hand? Are you too proud to say those words? Too shy? Reluctant to bother someone in the middle of that person's own work?"

Those are easy reasons to understand—but they aren't worth getting hurt for. You don't have to be too proud, because everyone needs help once in a while. You don't need to feel shy, because your co-worker has the same problems that you do. And you don't have to get hurt just to avoid interrupting someone else—after all, wouldn't you be glad to give someone else a minute or two of your time in order to prevent an injury?

Appreciate Teamwork

It takes everyone working together cooperatively in the workplace for everyone to be really safe. You can do a lot to maintain your own safety, but you can't be totally safe all by yourself. Why not? Because there's always the possibility that someone else may cause the accident that will do harm to others—including you.

That's why we all have to watch out for everybody, making safety a team effort. Teamwork means taking the time to show someone else the safe way to do the job, to point out a condition you think may represent a danger, to ask someone if

they know the right way for you to do something new. Cooperation of this sort is necessary because we are all in this together—not just in the workplace but in life itself. And life, like work, is not only safer and more productive, but even more fun when we cooperate.

The essence of safety is the realization that we are too valuable to leave our well-being to chance. That makes us want to take care of ourselves—to take our jobs, and our safe performance of them, seriously—and also to protect those working at our side

Daily Safety Focus

On Your Own Time

July 14

Safety is important not just to you and your family but to your employer as well. It's part of my job to help you to develop a safe attitude, so that safety will become ingrained part of your job, day in and day out.

But off-the-job safety is important, too. What you do on your own time is your own business, but since we're all part of a team, it's only natural that we're concerned about each other's welfare both on and off the job.

At work, you're part of a safety network that extends into many areas. There are rules and regulations to follow and individuals who work at keeping the safety program going. Off the job, though, you're on your own. You can leave safety glasses off when you're remodeling the kitchen, and you can balance a ladder on a box when you're painting the peaks on your house.

You probably wouldn't hear a word out of anyone, but it would take a pretty immature person to deliberately leave safety at work. Still, there are times when we all get a little careless.

The highways are prime areas of concern for safety away from work, since vehicle-related accidents are the prime cause of fatalities on the job and off—in the home or public place. I won't attempt to go into all the aspects of traffic safety here.

They're emphasized almost everywhere, and we've had training sessions devoted to vehicle safety. But I certainly caution you to keep it cool on the road. Be patient getting out of the parking lot, and always watch the other driver.

To some degree, most of us are do-it-yourselfers around the home, and this is where a lot of people are injured. Be careful when using a ladder, for example, being sure it's in good condition and you climb safely.

When using tools, pick the right tool for the job. If a tool is in poor condition, don't use it. Most of you have power tools, and you should be sure that they're properly grounded with a three-pronged plug or double insulation. And stay off wet surfaces when using electric power tools.

The weather is something we can't do much about. Yet it affects our safety, so we have to take precautions against it. Don't work too long in the hot sun. This can catch up with you fast, particularly if you've worked hard all week at your regular job.

Off-the-job safety should really be second nature if you practice it in earnest at work. So keep an eye out for hazards whether you're on the golf course, in your boat, or driving out on the road.

National statistics show that accidents away from work account for 70 percent of all deaths and 55 percent of all injuries to workers. So the toll in suffering and the loss in manpower runs high away from the job.

You are all valuable employees, and each of you fits into our overall operation and the overall manpower picture in the country. Your contribution to the economy would be difficult to replace if you were injured either on or off the job. Add to this the fact that you're priceless to your family, and it's easy to see why a 24-hour safety effort is necessary.

Daily Safety Focus

Storms: Protecting Yourself, Co-workers, and Family

July 15

Residents in many areas of the United States are aware of the hazards presented by thunderstorms. To borrow an expression from Paul Harvey "...but do you know -- the rest of the story." How do you protect yourself, your co-workers, and your family during thunderstorms?

The first step is to know what is happening in your area.

When severe weather is imminent, do you know what to do? If a **tornado** strike is imminent, take the following action:

In Open Country

Seek inside shelter if it is close by and time permits. If there is not time to escape, lie flat in the nearest depression, such as a ditch or ravine. A parked vehicle is unsafe as a shelter during a tornado or severe windstorm and should be avoided.

In Office Buildings

The basement or an interior hallway on a lower floor of an office building is safest. Upper stories are unsafe. If there is not time to descend, a closet or small room with stout walls (bathroom), or an inside hallway will give some protection against flying debris. Otherwise, get under heavy furniture. Select and mark shelter areas in office buildings.

Auditoriums, and Other Large Buildings with Wide, Free-Span Roofs

Buildings of this type are particularly vulnerable to tornado wind damage due to the large roof expanse upon which the wind force may act and also the relatively large area between roof supporting walls. Basements of these buildings offer reasonably good protection, as do smaller interior rooms at ground level or nearby sturdy buildings.

In Homes without Basements

Take cover in the smallest room with stout walls, or under heavy furniture, or a tipped-over upholstered couch or chair in the center part of the house. Stay away from windows, doors, and outside walls. Protect your head.

When **lightning** (thunderstorms) threatens, get inside a home or large building. Keep away from windows, exterior doors, water faucets, main distribution frame, switch equipment, electrical appliances, etc. If outdoors, with no time to reach a building or vehicle, follow these rules:

Get out and away from open water. Get away from bicycles, motor cycles, and wheeled and track equipment. Stay away from aerial lines, downguys, pedestals, towers, wire fences, clotheslines, metal pipes, rails, or other metallic paths which could carry lightning to you. Stay away from small, isolated sheds or other small structures in open areas. Avoid being the highest object on the surrounding landscape. In open areas, go to a low place such as a ravine or valley. In a forest, seek shelter in a low area under a thick growth of small trees. Don't get under a natural lightning rod such as a tall tree.

If you are isolated in a field and your hair stands on end (indicating lightning is about to strike), drop to your knees and bend forward putting your hands on your knees. **DO NOT LIE FLAT ON THE GROUND.**

When sitting in or driving a vehicle, you are protected by the shell of the vehicle. Do not touch the door handle or any metal object in the vehicle. Thunder, the sound of lightning, travels at 1/5 mile per second. Count the time that elapses between your first sight of the lightning flash and the sound of the thunder to determine how close the lightning is.

After the storm (or other emergency), our priority is to locate family members who were in different locations when the storm struck. Designate a relative or friend in another city or state as the contact following a disaster. Without a contact plan, families frantically search and add to the already overloaded emergency management communications system.

If you don't have a family emergency action plan, take time to develop one. Make certain everyone knows the safest place to seek shelter in the event of a tornado, the rendezvous point to use if lightning strikes the house and starts a fire. Pre-planning saves lives. Reacting at the height of the storm (without a plan) may place you needlessly in harm's way.

Daily Safety Focus

Pinch Points

July 16

To most of us a pinch doesn't sound too serious. A pinch on the cheek or a friendly pinch for fun is one thing, but the pinches you get on the job are something else. Recently, a worker was crushed to death against a wall by a huge truck that was backing up. That was a pinch point accident. In another instance, a pair of pliers slipped and pinched a worker's hand, which caused a blood blister.

Between these two extremes lie hundreds of pinch point situations in this industry. And there are just as many examples of injuries sustained because of these pinch points on record.

Pinch point conditions are one of the most difficult hazards to guard. Closely stored 55-gallon steel drums, when moved or handled, create pinch points between each other or the dolly being used to move them. Because the drums are round, they are more difficult to handle and control in many cases. Here the only protection is care and alertness.

The same thing applies to heavy crates, castings, and boxes that are stacked close to each other. It is dangerous to work around machinery that has oscillating or reciprocating parts or elements. Of course, most of these areas are guarded, but in cases when guards are removed to do work or make adjustments, be sure tide parts cannot move or be moved. Tag out or lock out the equipment and be sure the machinery cannot cycle if it is off balance or activated by accident.

There are many commonplace things that are potential pinch points, like heavy steel doors or heavy covers for bins or hoppers, and often there is no way to guard these hazards. Care is your only safeguard. Even extension ladders can create serious pinch points, the rungs sliding past each other can catch fingers, hands, and feet.

A little thought will bring to mind the many pinch points (sometimes called nip points) here in our own operation. Let's take a few minutes to discuss and identify some of them.

Daily Safety Focus

Sprains and Strains

July 17

Athletes in training know their abilities and their limitations, because going beyond what are physically possible leads to strained and sprained muscles and ligaments. Those injuries could put the athlete out of competition. Your job may include lifting and carrying heavy material. You should be aware of how much you can do in order to avoid any injury that could put you on the bench for a while.

Sprains and strains can occur anywhere--in the workplace, during recreational and sporting events, and at home. A sprain occurs whenever a muscle is stretched beyond its limit. Muscles do a great deal of work. However, they must be conditioned if they are to perform in a given way. Professional athletes condition their muscles through rigorous training. We also must condition our muscles. A worker who is accustomed to manually handling a large number of pieces of material in a given workday can do so with ease. Those of us who have different duties would find it difficult to do that same amount of work without paying for it with aching muscles. If we should continue to do the work, however, we would soon be conditioned and be able to perform the job without pain.

However, even the conditioned athlete or worker cannot exceed the limitations of the muscles. When a muscle is stretched too much, the ligaments pull and sometimes even tear. Stretched ligaments and tendons are termed strains. A sprain is when tearing has occurred.

The industrial setting provides many opportunities for the occurrence of sprains and strains; the most common is material handling. We all handle material in one way or another. Even the office worker is involved with material handling when picking up a package, box or chair to move it.

Other movements can also cause sprains and strains--overreaching or overextending a part of the body; reaching over something to pick up a load; or trying to reach a top shelf without using a proper stool or ladder.

What can we do to minimize these injuries? *Well, this* meeting is a beginning. If we understand what causes sprains and strains, we are better equipped to prevent them. A few basic rules to remember are:

1. Understand your limitations. Don't charge into a job cold. Warm up to it. Take a lesson from athletes--try to keep yourself in good condition and at your proper weight.
2. Don't overextend yourself--use a stepstool or a ladder when necessary.
3. Lift with your legs, not with your back. Keep the load close. Don't twist your body while *carrying* a load.
4. Be sure there are no slipping or tripping hazards in your work area or around your home. The sudden jerk caused by a slip or trip can cause a sprain or strain.
5. Don't shy away from hard work because you fear a strain. Condition your body to do what is necessary.
6. Look into ways to eliminate lifting and carrying or to keep it to a minimum. Is there a better way? Work smarter, not harder; it's easier and safer.

Daily Safety Focus

Tiny Tick Carries Lyme Disease

July 18

Outdoor workers in most states face a health threat of Lyme Disease spread by ticks. Landscaping, brush clearing, forestry work, parks and wildlife management are some of the occupations, which are most at risk for tick bites, and Lyme Disease.

The tick is a tiny, eight-legged, insect-like creature, which feeds on the blood of animals and human beings. While it is mostly harmless, They can spread bacteria responsible for Lyme Disease. The deer tick, which is the main carrier, is about the size of the dot at the end of this sentence.

If Lyme Disease is diagnosed early and treated with antibiotics, it can be cured. It can also be treated effectively in its latter stages, but response varies from one patient to the next. Some symptoms can linger for years.

Use these measurements to prevent illness from tick bites:

- When you are working or walking in grassy or wooded areas, cover up. Wear solid shoes, long pants tucked into your socks, a long-sleeved shirt and a hat.
- Use insect repellents containing DEET or permethrin. Follow all the directions and precautions on the label.
- Check yourself for ticks often when you are working outdoors and when you take a break. After work, shower and wash your hair. It is believed ticks cannot transmit the disease until they have been attached for 36 to 48 hours and have become engorged with blood.
- If you find a tick attached to your skin, remove it with tweezers or with your fingers protected by a glove or even a plastic bag. Pull it out gently without squeezing it. Wash the area thoroughly. Dispose of the tick where it will not re-infest. If you suspect Lyme Disease, put the tick in a sealed container such as an old pill bottle and take it with you to the doctor.
- Watch for the early signs of Lyme disease infection. A red rash, especially surrounding the tick bite, possibly in a "bull's eye" pattern, may appear in the first week or two.
- Flu-like symptoms and joint pain develop over the first month. Extreme fatigue, a stiff and aching neck, tingling in the fingers and facial paralysis can follow. Weeks or month's later severe headaches, painful arthritis, heart problems and central nervous system difficulties can occur.

Find out about the potential for Lyme Disease in your area, and learn to protect yourself when working or playing outdoors.

Daily Safety Focus

Drivers Distractions

July 19

Several years ago, my former law partner's husband was killed on his bicycle by a 16 year old who was attempting to reach for a soda bottle on the floor of his pick-up truck. Recently we've read about people in cars, on the sidewalk, and even in their own homes, being killed or seriously injured by individuals that turn their vehicles into weapons by driving recklessly. The stories are too similar and occur too often.

Sadly, the death and destruction caused by careless drivers can easily be avoided by the use of common sense, prudence and defensive driving techniques. Although drunk driving certainly causes a substantial amount of harm, surprisingly, most death and serious injury related accidents are caused without alcohol involvement. Driving safely will save lives. On a daily basis we see drivers not willing to stop at red lights and speeding through yellow lights rather than slowing down and stopping. We also frequently see individuals on our highways crossing several lanes of traffic to try to make it to the exit without regard for the drivers that they are cutting in front of along the way.

Other troubling traffic incidents include persons applying make-up in the car, dialing hand-held cellular phones, even reading the newspaper while driving. The results are often severe and devastating. Some of us have felt the pain of losing a family member or good friend as a result of drivers' acts or omissions on the road. There is nothing sadder than to get a call or visit from the police explaining that someone you love has been killed or seriously hurt in a car crash. This is every parent and spouse's nightmare. Unfortunately, this bad dream is too often a bitter reality for many.

Accidents don't just happen. They are caused by indifference, lack of attention, carelessness or recklessness. We can all help save lives by promoting careful and responsible driving habits.

Let us encourage "safe driving" among our co-workers, by working together and making "safe driving" an important priority.

Daily Safety Focus

Hand Tools

July 20

The Hand Tool Institute, an association of hand tool manufacturers and suppliers based in Terrytown, NY, says that most hand tool accidents are preventable if workers just follow basic safety rules. The five main points to remember are:

Always use appropriate eye protection to keep flying pieces and parts from contacting your eyes. The Hand Tools Institute suggests keeping your safety goggles in your toolbox so that you can easily find them to use for every hand tool job. Other important protective equipment includes work gloves for a better grip.

Use the right tools for the job. The Institute warns that each tool is designed to perform a specific function. It is dangerous to substitute or use an inappropriate tool.

Use tools properly, including proper positioning to avoid repetitive stress-type injuries.

Service tools regularly. Follow the manufacturer's recommendations for performing proper maintenance on your tools.

Don't use damaged tools. Discard them immediately, fix them, or replace them.

Handy Tips

Just how do these rules apply to your tools?

Here are some examples:

Pliers-Too many people use pliers as wrenches for turning nuts or bolts. This is not the proper function of pliers, which should be used for cutting wire. Discard your pliers when they have chipped or dulled cutting edges.

Hammers-A hammer blow should be struck squarely and parallel to the surface being struck. Glancing blows can cause injury. Never use a hammer with a loose or damaged head or handle. Look for dents, chips, cracks or other signs of wear and tear. Use riveting hammers for sheet steel, carpenter or claw hammers for driving and pulling nails, and ball-peen hammers for metal work.

Screwdrivers-Never use a screwdriver as a punch, wedge, pinch bar, pry, or chisel. Choose the proper-size tip for the screw. The wrong-size driver can cause a chewed-up screw head, damaged screwdriver, and bloody knuckle.

Wrenches-Don't try to extend the handle of a wrench with a cheater bar to add leverage. Instead, use a wrench with the proper-size handle. Make sure the wrench fits the nut, or it could slip or break. If possible, pull the wrench instead of pushing it. The safest wrench is a box or socket type.

Cutting-Edge Tools-Dull cutting-edge tools are dangerous, as they require excessive pressure to make them cut. Keep tools sharp. Always cut away from the body.

Safe handling

Be cautious when handling all tools. Don't leave them lying around where they can be a tripping hazard or especially on overhead scaffolds, piping, or ladders where they can fall on people below. Don't carry chisels, screwdrivers, and other pointy tools in your pocket. Use a carrying belt with the pointed end down. Tools should be handed from one worker to another, never thrown. Pass pointed tools with handles first.

Avoid repetitive stress injuries

Minimize repetitive stress injuries by keeping your wrists straight and elbows close to your body. Comfort grips or properly fitted gloves can help reduce the stress on hands and wrists.

Daily Safety Focus

Four Ways to Prevent a Dog Bite

July 21

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that over 4.7 million people are bitten by dogs each year. Tragically, children and the elderly are the most frequent victims. What's more, statistics prove that the majority of biting canines are not stray Pit Bulls, but our own household dogs!

Why dogs bite

Most dog bites are reported as "unprovoked." However, something causes a dog to bite, and victims are often taken by surprise.

Many people see dogs as gentle, devoted creatures that live to serve and rescue. But beneath that soft fur is a predatory hunter. Domesticated or not, dogs live by their instincts. These instincts tell them to chase prey, guard their territory, protect their young and defend themselves when cornered.

Learn how to protect yourself

Some people think that if you encounter an aggressive, frightened or otherwise dangerous dog, you're bound to receive a nasty bite. But there are ways you can protect yourself. Here's how.

1. Learn the warning signs

Dogs constantly communicate and usually give some type of warning before they bite. Most warning signs you can see; others you hear. They include:

Growling, snarling or aggressive barking

Shyness or fear, such as when a dog crouches, has his head low or tail between his legs

Fur raised up, ears erect, body stiff, tail high

An unnaturally still or unresponsive dog (many fighting breeds have been bred for their ability to disguise aggressive intentions)

A dog in pain will bite anyone that touches him -- even his owner

2. Avoid dangerous situations

Follow these tips to avoid coming face-to-face with a biting dog:

Stay away from dogs that are in cars, chained or cornered -- they often feel vulnerable and will bite to protect their territory

Never run past a dog -- joggers and children on bicycles can trigger their instinct to chase and attack

Don't go near a dog that's eating, chewing, sleeping or caring for puppies

Never tease a dog or play too rough

Be careful around older dogs -- they may be blind, sensitive to touch or hearing-impaired

Never leave infants or children alone with a dog -- according to the CDC, infants top the list for dog-related deaths

Never try to break up a dog fight with your hands; use a water hose, stick, or throw a blanket over the dogs to disorient them (children should call an adult for help)

Keep your face away from your dog's, especially when disciplining

3. Know self-defense moves

Many people are bitten because they unintentionally provoke or escalate an attack. If you're approached by an aggressive dog, don't make eye contact or move suddenly, says Mitzi Robinson, who runs Bulli Ray Enterprises, a dog-bite prevention company in San Diego, CA.

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This can challenge a dog and cause him to attack. Stand motionless, like a statue. Face the dog, but turn your head away.

If a dog lunges at you, don't try to overpower him. If you're holding something, put it into his mouth. "If you don't have anything in your hand, put your arm up to protect your face," Robinson says. If you're knocked to the ground, don't move or scream. Pretend that you are a turtle: curl up in a ball face down, and cover your head with your arms. Stay in this position until the dog leaves.

4. Make your dog people-safe

Take your dog to training classes -- develop his respect for humans

Your dog should be part of the family -- unsocialized, "outdoor" dogs bite more frequently than "indoor" dogs

Establish house rules and standards of behavior for your dog -- this will make your pet happier, more respectful and safer to be around

Dogs are magnificent creatures, but you must fully understand them to safely co-exist together. Once you've learned to respect dogs, they can truly be your best friend.

What to Do If You're Bitten

If you are bitten and don't know the dog, try to remember what he looked like and where he went. Your doctor needs to rule out the possibility of a rabies infection.

Wash your wounds with plenty of warm, soapy water or saline solution, and cover with a clean, dry dressing. Call your doctor immediately. Renee Ralls, a home-care nurse in Sonoma County, CA, warns, "Be sure your tetanus vaccination is up to date. Tetanus is a common virus, and infections can be fatal."

Report the incident to the police, your local health department, and an animal control agency.

Daily Safety Focus

It's Up To You...

July 22

Who is responsible for your safety on the job? Is it the government, the company, your boss or the other members of the crew? Actually, all of them have a responsibility for your safety. But ultimately, the challenge is yours.

Taking responsibility for your own safety is a full-time job. Here's how to do it:

- Be aware of your surroundings at all times. Your work environment can change from one moment to the next with the approach of a vehicle, something falling from overhead or the presence of an intruder. Stay alert.
- Upgrade your workplace safety training on a regular basis. Take advantage of company training sessions. Review the operator's manual for equipment you use, and company safety documents such as the emergency plan.
- Keep up your first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) skills. Community organizations offer sessions at off-work hours. If you have a chance to sit in on some hazardous material information sessions do so.
- Talk about safety with your team members. In the break room, at meetings and in one-on-one conversations, put the focus on safety.
- Perform your own workplace inspections. Maybe other co-workers will have overlooked the faded sign marking the eyewash station or the fire door that won't stay closed.
- Look for solutions to safety problems. When you find something wrong, try to figure out how to make it right. If a machine guard is inadequate, perhaps you can go to your supervisor with a practical plan for beefing it up.
- Don't be afraid to point out unsafe practices by your fellow workers, using common sense and courtesy, of course. And encourage them to do the same for you. When you make a mistake, it is better to be embarrassed than injured.
- Don't let someone else, even your supervisor, make you do something you believe to be unsafe. If somebody tells you it's okay to enter a confined space unprotected, they are wrong. It's just possible your boss could use some more safety training too.
- Take a term on your joint health and safety committee at your workplace. Regulated by laws and made up of employees and management, these committees provide a forum for safety concerns. They make regular inspections, and try to make your working environment safer.

You can do a lot to keep your fellow workers safe, and they can do a lot for you. But in the end, you are responsible for your own safety.

Daily Safety Focus

Circle of Safety

July 23

Before you get into a company vehicle, you are required to do a circle of safety. How good is the circle of safety you do? Do you just go through the motions? You only do it when someone's watching? Or are you that conscious individual who takes vehicle safety seriously. Only you can answer that question. Let's take a look at what a circle of safety is all about and how to perform one.

As you know when you park a vehicle for any length of time, anything could and usually does happen. That is why a circle of safety is so important. During the circle of safety we are looking for anything that could be leaking from the vehicle.

You're looking for anything unusual. You Check tires for any slices or parts missing on the wheel hubs. This would prevent anything unexpected while your driving down the road.

When you get to the back of the vehicle you need to look at the loaded material. Make sure all material is secured and will not fall off the truck and hit another vehicle while traveling down a road. While you're back there check the rear lights, making sure there are working and not cracked. Look all around, what's in the general vicinity, any special conditions, ice or slippery pavement etc? Look around do you see any unusual terrain, potholes, snow banks, hidden traps, oddly parked vehicles, low tree limb, children present, etc. Make a mental note of anything unusual that you do find.

While you walk around the vehicle, check the bin doors making sure they are secured and the latches work properly, look at the windows, are they clean and not cracked? Are the fire extinguisher and first aid kits current? Anything found on the vehicle that needs to be fixed must be addressed prior to that vehicle leaving the spot it is in.

A circle of safety must be done prior to moving any vehicle that has been parked for length of time. The circle of safety should encompass everything on the vehicle along with anything around it. Remember you are responsible for the safety of that vehicle and those around it once you get behind the driver's wheel.

Can you think of the times that you didn't do a proper circle of safety and what could have happened if something was left out of place on the vehicle? Or something was wrong with the tires? Had a fire or injury and you didn't have the proper extinguisher or first aid kit?

Daily Safety Focus

Job Safety Affects the Whole Family

July 24

When we commit an unsafe act on the job, we rarely consider the consequences in our lives off the job. But workplace injuries can take a terrible toll on our personal lives, and the lives of our families.

A workplace injury can tragically change a family life. The consequences are much greater than the financial ones, although those are certainly a burden.

When a man or woman receives a serious workplace injury, the whole structure of the family can undergo a change. Things which the family used to take for granted are no longer possible. The role of the injured person July undergo a drastic change, and everyone else is forced to adjust accordingly.

All of this makes safety a family matter - to encourage you and to support you in receiving training for safety procedures, wearing the correct Personal Protective Equipment, and working with an attitude for safety.

With this in mind, you are encouraged to take this safety talk home and discuss it with your family. After all, they have almost as much to lose as you do if you are badly injured at work.

Workplace accidents and workplace environments can cause brain damage, hearing loss, paralysis, amputations, blindness, chronic and terminal illnesses, and other life-changing conditions.

The following "Partner's Pledge" is intended to point out how much your spouse or other family members could be affected if you receive a serious on the job injury. Take it home and talk about it.

Note: This exercise is in no way intended as a reflection upon persons with disabilities-who cope admirably, who are taking their rightful place in increasing numbers in the workforce, and who are of course valued family members. It is merely intended to drive home the possible consequences of workplace injuries and their effects on the family.

Partner's Pledge

I, _____, hereby authorize you, my family partner, to work without Personal Protective Equipment such as safety goggles, safety shoes, ear plugs, hard hat and respirator. You have my permission to ignore seatbelts, machine guards, lockout-tagout procedures and chemical hazard warnings.

I hereby promise I will, without condition, carry out the following duties in case you become seriously disabled:

- **If you choose not to wear head protection** - I promise to accept any radical personality change resulting from your brain injury.

- **If you choose not to wear hearing protection** - I promise to explain by saying to our grandchildren that ... "Grampa's really not yelling at you - he speaks loud only because his ears ring and he can't hear too well".

- **If you choose not to use fall arrest equipment** - I promise to transport you everywhere you can no longer go on your own.

- **If you choose not to wear eye protection** - I promise to describe each fantastic sunset, each colorful spring garden and every Christmas morning that you won't be able to see.

- **If you choose not to follow lockout / tagout procedures** - I promise to tie your shoes every morning and to do all of the yard work that you used to enjoy.

- **If you choose not to follow confined space entry procedures** - I promise to hold down two jobs to support our children in the lifestyle to which they have become accustomed.

And most of all ... in doing so I promise that I will remain cheerful in spite of the pain and sadness that will overwhelm us all.

Partner's Signature

Daily Safety Focus

Hurrying or Working Efficiently

July 25

At home or on-the-job there never seems to be enough time. Our lives are complex and full of many responsibilities and activities. Faster production and higher quality at work is constantly demanded of every one of us.

Many accidents are the result of working in a hurry or knowingly taking shortcuts. When we are under pressure, it is tempting to rush through things and to take shortcuts. But when it comes to safe work practices, hurrying can cause serious injury or death. There must be zero tolerances for shortcuts and safety violations.

Here are some examples:

- A worker is going to use a bench grinder to quickly grind just one small piece of metal. He doesn't bother with wearing safety eyewear, because he's in a hurry - besides he's only going to be running the grinder for a few seconds. A metal fragment flies from the work into his eye, causing a painful injury, which results in the loss of vision in that eye.

- A delivery driver is going to be making another stop in just three blocks, and is tired of "wasting time" getting in and out of the seat belt. They leaves it off, and is thrown into the windshield when the van is struck by another vehicle which runs a stoplight.

- A painter working in an awkward position on a high tower feels that he is losing "productive time" when he has to tie off his fall protection equipment at each new location. He decides to skip it and just keep moving. He loses his balance and falls to his death.

Falls are a major cause of workplace injuries and deaths, and hurrying is a prime contributor to such incidents. Many falls occur when people don't take the time to pick up litter or scrap, to report burned-out light fixtures, to properly store materials and equipment, to close drawers, to secure ladders or to correctly use fall protection equipment. Walking too fast on slippery, uneven or cluttered surfaces. Taking shortcuts away from walkways and aisles can also result in falls.

Back injuries are also a major cause of time lost from work. Taking the time to size up the load and lift properly or get help can prevent many back injuries.

Most people know that speed kills when it comes to operating a motor vehicle. But rushing through a task can also have the same fatal results. Your personal time management can also help prevent hurrying. When starting a task give yourself time to plan the job safely without having to rush through it.

There's a big difference between hurrying and working efficiently. Hurrying leads to accidents. Working efficiently gets the job done in the best and safest manner possible. It's important to learn the proper safety techniques, and to always take the time to use them. Keeping an eye on what you are doing rather than an eye on the clock will always help prevent accidents. And if you think safe work procedures slow you down - just try walking on crutches for a while, or using one hand to tie your shoes.

Daily Safety Focus

Why Safety Belts?

July 26

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.

Daily Safety Focus

Oh, My Aching Back!

July 27

Did you ever notice that kids hardly ever complain about an aching back? That's because most people start out life with a strong, healthy back. But over the years, the wear and tear of daily living takes its toll on your back, leaving you with nagging aches and pains.

In fact, almost every adult has suffered some kind of back pain during his or her life. That's why back problems are one of the most common reasons why people take time off from work. Millions of dollars are spent on therapies, medications, and even surgery every year.

The best way to cure a backache is to stop it before it starts. Here are some ways you can prevent back problems at work or at home:

Lift It Right

- Bend your knees when you lift, not your back.
- Lift with your legs and hold objects close to your body.
- Lift objects only chest-high.
- If a load is extra heavy or awkward, don't be shy—ask for help ahead of time.
- Make sure you are on stable ground when lifting.
- Don't bend over with legs straight or your knees locked, and don't twist while lifting.

Standing and Walking Etiquette

- If you have to stand for long periods of time, put one foot up on a footrest. Change feet often.
- Maintain a posture that feels good.
- Walk with your head high and chin tucked in.
- Wear comfortable shoes with good support.
- Don't stand in one position too long. Take breaks.

Sitting Properly

- Sit in chairs that are low enough to allow you to place both feet flat on the floor keeping your knees levels with your hips. If the chair is too high, adjust it or use a footrest.
- Sit firmly against the back of the chair.
- Protect your lower back with a lumbar support.
- Don't slump.
- Make sure your chair is not too far away from your work.
- Avoid leaning forward and arching your back.
- Stand up and stretch frequently.

Daily Exercise

Try to exercise every day to maintain a healthy back. Strong abdominal muscles help support the back, so don't forget those sit-ups. Partial sit-ups, or "crunches," can help you avoid back strain while exercising. Safe stretching exercises will loosen muscles and guard against injury.

Be Aware

Medical experts say that people often don't feel the pain of injury when it occurs, but they suffer from backaches the next day after the muscles have tightened up. That's why it is so easy to forget to follow safe lifting practices because there is no warning that you are straining your back. Always be on alert for any possible overexertion and consistently follow safe lifting techniques. You owe your back a break!

Daily Safety Focus

Why Take a Chance?

July 28

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 July 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.

Daily Safety Focus

Get A Handle on Stress!

July 29

Stress is unavoidable. It's your natural response to the challenges and changes of life.

You do have a choice in how you deal with stress, though. You can learn to relax physically and mentally. You can let off steam through physical exercise. You can reduce the causes of stress in your life.

Here are some healthy ways to deal with stress:

- Keep your sense of humor. There's usually something to laugh about no matter how bad things are.
- Get regular exercise. This will improve your fitness for dealing with all of life's physical and mental challenges. It is also a good way to shift your focus away from things which upset you or make you angry. A simple and effective response to an unhealthy stress problem is to rid yourself of the excess energy by doing something physical such as sports, running or walking.
- Eat right to maintain your health. Eat a variety of fruits and vegetables, the fresher the better. Fill up on complex carbohydrates such as whole grain bread, rice, pasta and potatoes. Skip the foods filled with fat and sugar.
- Get enough sleep. Individual sleep needs vary, but you should sleep long enough to wake up feeling rested and refreshed. Sleep patterns are often disrupted when a person is stressed.
- Cigarettes, alcohol and caffeine kick your body into high gear and can add to your stress level over the long run, so cut back or quit. If you need help in staying off alcohol or drugs, get help from a treatment program or self-help group.
- Manage your time wisely. Do the most important things first.
- Talk about your problems. The listener July not be able to offer solutions, but talking them out helps put your problems in perspective.
- Learn some relaxation techniques. Here's a simple one: Close your eyes for a few moments and breath in and out deeply and slowly. Concentrate on the sensation of breathing. Obviously, you can't do this while you are doing something like driving or operating a drill press, but you can do it while you are taking a break.
- Look on the bright side. Optimism is a good antidote for stress.
- Most people are well into unhealthy stress situations before they realize it. People around them can help by noting their symptoms and letting them know.

When you are feeling worried, remember that most of the things we fear never actually happen. Save the heavy stress reactions for genuinely threatening situations. In the meantime, relax and try to enjoy your life today!

Daily Safety Focus

Drive Forwards - Not Backwards!

July 30

Here's a driving challenge for you - try to get through the day without ever backing up!

Backing up can be much more dangerous than going forward. Backing accounts for many collisions causing damage to vehicles and cargo, as well as fatal accidents, particularly those involving pedestrians.

By planning ahead, you can avoid many situations, which would require backing up. Before you park, enter a loading yard or drive down an alley, think about how you are going to get out. Is there a better way to go, so you can exit by moving forward instead of backward?

If you do have to back up, here are some rules on doing so safely:

- Walk around your vehicle doing a circle of safety. Look for obstacles you might strike when you start to move. This is a good habit even if you are going to be moving forward. Look for obstructions such as other vehicles, curbs, signs, overhanging roofs and overhead wires. Be aware of traffic patterns for vehicles and pedestrians.

- Some departments require their drivers to place cones around the vehicle so they will be reminded to do a circle check as they pick them up.

- Have a co-worker guide you as you back up. The signaler must stand in a safe place in view of the driver and use proper agreed-upon signals. Do not rely solely on the signaler; you remain responsible for control of the vehicle.

- Watch in your rear and side view mirrors and over your shoulder as you back up. Use the "Big Picture" theory. Look at a distance around you in all directions, not just the exact area into which you are backing. Be on the lookout for unexpected pedestrians or obstacles.

- Do not lean out an open driver's door to see as you back up. This gives you only a limited area of vision and can cause the door to strike an object or person. Also, always remember to wear your seatbelt when operating any type of mobile equipment.

- Back up slowly. Cover your brake by keeping your foot above it so you can stop instantly.

- Make use of backup alarms, lights and other signals, required on certain types of vehicles used for construction, utility maintenance and other purposes. These devices - mechanical, electrical, electronic and sonic - are made to warn other personnel and passersby.

- As a pedestrian or driver, be continually alert for vehicles, which July start to back up. Watch for them in parking lots, terminal yards, loading areas, warehouses, construction sites and in parallel parking slots along the streets. Listen for backup alarms, but never rely on them to warn you.

Backing up a vehicle can put you at risk of an accident causing injury and property damage. Therefore avoiding this maneuver whenever possible is the best alternative.

Daily Safety Focus

Lawn Safety

July 31

Remember the first time you cut your parent's lawn by yourself? If you are over forty, you probably used a manual push type, which required the strength of Samson for overgrown yards. As time progressed, our parents got gas powered push movers and eventually they moved on to riding mowers. Mowing the yard was not too bad. You could cut the yard, watch the neighborhood action, and get the feel of an engine (a true Tim the Toolman experience!). Since you are now an adult, you realize that there is more to mowing than just cranking up the engine and riding off to the green gloryland. Below are some basic tips to keep you safe while you keep yourself and the yard in shape.

For Gasoline Mowers:

Fill the tank before starting and don't refill it after the engine is hot.

Never dangle gas cans from mower handles where a hot exhaust pipe could ignite escaping fumes and cause an explosion.

Start the mower on level ground where you have firm footing. Mow parallel to a slope. Never pull the mowers toward you always push it.

Always turn off the mower and disconnect the spark plug wire before unclogging the machine or adjusting it. Gasoline mowers can start even when they're turned off if the blade is rotated.

For Electric Mowers:

Check cords and plugs. If you cut the cord with the mower frequently, use a ground fault interrupter to insure your safety.

Hedge Trimmers/Weed Trimmers/Lawn Edgers:

Wear safety eye protection. It's also a good idea to wear long pants when doing lawn work to protect from abrasions.

Never use electric-hedge trimmers over your head. If trimmers become lodged on something, disconnect power source before, attempting to dislodge it.

Remember weed trimmers are intended for groundwork only, not for overhead work in trees or bushes where the hazard of flying debris is a real possibility.

When using a weed trimmer, disconnect power before advancing the line if it is a manual-feed trimmer.

In General:

Before mowing, trimming or edging, read the owner's manual, and pay particular attention to safety recommendation.

Clear the lawn of sticks, stones, toys, and anything else that might be flung by the mower, trimmer or edger.

Also, clear the yard of children and pets. Always be aware of where others might be in the yard. A moment's inattention could mean tragedy.

Wear sturdy shoes with rough soles. Never go barefoot or wear cloth shoes or sandals.

Keep hands and feet away from the mower housing and never unclog the mower when it's running.

Keep children away from a mower unless you're sure they're trained in how to use it and the dangers.

Don't mow, trim or edge in "blind spots". There may be hidden obstacles under bushes or hedges, or in trees.

Be aware of the lawn surface, watch out for "pot holes" or tree roots.

Never leave equipment running. And never leave tools where others might stumble over them.