NECA IBEW

Oregon Pacific-Cascade Local Union #932

Joint Safety Committee
Oregon Pacific-Cascade Chapter, NECA
IBEW Local 932
Wednesday March 22, 2023
Meeting Minutes

Rollcall: meeting called to order- In-Person and Videoconferencing
Approval of prior month minutes

Communications

2023 Innovative Safety Committee application-please send any OSHA activity to NECA office
Confined Space policy- Language update on assessment- Who, When

New Business: Monthly Safety Training and Information Packets (distributed)

Ladders- 3 points contact, 3' rule.
4-day workweek
Attracting Top Talent- Outreach, social media (Tik-Tok)-Message, apprenticeship pool ideas
Active Shooter? Are we prepared?- Each contractor to review program and modify as needed

OSHA Injury/Incidents (Jan-Jun)

Recordable
280 Pulling action, muscle strain, MD
280 Kneeling, muscles strain, Knee, MD
280 Slip, muscle strain, chest, MD
659 Stuck-By, Shock to hand, LT
659 Struck-By, Drill handle, broken finger, LT
First Aid/Near-miss
Cut finger, cutting strips of Velcro, no gloves
Cut arm, cutting cable tray, no long sleeves
Wrist twist, drilling concrete with rebar, body placement

Class Schedule

Posted Online

Next Meeting – July 26, 2023

Adjourned

July 26, 2023

_____
Elias Campbell-CHST
Touchstone Consulting-Consultant

Joint Safety Committee
Oregon Pacific-Cascade Chapter, NECA
IBEW Local 932
Wednesday July 26, 2023
Meeting AGENDA

Roll call: meeting called to order, In-Person and Zoom
Approval of previous Meeting Minutes

1.0 Communications

1.1 Recap on Heat Training
1.2 Recap on Wildfire Smoke training

2.0 New Business- (safety packets distributed)

Safety Magazine Excerpts
2.1 Lessons learned from three incidents.
2.2 Importance of JHS's and Pre-task

3.0 OSHA Injury/Incidents (Jan-June)

Recordable
3.1
3.2
3.3
First Aid/Near-miss
3.4
3.5

4.0 Class Schedule- Posted online

All NECA Contractors are reminded that work related accidents and incidents should be reported via the Accident/ Incident report to the NECA office for consideration by the committee. If you need a copy of the report, contact the Chapter office.

IMPORTANT REMINDER: The variance granted to NECA/IBEW by OR-OSHA requires participation by both Labor and Management Representatives at the Joint Innovative Safety Committee. For the Committee to be viable and provide assistance to Contractors and IBEW Members we need to have consistent attendance of all committee members.

Next Meeting: September 27th , 2023

POWERFUL TRADITION ELECTRIFYING FUTURE

OREGON PACIFIC-CASCADE CHAPTER

Safety Meeting Packet

July 2023

1040 Gateway Loop, Suite A ◆ Springfield, OR 97477

541-736-1443 Office ◆ 541-736-1449 Fax

2023 LABOR HOURS RECAP
ALL SIGNATORY CONTRACTORS

Local#	Contract Type	Annual Total		Average Hrs/Mo	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
280	Inside	556,419	5	111,284	103,945	111,251	122,872	113,682	104,669							
280	Inside Appr.	184,960	5	36,992	33,080	36,178	41,949	39,430	34,323							
280	MAI	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0							
280	Material	53,556	5	10,711	11,230	10,956	11,319	10,906	9,145							
280	Residential	41,765	5	8,353	7,215	8,641	9,630	7,955	8,324							
280	Resi. Appr.	27,036	5	5,407	4,753	5,536	6,370	4,780	5,597							
280	S & C	98,428	5	19,686	17,028	18,882	23,246	19,379	19,893							
280	S & C Appr.	31,153	5	6,231	4,879	5,741	7,610	6,606	6,317							
280	Support Tech/MOU	97,138	5	19,428	17,393	23,084	23,217	17,512	15,932							
	TOTAL 280	**1,090,455**	**5**	**218,091**	**199,523**	**220,269**	**246,213**	**220,250**	**204,200**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
	Total NECA	**986,553**	**5**	**197,311**	**180,657**	**197,877**	**223,078**	**202,674**	**182,267**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
	% NECA	**90.47%**			**90.54%**	**89.83%**	**90.60%**	**92.02%**	**89.26%**	**#DIV/0!**	**#DIV/0!**	**#DIV/0!**	**#DIV/0!**	**#DIV/0!**	**#DIV/0!**	**#DIV/0!**

Local#	Contract Type	Annual Total		Average Hrs/Mo	Jan	Feb	March	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
659	Inside	115,878	5	23,176	18,216	22,795	28,225	23,379	23,263							
659	Inside Appr.	56,528	5	11,306	9,251	11,148	14,290	11,477	10,362							
659	Material	3,615	5	723	930	846	772	556	511							
659	Residential	3,580	5	716	634	756	929	609	652							
659	Resi. Appr.	1,460	5	292	287	413	228	229	303							
659	S & C	5,268	5	1,054	953	1,033	1,139	999	1,144							
659	S & C Appr.	1,496	5	299	228	315	358	289	306							
	Total 659	**187,825**	**5**	**37,565**	**30,499**	**37,306**	**45,941**	**37,538**	**36,541**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
	Total NECA	**154,176**	**5**	**30,835**	**24,825**	**30,539**	**37,842**	**31,042**	**29,928**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
	% NECA	**82%**			**81%**	**82%**	**82%**	**83%**	**82%**	**#DIV/0!**	**#DIV/0!**	**#DIV/0!**	**#DIV/0!**	**#DIV/0!**	**#DIV/0!**	**#DIV/0!**

Local#	Contract Type	Annual Total		Average Hrs/Mo	Jan	Feb	March	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
932	Inside	47,477	5	9,495	8,218	9,082	9,687	10,250	10,240							
932	Inside Appr.	22,974	5	4,595	3,957	4,342	4,655	5,178	4,842							
932	Residential	524	5	105	114	108	31	119	152							
932	Resi. Appr.	398	5	80	0	0	79	151	168							
932	S & C	2,386	5	477	486	393	558	514	435							
932	S & C Appr.	35	5	7	0	0	0	35	0							
	Total 932	**73,794**	**5**	**14,759**	**12,775**	**13,925**	**15,010**	**16,247**	**15,837**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
	Total NECA	**58,061**	**5**	**11,612**	**10,320**	**11,135**	**11,436**	**12,829**	**12,341**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
	% NECA	**79%**			**81%**	**80%**	**76%**	**79%**	**78%**	**#DIV/0!**	**#DIV/0!**	**#DIV/0!**	**#DIV/0!**	**#DIV/0!**	**#DIV/0!**	**#DIV/0!**
	Grand Total	**1,352,074**	**5**	**270,415**	**242,797**	**271,500**	**307,164**	**274,035**	**256,578**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
	Total NECA	**1,198,790**	**5**	**239,758**	**215,802**	**239,551**	**272,356**	**246,545**	**224,536**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
	% NECA	**89%**			**89%**	**88%**	**89%**	**90%**	**88%**	**#DIV/0!**	**#DIV/0!**	**#DIV/0!**	**#DIV/0!**	**#DIV/0!**	**#DIV/0!**	**#DIV/0!**

Safety Training Topics

July 2023

Boating Safety

Bonfire, Grill and Fire Pit Safety

Fall Protection

Fire Prevention

Hearing Protection

SAFETY TRAINING TOPIC

Boating Safety

Hundreds of people are killed each year in recreational boating accidents. During the summer months it is likely that you and or your colleagues will be on a recreational water-vehicle. Here are some safety tips to follow if you plan on being out on the water.

First, always check local weather conditions and forecasts before taking a boat out. If you observe darkening clouds, volatile or rough waters, changing winds or sudden drops in temperature, return to shore immediately.

Before taking a boat you must inspect the vehicle to ensure that it is safe for use. You should ensure that there is a fire extinguisher on board and enough life vests for each passenger on the boat. It is also important that more than one person on board is familiar with all aspects of the boat's handling, operations and features. In the event that the operator is injured or incapacitated in any way, it's crucial that someone else can get everyone back to shore safely.

Once on the water it is imperative to use common sense. This means always operating at a safe speed (especially in crowded areas), being alert at all times and steering clear of large vessels and watercraft that may have difficulty stopping or turning. You should also always adhere to buoys and other navigational aids.

The likelihood of being involved in a boating accident drastically increases when alcohol is involved. Avoid drinking alcohol while boating at all costs. It can be deadly, not to mention it’s illegal.

You should also be able to swim. A large part of safe boating means you can swim in the event your boat capsizes or you fall into the water. Familiarize yourself with any state laws and regulations, prior to operating a boat. Regardless of your state's requirements, it's always important to be educated. Consider taking a boating safety course, even if you are not required to do so.

Finally, you should also consider getting a free vessel safety check. The United States Coast Guard offers complimentary boat examinations to verify the presence and condition of certain safety equipment required by state and federal regulations. They'll provide a specialist to check out your boat and make helpful boating safety tips and recommendations.

REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

- Why should you have more than one person on board is familiar with all aspects of the boat's handling, operations and features?

SAFETY TRAINING TOPIC

Bonfire, Grill and Fire Pit Safety

During the summer months you are likely to use or be around bon-fires, propane and charcoal grills and fire pits. These can all be extremely dangerous if not used properly. Here are a few safety tips to follow to prevent fires and injuries from occurring.

When using any type of grill only do so outdoors. Always have them positioned away from siding, deck railings and out from under eaves or overhanging branches. Grills must be kept a safe distance from lawn games, play areas and foot traffic. As a general rule of thumb a three-foot "safe zone" around the grill should be established. When cooking, use long-handled grilling tools to provide adequate clearance from heat and flames when using the grill. You should also periodically remove grease or fat buildup in trays below the grill to prevent fires from occurring.

In the event, you are using a charcoal grill, always purchase the proper starter fluid and store out of reach of children and away from heat sources. Never add charcoal starter fluid when coals or kindling have already been ignited. Do not use any flammable or combustible liquid other than charcoal starter fluid to light the fire.

Prior to using a propane grill, check the propane cylinder hose for leaks. You can do so by using a light soap and water solution applied to the hose. This will reveal escaping propane quickly by releasing bubbles. You must replace any damaged cylinder or hose before use,

When using a fire-pit, make sure to never use flammable fluids such as gasoline, alcohol, diesel fuel, kerosene, and charcoal lighter fluid to light or relight fires. Do not burn trash, leaves, paper, cardboard, or plywood. Avoid using soft wood such as pine or cedar that likely pop and throw sparks.

If you are building a bonfire never do so in dry conditions or if the campground and area rules prohibit fires. If there is not an existing fire pit, and pits are allowed, look for a site that is at least fifteen feet away from tent walls, shrubs, trees or other flammable objects. Also beware of low-hanging branches overhead.

When you're ready to put out your, follow these guidelines:

- Allow the wood to burn completely to ash, if possible.
- Pour lots of water on the fire; drown all embers, not just the red ones.
- Stir the campfire ashes and embers with a shovel.
- Scrape the sticks and logs to remove any embers.
- Stir and make sure everything is wet and they are cold to the touch.
- If it is too hot to touch, it's too hot to leave

Finally when being around any type of fire it is a good idea to have an appropriate rated fire extinguisher in reach!

REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

- What should you do prior to using a propane grill?

SAFETY TRAINING TOPIC

Fall Protection

SOME FACTS

Fall-related accidents account for about 10% of all workplace fatalities. Nearly all of the fall accidents on record were preventable.

Ways of protecting yourself include hazard elimination, fall protection, and work procedures.

HAZARD ELIMINATION

The most effective way to deal with fall hazards is to eliminate them. For example, if you can lower a light to replace its lamp and then raise the light back up, you have eliminated the hazard.

Partial elimination is the second most effective way. For example, if you can pre- assemble items before going up in a lift or up on a ladder, you will spend less time being vulnerable to a fall.

FALL PROTECTION

You can't always eliminate a fall hazard, and partial elimination still leaves you with a hazard. Fall protection, as defined by the fall protection industry, is a passive way of preventing you from falling.

Fall protection examples are all around you. These include ladder cages, platform railings, and secured hole covers.

FALL RESTRAINT

This is what most people think of, when they think of fall protection.

It involves the use of a secure anchorage and a lanyard connected to your full body harness. The lanyard allows you to reach the work area, but prevents you from falling too far.

Fall restraints require you to have training in the proper use and inspection of your equipment.

WORK PROCEDURES

Some situations make fall protection and fall restraint measures impractical or impossible.

The idea of changing the work procedure is not to find a cheaper way of protecting against the fall. The idea is to rethink the work process so fall protection measures become practical, possible, or unnecessary.

You may need to help change the procedure or find a way to eliminate the task completely. Your input is valuable, as you are the one doing the work.

SAFETY HARNESS INSPECTION

When using fall restraint devices, you must inspect them. Look for fiber dan1age, pulled stitches, or frayed edges. Examine D-rings, grommets, rivets, buckles, tongues, and straps.

LANYARD INSPECTION

Look for fiber damage, pulled stitches, or frayed edges. Inspect the snaphooks, carbineer, and any other mechanisms.

If it is a retractable lanyard, ensure the back nuts and rivets are tight.

If it is a retractable lanyard, test for smooth operation and proper locking.

ANCHORAGE POINTS

Before attaching to an anchorage point, look for cracks, sharp edges, or evidence of abuse.

In a particularly dangerous area, you will need to attach to a new anchorage point before un-attaching from the one you are attached to.

Do not attach to guardrails, C-clamps, ladders, conduit, light fixtures, rebar, plumbing, roof stack, or any object that you aren't sure can support your weight plus the force of your fall. Anchorage points must be capable of supporting 5,000 pounds per person because of the forces generated from the impact of a fall.

REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

- If there are ten people in your crew, how many are statistically likely to die from a preventable fall accident?
- What are three ways of protecting yourself from falls?
- What are some examples of how might you eliminate or partially eliminate a fall hazard?
- What is fall protection, as defined by the fall protection industry, and what are some examples?
- What is fall restraint, and what are some examples?
- What kind of training do you need if you are going to use fall restraint equipment?
- What is the purpose of changing work procedures?
- How do you inspect a harness?
- How do you inspect a lanyard?
- What do you need to know about attachment points?

SAFETY TRAINING TOPIC

Fire Prevention

FACTS AND FIGURES

Workplace fires and explosions kill more than 200 workers each year and injure another 5,000.

21.5% of industrial fires are from electrical causes.

Smoking causes 17% of industrial fires, while cutting and welding cause 5.5%.

PREVENTION STEPS

Use the proper circuit protection on equipment. Never bypass protection "just this once." Temporary bypasses are easily forgotten and are too dangerous even when they are not forgotten.

Smoking is the number two cause of industrial fires. It is the number one cause of premature baldness and male impotence. It is a leading cause of cancers of the bones, bladder, testicles, bowels, brain, tongue, and lungs. It is a leading cause of heart attacks, emphysema, and other illnesses. Think about this when you decide to light up. If you light up in the workplace, you endanger everyone.

To reduce the fire danger from smoking, smoke only in approved areas and use the ashtrays provided. A carelessly flicked ash or tossed butt can easily roll under an ignitable and cause a fire. It is also easy to ignite a trail of fuel fumes, which can then ignite the fuel from a considerable distance.

Pick up all food wrappers, beverage containers, napkins, and other disposable items used at meals and breaks. Dispose of them properly to prevent attracting rodents and insects.

Clean up any oil, fibers, or dust on or around equipment and machinery.

If an oil spill is too big to clean up easily, report the spill to your foreman. If you must leave the area to report the oil, leave some kind of marker-an oil pig or other absorbent material is sufficient-so others can see the spill.

If fueling a portable generator or heater, use an approved fuel can and dispenser. Do not, for example, use a paper funnel when adding fuel. Try to do the refueling outside, away from ignition sources.

Store flammable and combustible materials in appropriate containers away from heat sources. For example, place touch-up paint in yellow lockers made for storing such materials.

Dispose of flammables-solvents, fuel, oil, and the like-according to established guidelines. Most likely, this will be in a container just for flammables.

Dispose of ignitables – paper, cloth, cardboard, and the like – according to established guidelines. Most likely, this will be in a regular trash container. Never leave open flames unattended.

Before using spark-producing equipment, such as a welder, ensure the work area is free of flammables.

Before using flame-producing equipment, such as a cutting torch, ensure the work area is free of ignitables.

Arsonists are a reality. Support suspicious activity to your foreman and to security.

FIRE HAPPENS

Keep fire exits and escape routes clear and well-marked.

Know the location of alarm boxes and fire extinguishers.

REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

- What is the number one cause of industrial fires?
- What are some ways to prevent electrical fires?
- What is the number two cause of industrial fires?
- What are some cautions about smoking?
- Why shouldn't you eat in electrical rooms?
- What should you do about oil leaks?
- What should you do about small oil spills? Big ones?
- What are some cautions about fueling portable equipment?
- Where should you store flammables?
- What is the difference between fire prevention and fire protection?

SAFETY TRAINING TOPIC

Hearing Protection

Hearing loss is a major preventable health problem. Damaged hearing reduces your ability to communicate on the job, and it results in social and marital problems. There is no sense in leaving yourself open to a personal loss.

Many of us assume that wearing foam ear plugs when the sign tells us to "wear hearing protection" is all we need to do to protect our ears. This isn't true. Ear plugs are just one form of ear protection, and areas with signs requiring hearing protection are just one situation where you should wear ear protection.

Many of us assume hearing protection and ear protection are the same. This isn't true. Ear protection is more inclusive than hearing protection, but ear protection equipment doesn't necessarily provide hearing protection and vice-versa.

Many of us assume hearing loss is a natural result of aging. This isn't particularly true. Hearing loss due to excessive noise is preventable.

Many of us assume we can always get a hearing aid, so hearing loss isn't important. This isn't true. Hearing aids do not provide the same quality of hearing that undamaged ears do.

Many of us assume that if we have passed a hearing test we don't need to worry about our hearing. This isn't true. Hearing tests don't catch damage until it has happened, and standard hearing tests are not comprehensive enough to catch all damage that does occur.

Wear hearing protection whenever you must raise your voice to carry on a normal conversation.

Wear hearing protection whenever you are around machinery that could start without notice and alarm systems that are likely to go off.

You should wear hearing protection whenever the noise levels exceed OSHA limits on or off the job. Damage can occur even when you are having fun. Wear hearing protection any time you operate a firearm.

Personal hearing protection includes roll-able foam plugs, molded plugs, over the ear muffs, or other devices.

Do not wear ear plugs if you are at risk for an arc blast. The concussion could drive those plugs into your ears and render you permanently deaf.

Environmental hearing protection includes noise shields, soundproofing, restricted access, and closed doors. If you find any of this hearing protection damaged or not functioning properly, report it to your foreman.

Noise isn't the only thing that can damage the inner ear. Be careful when blowing your nose. In addition to damaging your inner ear, excess pressure can rupture your nasal membrane.

REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

- What are some reasons ear protection and hearing protection are important?
- Are hearing protection and ear protection the same?
- Is hearing loss primarily a consequence of aging, or is it preventable?
- Why should you preserve your hearing?
- If you passed a hearing test, are your ear protection worries over?
- When should you wear hearing protection?
- Name some forms of personal hearing protection?
- Name some forms of environmental hearing protection?
- What are steps you can take to prevent hearing loss?

Safety Training Topics

August 2023

Commercial Vehicles

Traffic Control

Hardhats

Respirator Use and Testing

Working Hot

SAFETY TRAINING TOPIC

Commercial Vehicles

WHAT IS A COMMERCIAL VEHICLE?

A Commercial Motor Vehicle is any self-propelled or towed vehicle used on highways in intrastate or interstate commerce to transport passengers or property:

- If it has a gross vehicle weight rating of 26,001 or more pounds; or
- If it is designed to transport more than 16 passengers, including the driver; or
- If it is used to transport hazardous materials (as defined in 49 U.S.C. App. 1801 et seq.) in quantity requiring placarding under federal regulation.

Simple definition:

In essence, it's usually a big truck that may pull a freight trailer.

However, the company and its insurance agency may consider any company vehicle a commercial vehicle.

THE COMMERCIAL MOTOR VEHICLE SAFETY ACT (CMVSA)

This Act requires all states to meet the same minimum standards for testing and licensing drivers of commercial motor vehicles. The act also mandates uniform penalties and a central reporting system. Violations of the CMVSA are serious.

THE LAWS

The laws surrounding commercial vehicles boil down to one thing: Don’t drive a commercial vehicle unless you have a current Commercial Driver’s License (CDL) with authorization for that vehicle. Period.

DON'T MOVE THE TRUCK

If a truck is delivering the switchgear you need but is on the wrong side of the building, don't "do the driver a favor" and drive it to the correct side.

If a truck is blocking your way and you can't find the driver, don’t hop in the truck and try to move it. Call security and have them find the driver. Do not attempt to open the trailer. The truck may be legit, or it may be part of a terrorist act. Stay clear of it.

TAKING DELIVERY

You may need to be on hand to load or unload electrical equipment, especially if you are on a rush job. In that case, you may be interacting with the driver.

Commercial vehicles are hard to drive, which is one reason for the stringent licensing. Cut the driver some slack.

Offer to help the driver back up, especially if the driver is trying to maneuver a 28-foot trailer into a tight space.

Do not stand directly behind the vehicle. If assisting the driver, stand off to the side and follow directions on where the driver wants you positioned.

Stay clear of the vehicle while it is moving.

The driver may be distracted or tired, so diplomatically double check safety items before loading or unloading. For example, ensure the wheels are blocked. The driver will know how to do this- you can help just by asking if it is done.

Rope off the delivery area if, for example, you need to uncrate panel board enclosures and inspect them before the driver leaves.

The driver is under tight time pressure, and despite the hyperbole to the contrary, these folks cut safety corners to "make time" they lost through delivery delays. So, help make the delivery go as smoothly as possible. For example, if you are taking delivery of a motor, have your insulation resistance tester ready.

Do not raise the trailer door or enter the trailer until the driver tells you it's OK to do so.

Do not operate a lift truck unless you have been formally qualified to use that particular truck. A delay from an accident will take far longer than a delay in finding a qualified operator. If you can't find a qualified operator, contact your foreman.

REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

- What is a commercial vehicle?
- How can you sum up the laws about commercial vehicles?
- When can you *move* a commercial vehicle?
- What should you do if you find a commercial vehicle unoccupied in a main traffic area of a plant or other job site?
- Is it OK to stand on the running board of a commercial vehicle, as long as you hang onto the door?
- If you are assisting the driver in backing into a tight space, where should you stand?
- What should you double-check, before loading or unloading takes place? What are some safety items to run through, in that process?
- When should you stay clear of the commercial vehicle?
- How can you help a driver get through the delivery or pickup in a timely manner, and why is that important?
- If you can't find a qualified lift truck operator, how do you get that new switchgear off the truck so you can get it set in place and go home?

SAFETY TRAINING TOPIC

Traffic Control

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT TO YOU

Several hundred people die each year in traffic-related deaths in construction zones. The trend is rising because of changing demographics, increasing driver distractions (such as cell phones), and increasing work in traffic areas.

Both above grade and subsurface work on and around roadways will become more common with the replacement of crumbling infrastructure and the need for increased capacity, or with new innovations such as high-tech traffic control systems. You are likely to work on one of these projects, if you have not already done so.

Governments have responded to the increased dangers with "Give 'em a brake" signs, construction zone fine multipliers, and severe penalties for violating certain motorist rules in construction zones. This is a problem that gets attention. Unfortunately, none of the corrective actions have eliminated the dangers.

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO

Understand the general goal of traffic control plans to route traffic through work zones as closely as possible to normal conditions using geometry and traffic control devices while minimizing danger to the working crews.

Understand the traffic control plan for your particular part of the project. Your foreman will communicate this plan to you, so ask questions as needed.

If you think you see a weakness in the plan, identify it to your foreman and ask for clarification or resolution. Not all plans are perfect. An example of a weakness is not allowing for sufficient room in the right place for the boom truck you need.

Understand the restrictions the traffic control plan places on you where you can walk, what kinds of gestures you can make, where you can place tools, and so on.

Wear the proper PPE for the conditions. In some cases, this would mean wearing an orange vest or similar item that makes you stand out against the background.

When entering or exiting a pit or manhole-but especially when exiting-look first for vehicles that have run the barricades or are driving on the shoulder or other areas where traffic is not supposed to be. This happens often enough that it is a concern.

On a large or long-lasting project, you'll typically have traffic control attendants. It is very unlikely an electrician will be directing traffic. However, things happen; people get injured, don't show up, etc., or a particular operation may require extra people to control traffic for a few minutes. You may be asked to help control traffic. In such a case, keep in mind that your goal is to communicate with motorists and with the other traffic controllers if there are any. Make eye contact and use clear hand signals. Allow time for people to respond.

IF YOU ARE A SMALL CREW

On a small or short-lived project, you probably won't have a traffic control attendant. Linemen work under such conditions all the time. In such cases, you must use traffic control devices to alert motorists to drive around your vehicle or work area. These devices would be unattended while you and others do the work.

Park your truck in such a way as to minimize the likelihood of being struck by regular traffic motorists.

Take care to direct traffic with hand signals so you can clear a path to safely set up the traffic control devices. It does no good to get hit by a car while set- ting these up.

When choosing placement locations for the traffic control devices, allow time for people to respond. Placing one device 10 feet in front of a truck doesn’t do much good. Placing a series of devices between the flow of traffic and your truck gives drivers the time they need to change lanes.

To increase your assurance that the traffic control devices will protect you while you are working, pause after placing them. Watch how motorists approach these devices. If the motorists adjust to these devices smoothly, you have placed them well. If the motorists are making sudden stops or appear confused, reassess placement and make the necessary corrections. If this doesn't fix the problem, you may need to contact your foreman about getting a traffic control attendant or possibly rescheduling the work for a safer time.

If you can see your traffic control devices from the work area, look at them or the traffic occasionally to ensure they are still working. Whether you can see them or not, check your traffic control devices with each trip back to the truck. They may have been struck, moved by wind, or in some other way rendered ineffective.

REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

- Why is this topic important?
- What is the general goal of traffic control plans?
- What should you do if you don't understand the traffic control plan for your particular part of a project?
- What should you do if you think you see a weakness in the traffic control plan?
- Do traffic control plans place restrictions on you? What might some of these be?
- What might be appropriate PPE if you are working in a manhole on a city street?
- What should you do when entering or exiting a pit or manhole, and why?
- How should you park your truck if you are working on or near a roadway?
- What are some things to remember about traffic control device placement?
- When should you check your traffic control devices?

SAFETY TRAINING TOPIC

Hardhats

WHEN TO WEAR

Wear your hardhat any time you are on the job site, other than in an office or trailer.

TYPES AND CLASSES

Type I hats reduce impact from a blow to the top of the head.

Type II hats reduce impact from a wider range of blows.

Class C hats provide no electric protection.

Class E hats provide protection from high voltage and are proof-tested to 20,000V.

Class G hats provide protection from low voltage and are proof-tested to 2,200V.

WHAT THE HARDHAT DOES FOR YOU

Your hardhat helps identify you, thus improving security for everyone.

It provides some protection from falling objects, arcs, and objects your head might strike in close quarters. Your hat protects you from impact only if you have not altered the suspension system by placing things (other than a cold weather liner) between the suspension and the shell. Ensure your suspension isn't so loose it wobbles and not so tight it pinches your skin.

It is mechanically protective to the extent you have maintained the shell integrity. This means yon cannot drill holes into it or alter the shell in any way. The solvents in paint can weaken the hat. Crystal clear acrylic spray may be acceptable, but get approval from your safety director before use.

It is electrically protective to the extent you have maintained shell integrity plus insulating properties. The more you alter the surface of the hat, the less protection it provides. Ink, pencil marks, paint, and paper create conductive paths on the hat, so keep writing and stickers to a minimum.

It keeps you cool. Measurements taken in hot weather show that the temperature in a properly worn hardhat is often less than the temperature outside. That's due to a combination of airflow, evaporation, and shading.

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO FOR YOUR HARD HAT

Properly adjust the suspension system.

Leave the shell intact. Don't drill holes in it, and don't swath it in stickers or other decorations.

Store it in a clean place out of the path of concentrated sunlight. Your car's rear window is not such a place.

Wash it with warm soapy water, and rinse the soap off thoroughly, when the hat shows signs of dirt accumulation. Wash the sweatbands and cradles, too.

Replace the suspension system if it is worn or damaged. Replace the hat if it has dents, cracks, or signs of wear.

Replace the hat if it's been subjected to an impact. It might not have been damaged, but you don't know for sure.

DON'TS

Don't heat it or bend it, and don't modify the visor.

Don't use the area between your head and the shell as a storage bin.

Don't wear it backwards or sideways. The front brim is designed as eye and face protection.

DEMONSTRATION

Have a volunteer wear the sample hard hat, adjusted properly. Tap the hat with the hammer, but don't use much force. You can get the point across without causing a neck injury! Ask the crew members present if anyone wants to volunteer to do this trick without the hat. Note that the hat, having absorbed the impact, may be damaged and should be replaced.

REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

- When should you wear your hardhat?
- What is the type and class of the hardhat you are wearing? Is it correct for the kind of work you are doing?
- How does a hardhat protect you mechanically?
- How does a hardhat protect you electrically?
- What must you do to ensure the integrity of this electrical protection?
- Can a hardhat increase your hot weather comfort? Why?
- Why is the suspension system important, and what must you do to ensure it works for you?
- How should you store your hardhat?
- When should you replace your hardhat?
- What are some "don'ts" for hardhats?

SAFETY TRAINING TOPIC

Respirator Use and Testing

RESPIRATOR TYPES

Respirators range from simple dust masks to Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) units to units connected via hose to a central air supply.

RESPIRATOR SELECTION

Normally, someone else will select the respirator you need for the job at hand. However, be sure you check that the respirator is adequate for the job.

Respirators are often used in conjunction with confined spaces, so check your confined entry permit for the hazards contained in the area, if appropriate.

Your supervisor can help you determine the correct respirator for the job.

PREPARE YOURSELF

You must be respirator-qualified and clean-shaven to use any respirator other than a dust mask.

If you have clogged sinuses, use a decongestant nasal spray or saline solution to clear them. Taking a systemic (oral) decongestant will leave you in a state of vasodilation-check with your safety director before doing this. Under no circumstances should you take an over-the-counter antihistamine, as these increase drowsiness that can endanger you.

If you are a smoker, abstaining from smoking for several hours or days prior to planned respirator work will increase your respirator endurance dramatically by increasing your lung efficiency and lowering the levels of carbon monoxide in your blood by several orders of magnitude.

PREPARE THE RESPIRATOR

If it's a filtering-type unit, ensure it has the right filter, canister, or cartridge attached.

If SCBA, ensure the tanks have enough pressure for the duration of the job.

If it's hose-connected, help your attendant to check the hoses, or wait while it's done before entering the work area.

Wipe the facemask with an alcohol pad or similar disinfectant prior to use.

Check the respirator fit using the negative pressure method shown in training. If, for example, you are using a canister filter, hold your hands over the canisters and inhale. The filter should collapse around your face and stay collapsed until you exhale. Your procedures may also call for you to perform the positive pressure method. If so, take care not to blow too hard.

Test the vent port to ensure you can exhale through it.

USE THE BUDDY SYSTEM

If you feel fatigued, panic, nausea, or other symptoms of distress coming on, motion to your coworkers that you must leave the area. If there is only one coworker with you, help him or her get to a stopping point and leave together. Report to your foreman immediately.

If you sense fatigue, panic, nausea, or other symptoms of distress in a coworker, motion to the person to leave the area. Note any unusual circumstances in the environment. If someone so motions you, leave the area. Report to your foreman immediately.

If the respirator appears to be failing, leave the area immediately. Report to your support team or your foreman.

RESPIRATOR CARE

Clean your respirator after each use.

Before storing it, remove any cartridges or filters and discard them. Clean your facemask with an alcohol pad or similar disinfectant. After giving it time to dry, store it in a clear poly bag with your name on it.

Store the respirator so that you protect it from damage, contamination, dust, sunlight, moisture, and anything else that might harm it.

REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

- Who usually selects the respirator for a given job, and who should double-check?
- What criteria must you meet to use a respirator other than a dust mask?
- What should you do if you have clogged sinuses?
- If you are a smoker, how can abstaining for a few hours or days before using a respirator help you?
- What should you ensure, if you are using a filtering unit?
- When should you clean the respirator?
- How should you clean the respirator?
- How do you check for respirator fit?
- If you sense fatigue or panic in a coworker or in you, how does the buddy system work?
- What are some tips on caring for your respirator?

SAFETY TRAINING TOPIC

Working Hot

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

Every time you work on energized circuits you risk an arc blast or electric shock.

If you take the necessary precautions, you can eliminate the risks.

THE POTENTIAL HARM

Temperatures generated by short-term contact with a circuit even as low as 120V can be 10 times higher than what it takes to cook your tissues.

It takes very little electricity to electrocute you. The amount of current it takes to light a 75W lamp is past the threshold of what it takes to cause fibrillation. When you think of fibrillation, think of your heart being rendered useless.

Electrocution burns take place from the inside out.

Contact time is an important determinant in the severity of damage. The less time, the better. Other factors that detern1ine the severity of damage include voltage, resistance, frequency, and victim characteristics such as age, physical condition, and size, plus some environmental factors.

SHOCK CHARACTERISTICS

At 60 Hz, AC shock produces a tingling sensation that ranges from slight to violent.

DC shock produces a warmth sensation that ranges from warm to burning hot.

When the current through your body reaches a certain point, it paralyzes your arm muscles so you can't let go. This is what people are talking about when they refer to "let-go current."

The Jet-go current threshold decreases as frequency increases. It takes less current to pass the let-go threshold when you are working on a 400 Hz UPS than when you are working on a 60Hz system.

SHOCK CURRENT PATH

The path the current takes through your body can determine whether you survive or not.

That's why we take measurements with one hand on the probe and one hand in a pocket, rather than with both hands-on probes and a path established across the heart.

That's why we also try to eliminate pathways between feet and hands.

Your heart is on your left side. Thus, if you must choose a path that includes a hand and a foot, choose the right hand and foot rather than the left hand and foot.

PREVENTING ELECTRIC SHOCK

Working on de-energized circuits is an obvious way to prevent shock, but it depends on proper lockout/tagout, proper testing for voltage, and using safety grounds.

Non-compliance with the requirements for ensuring circuits are de-energized is rampant, and the body count from non-compliance is high.

Using the appropriate PPE and following hot work procedures is your first line of defense, not your last.

ELECTRIC ARC BLAST CHARACTERISTICS

The heat from an electric arc can reach temperatures four times as hot as the surface of the sun.

The pressure wave generated by an arc fault can hurl you away from the heat source but usually causes other injuries also. In worst-case scenarios, the pressure wave acts like a giant hammer. The pressure waves are sometimes strong enough to level concrete walls.

PROTECTION FROM FLASH

Wear the required PPE, such as a flash suit, hood, and face shield.

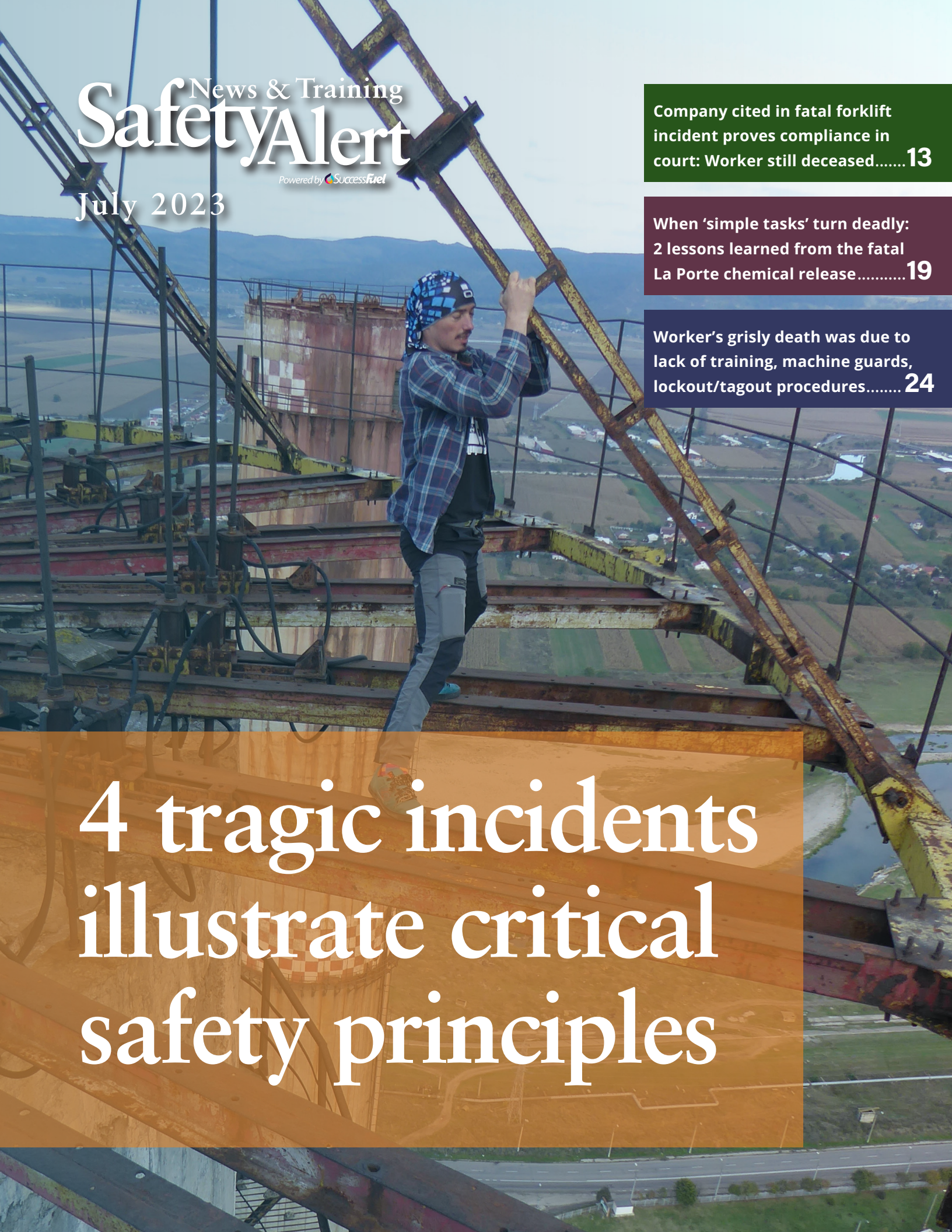
Wear clothing resistant to flash flame wherever exposure to an electric arc flash is possible. In the several seconds, it takes to remove clothing or extinguish flames, you can be subject to deep and possibly fatal burns.

Reduce the likelihood of arc faults, to begin with. For example, make test connections one lead at a time to prevent creating an ionized path that completes a circuit between an energized terminal and the ground. Another way is to remove as many loads from the equipment as possible before working on it.

REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

- Why is it important to know the principles of working hot?
- What are the characteristics of AC shock?
- What are the characteristics of DC shock?
- What is let-go current?
- Regarding hands and feet, what is the proper way to take measurements, and why?
- What is your first line of defense for preventing electric shock?
- How hot can an arc blast get?
- Is the pressure wave from an arc blast powerful? How so?
- What are some clothing and PPE issues, in regard to arc flash and arc blast?
- How can you prevent an arc fault in the first place?

News & Training
Safety Alert
Powered by SuccessFuel
July 2023



4 tragic incidents illustrate critical safety principles

Safety Alert News & Training

Powered by SuccessFuel

July 2023

News Briefs

Safety Stories You Might Have Missed

Worker COVID-19 vaccination requirement for U.S. Medicare/ Medicaid ends August 2023

A COVID-19 vaccination mandate for workers with the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) will end on Aug. 4, 2023.

CMS stated May 11 that the COVID-19 vaccination requirement would "soon end" but gave no further details at the time.

On June 5, CMS published a final rule "providing guidance to healthcare employees about unwinding provisions of its interim final rule, which mandated COVID-19 testing, education, and vaccinations," according to law firm Littler Mendelson.

The final rule will withdraw the requirement that all healthcare workers regulated by CMS be fully vaccinated.

This doesn't go into effect until Aug. 4, 2023, but CMS "explicitly stated" that it won't enforce that mandate in the interim.

CMS stated that it still intends to encourage ongoing COVID-19 vaccination through other programs.

The final rule will also permanently adopt policies requiring covered providers to continue to educate staff and residents about COVID-19 vaccinations.

This lines up CMS' approach to COVID-19 with that of other infectious diseases, such as influenza.

Expired COVID-19 testing requirements that were first put in place on Sept. 2, 2020, have been removed under the final rule.

All of this comes with one caveat, Littler Mendelson states: Healthcare providers "may no longer rely upon the presumption that CMS' vaccination rule preempts legislation in other states, such as Utah, which restrict employers from requiring vaccination or making employment decisions based on immunity status."

That means it's important that healthcare providers who want to continue with mandatory COVID-19 vaccinations for their staff check on state-specific prohibitions to avoid violating state laws.

Read the story online

Distracted 'driving' in maritime incident leads to $12.3M in damages

A maritime collision that caused $12.3 million in damages was the result of distracted bridge watch officers on both ships, according to a federal investigation.

On July 23, 2022, the *Bunun Queen* was traveling eastbound in the Gulf of Mexico near Port Fourchon, Louisiana as the *Thunder* was traveling northbound when the vessels collided.

The *Thunder* sustained substantial damage to its port side, with the cost of repairs coming in at a whopping $11,598,078. The *Bunun Queen* sustained $680,000 in damages. No injuries or pollution were reported as a result of the incident.

This collision occurred during the day, with good visibility and fair-weather conditions, according to the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB). Radar and other plotting devices on both vessels were able to detect the other vessel.

However, on both ships, only one bridge watch officer was on watch to maintain a proper lookout. The officer on the *Bunun Queen* was printing out paperwork for a different job duty instead of maintaining the watch. Meanwhile, the officer on watch aboard the *Thunder* was making personal calls and texting on his cell phone.

The NTSB found both watch officers violated the Convention on the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea which states that "every vessel shall at all times maintain a proper lookout by sight and hearing as well as by all available means appropriate."

NTSB investigators determined that the probable cause of the incident was both watch officers' distraction due to performing non-navigational tasks.

Personal use of cell phones and other wireless electronic devices by on-duty crewmembers in safety-critical positions has factored into collisions and other incidents across all modes of transportation, the NTSB report states.

Read the story online

Feds: Fatal fall result of employer's failure to assure worker's use of PPE

Donald Saul, a driller employed by Explosive Contractors Inc. (ECI), was working at the 3M Little Rock Industrial Mineral Products mine in Pulaski County, Arkansas. ECI was tasked with blasting material at the mine before it gets loaded into haul trucks.

On June 20, 2022, Saul conducted a pre-operational inspection of his Epiroc D65 Rock Drill at 6:37 a.m. The drill has a diesel engine-powered main body that carries a hydraulically manipulated drill mast. The drill mast houses the drill steel carousel and drill steel.

Saul then transported the drill to the area where he was assigned to work during his shift. At 9:13 a.m., Saul called a 3M mine supervisor and ECI's drilling supervisor with his cell phone and told them he had a dislodged drill steel that he needed assistance with. The 3M supervisor transported Saul to his pickup truck to retrieve a new drill steel while the ECI drilling supervisor told him how to correct the problem.

By 9:20 a.m., Saul and the 3M supervisor were back at the drill, working on getting the dislodged drill steel removed and replaced. The 3M supervisor left at 10:10 a.m. as Saul began positioning the drill for the first hole in the drill pattern.

At 10:30 a.m., the ECI drill supervisor attempted to contact Saul multiple times to see if he was able to fix the drill steel problem. Saul didn't answer any of the calls. The drill supervisor checked in with the 3M supervisor and they were able to find Saul's drill using surveillance cameras. However, while they could see the drill, they were unable to locate Saul. During a scan with the camera, the 3M supervisor saw something orange in a rock pile near the drill.

The 3M supervisor and several other employees drove out to the drill and found Saul laying on a rock pile leftover from previous blasting activities. Saul was pronounced dead by emergency responders at 12:48 p.m.

MSHA found that the root cause of the incident was ECI's failure to assure that Saul used fall protection while working where there was a danger of falling.

ECI has since developed new written procedures addressing the use of fall protection and fall restraint systems at drill sites.

Read the story online

Minnesota legalizes recreational marijuana, protects employee off-duty use

Minnesota has legalized recreational marijuana and will protect all employee off-duty use of cannabis beginning Aug. 1, 2023.

Under the new recreational marijuana law, individuals 21 years old or older are allowed to possess or transport up to 2 ounces of the cannabis flower in public and to possess up to 2 pounds of the cannabis flower in a private residence.

There's nothing in the new law prohibiting employers from taking action against employees who use, possess, sell, transfer or are impaired by these products while:

- working
- being on company premises, or
- operating an employer's vehicles, machines or equipment.

However, employers may no longer require or request pre-employment cannabis testing or refuse to hire an applicant just because they tested positive for cannabis on a pre-employment test. Employers can no longer require "physical examination cannabis testing for most positions, nor can they require cannabis testing on an arbitrary or capricious basis."

There are exceptions to this rule that apply to:

- safety-sensitive positions
- peace officer positions
- firefighter positions
- positions requiring face-to-face care, training, education, supervision, counseling, consultation or medical assistance to children, vulnerable adults or patients being treated for a medical, psychiatric or mental condition
- positions requiring a commercial driver's license or requiring an employee to operate a motor vehicle for which state or federal law requires drug or alcohol testing
- positions of employment funded by federal grants, or
- any other positions that require testing of a job applicant under federal law.

Read the story online

257 significant, substantial violations found at 20 mines in 15 states during April 2023 inspections

Impact inspections conducted by the U.S. Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) during the month of April 2023 revealed 914 violations, including 257 designated as "significant and substantial."

A significant and substantial, or S&S, violation is "one reasonably likely to cause a reasonably serious injury or illness," according to MSHA.

Impact inspections are done at mines that have a poor compliance history with MSHA requirements or previous accidents, injuries and illnesses.

MSHA investigators also found 18 unwarrantable failures at the mines inspected in April 2023. Violations designated as unwarrantable failures occur when an inspector finds aggravated conduct that constitutes more than ordinary negligence.

April's impact inspections were conducted at mines in Arkansas, Arizona, Indiana, Kentucky, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nevada, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Utah, West Virginia and Wyoming.

MSHA offered an example of what an impact inspection can reveal, using its inspection of a large surface lime plant and quarry near Woodville, Ohio.

The agency targeted the mine for an impact inspection after receiving three hazard complaints as well as finding that it had a 2022 non-fatal days lost accident rate that was almost three times higher than the national average for this type of mine.

This mine also recorded a serious incident on April 11, 2023, when a miner was injured after a poorly maintained metal guard fell on them. The mine also had an increased number of regular citations and S&S citations.

The impact inspection resulted in 26 citations, including 14 S&S violations. Two of these violations were considered of great concern, including failure to:

- barricade a hazardous area that exposed workers to serious and potentially fatal injuries similar to those suffered by the miner in the April 11 incident, and
- construct and maintain guarding, exposing workers to serious injuries.

Read the story online

Feds may soon require automatic braking systems on cars: Are commercial vehicles next?

A new proposed rule from the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) may eventually require automatic emergency braking (AEB) systems on commercial vehicles.

The DOT's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) announced a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on May 31 that would require AEB and pedestrian AEB systems on all passenger vehicles and light trucks.

AEB systems use various sensor technologies and sub-systems to detect when a vehicle is about to crash and then automatically applies the brakes if the driver hasn't already done so.

These systems also apply more braking force to supplement a driver's braking if needed to avoid or mitigate the severity of a crash.

The National Safety Council (NSC) and the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) applauded the rulemaking effort and expressed their hope that a similar rule would be created covering commercial vehicles.

NTSB Chair Jennifer Homendy stated that she hopes "NHTSA … requires installation of AEB and pedestrian AEB in commercial vehicles," something the board has had on its Most Wanted List of Transportation Safety Improvements since 2021.

Homendy said the NTSB will be submitting comments to the proposed rulemaking.

The proposed rule on passenger vehicles and light trucks "is expected to dramatically reduce crashes associated with pedestrians and rear-end crashes," according to the NHTSA.

If finalized, the agency projects that the rule "would save at least 360 lives a year and reduce injuries by at least 24,000 annually."

The proposed rule requires full collision avoidance at speeds up to 50 mph and sets pedestrian AEB performance standards in all lighting conditions at speeds up to 37 mph, according to information provided by the NSC.

If adopted as proposed, nearly all U.S. light vehicles of a gross vehicle weight rating of 10,000 pounds or less will be required to have AEB technology three years after the publication of a final rule.

Read the story online

New report details 4 ways robotics can make the workplace safer

A new report details how businesses can use robotics to enhance worker safety by assessing its risks, identifying solutions and readying the workplace for use of the new technology.

The National Safety Council's (NSC) Work to Zero Initiative's Improving Workplace Safety with Robotics report analyzed academic journals, vendor interviews and company case studies to evaluate the benefits of robotics and autonomous mobile robots (AMR) on reducing injuries and fatalities in the workplace.

This report also provides best practices that employers can follow to use robotics across a range of different workplaces.

Five of the most common robot configurations available to employers are identified and assessed in the report – AMRs, Automated Guided Vehicles (AGVs), articulated robots, humanoid robots and cobots.

NSC found that this technology can be ideal in manufacturing settings "where repetitive, high-volume production is necessary." The report also identifies several other examples on how the use of robotics can create safer outcomes for workers, including:

- inspecting confined spaces and industrial facilities, especially in the construction, mining and logging industries
- transporting parts, goods and materials combined with the use of sensors and computer vision to minimize the risk of human-machine collisions
- using robotic arms for precision cutting and welding and for handling toxic, high temperature or explosive materials, and
- machine tending and parts repositioning by using robotic arms and AMRs to reduce the risks of manual machine handling.

However, there are still several barriers to widespread adoption of robotics, including:

- cost of implementation and ongoing maintenance, and
- the potential that some configurations could disrupt certain work environments or require additional safety technologies to effectively mitigate risk.

Read the story online

Sonic Drive-In franchisee cited for 170 child labor law violations relating to safety of teen workers

The operator of six Nevada Sonic Drive-In locations is in trouble with the U.S. Department of Labor for allowing teen workers to operate manual deep fryers, leading to more than 170 child labor law violations.

U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) Wage and Hour Division investigators found that teen workers were also allowed to work longer hours than the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) allows.

Teen workers were allowed to operate fryers without automatic fry baskets, exposing them to the risk of being burned by hot oil and grease. The operation of manual fryers is considered a hazardous occupation that's unsafe for children under the FLSA.

SDI of Neil LLC, the Sonic Drive-In franchisee, was also accused of allowing 14- and 15-year-old employees to work:

- before 7 a.m., and later than 7 p.m. on days between Labor Day and June 1, and later than 9 p.m. on days between June 1 and Labor Day, and
- more than three hours per day on school days, more than 18 hours per week in a school week, more than eight hours on a non-school day, and more than 40 hours in a non-school week.

The violations involved a fine of $71,182, which the company has paid.

From fiscal year 2018 to 2022, the Wage and Hour Division identified child labor violations in more than 4,000 cases with more than 15,000 children employed in violation of the FLSA.

See the Wage and Hour Division's Seven Child Labor Best Practices for Employers webpage for more information on how to keep teen workers safe and how to remain compliant with the FLSA.

Read the story online

Oregon raises fines for willful, repeat violations leading to worker deaths to $250K

Legislators in Oregon have approved a bill that would raise fines issued by the state's OSHA to between $50,000 and $250,000 for willful or repeat violations leading to an employee's death.

The maximum fine issued for willful or repeat violations that do not involve an employee's death will match federal OSHA's maximum fine of $156,259.

Senate Bill 592A was approved May 22 and is expected to be signed by Governor Tina Kotek. The bill will take effect immediately once it is signed into law.

The bill is meant to raise Oregon OSHA's minimum and maximum fines across the board "in some cases by more than 1000% to align with federal OSHA," according to The Oregonian. The state agency issued some of the lowest fines in the nation for safety violations with the minimum fine for a serious violation set at only $100.

The U.S. Department of Labor found that Oregon OSHA issued an average penalty of $620 for serious violations during the 2021 fiscal year, which is more than 73% below the federal range of $2,325 to $3,875.

SB 592A will require Oregon OSHA to issue fines between $1,116 and $15,625 for serious violations. Fines for willful or repeat violations will range from $11,162 and $156,259.

Serious violations that lead to an employee's death will involve a fine of $20,000 to $50,000, which will increase to between $50,000 and $250,000 for willful or repeat violations that lead to an employee's death.

An analysis of Oregon OSHA data conducted by The Oregonian revealed that the state agency "issued an average fine of about $3,700 over the previous five years in such cases."

Read the story online

Airport workers in 6 states file OSHA complaints against service company Swissport

Airport workers in six states have filed OSHA complaints against Swissport, a company that provides cleaning services for several major airlines.

Swissport workers in Boston, Dallas, Denver, Newark, New York and Washington D.C. filed complaints claiming that the company ignored their concerns over a lack of safe working conditions.

The employees "described being transported in vans with questionable brakes and exposed seat springs that poke them," according to WBUR Radio in Boston. "They also said they are given very little time to clean human feces and blood in airplane bathrooms."

One employee, Rosa Sanchez Ortiz, told WBUR that there is typically a lack of PPE for workers to use as they clean human feces and blood in airport bathrooms. Sanchez Ortiz said the lack of latex gloves also exposes workers' skin to harsh cleaning chemicals. She said these concerns have been ignored by supervisors for months.

Swissport employees at Boston's Logan airport reached out to the Service Employees International Union for help. The union has sought to meet with Swissport over the workers' concerns, but the company hasn't responded.

WBUR said that the company did issue a statement, saying, "Contrary to these claims, Swissport fully complies with all applicable labor regulations," and argued that "the health and safety of all our employees is the highest priority for Swissport."

Swissport made the National Council for Occupational Safety and Health Dirty Dozen List for 2023 for exposing its employees to hazardous conditions on the job, including exposure to human feces.

Read the story online

Can animal shelter employee get workers' compensation for injury from cat toy?

Can an animal shelter employee who injured her arm and wrist while using a toy to distract a cat get workers' compensation for her injury?

Amy Salter worked for Jean Simpson Personnel Services at the DeSoto Parish Animal Shelter. One of her job duties involved helping to take photos of animals for the shelter's Facebook page.

On May 22, 2019, Salter was shaking a toy to get one of the cats to look at the camera when her right hand began to hurt and then locked in position.

Salter filed a statement of workers' compensation form regarding the incident on June 13, 2019. About one year later, she filed a disputed claim

A trial was held Aug. 17, 2021, with a workers' compensation judge. A summary of Salter's medical history was submitted as evidence.

On Feb. 7, 2022, the judge ruled in favor of Salter because Jean Simpson presented no evidence showing that doctors would have changed their opinions on Salter's condition even if they'd been presented with her additional medical history. Further, Salter met her burden proving her injury was work-related, according to the judge.

Salter was granted workers' compensation benefits from May 31, 2019, without a specified end date along with medical treatment. The judge also awarded $8,000 in penalties for Jean Simpson's failure to authorize treatment, pay medical expenses and pay indemnity benefits. Another $20,000 was awarded for attorney fees.

Jean Simpson filed an appeal, claiming that the judge erred in finding that Salter met her burden in proving the occurrence of a compensable accident and that her medical issues were caused by an on-the-job injury.

The appeals court found that, based on the evidence, the judge was reasonable in determining that a workplace accident occurred resulting in Salter's injury.

However, the appeals court determined that the judge erred in awarding benefits beyond Oct. 28, 2019, when Salter no longer had pain in her wrist and was discharged from care. This led the court to reverse the award of penalties and attorney fees.

Read the story online

Feds issue heat stress health alert for miners

The U.S. Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) issued a heat stress health alert for mine operators to pay special attention to miners working in high temperatures during the summer.

Symptoms of heat stress include:

- hot skin that's typically dry, red or spotted
- a body temperature that's more than 105 degrees Fahrenheit
- confusion
- a pale or flushed face, and
- muscle cramps from loss of sodium.

When treating symptoms, be sure to:

- remove the miner from the hot area
- apply cool wet cloths
- give water if the miner is awake, and
- seek medical attention if there is no improvement.

However, when treating symptoms do not:

- apply ice directly to the skin
- allow the miner to become so cold that shivering develops, or
- leave the miner alone.

To prevent heat stress, mine operators should:

- provide cool drinking water near miners
- encourage miners to drink a cup of water every 15 to 20 minutes
- remind miners to avoid drinks with caffeine and large amounts of sugar
- remind miners who are working outdoors during the day to use proper protective clothing, sunblock and shade
- use administrative controls to rotate miners on hot jobs, and
- schedule heavy tasks during cooler times of the day.

Read the story online

Bill protecting medical marijuana users' rights passes without workers' comp protections

A Louisiana bill offering employment protections for medical marijuana patients was barely approved May 22, but a compromise cost those patients the ability to make workers' compensation claims.

House Bill 351 will protect medical marijuana users from losing unemployment benefits due to marijuana use, but the bill's supporters had to sacrifice their attempt to allow users to make workers' compensation claims to get the bill passed.

There are currently only six states that have legalized medical marijuana to explicitly allow patients to make workers' compensation claims: Connecticut, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico and New York.

Rep. Mandie Landry, of New Orleans, sponsored the bill. She relied on a compromise with the Louisiana Association of Business and Industry (LABI) that sacrificed the bill's right to allow medical marijuana patients to file workers' compensation claims to get HB 351 to move forward, according to GreenState.com.

LABI member Wayne Fontana expressed concerns that workers' compensation protections would encourage marijuana use at work, leading to more employee accidents. Landry clarified that the bill was not intended to encourage people to be "stoned at work."

Approval of the bill came with a vote of 6-5 once the workers' compensation protections were removed.

Landry has sponsored other bills to protect medical marijuana patients, including HB 988, which protects state workers from discrimination due to medical marijuana patient status. She also created the Employment and Medical Marijuana Task Force.

Read the story online

Lone maintenance worker suffers fatal fall from ladder, isn't found for 3 hours

A maintenance worker suffered a fatal fall from a ladder because his employer failed to ensure ladders were secured properly and didn't check in on him while he was working alone.

Investigators with the Washington State Fatality Assessment & Control Evaluation (FACE) program found that the worker didn't properly lock in the ladder's hinges resulting in the fall which saw him lying on the ground waiting for help for about three hours.

On July 27, 2021, the maintenance worker was alone, touching up the exterior paint of a one-story house being prepared for sale.

At 1 p.m., the homeowner arrived at the house, talked with the worker and then went inside to sleep. No one else saw the worker until 7 p.m. when a home appraiser found him badly injured lying on his back.

The maintenance worker had fallen onto rocks and concrete at the base of an 18-foot fully extended portable, metal articulated ladder. The bottom half of the ladder was leaning on a 6-foot below-grade rock retaining wall near the house's basement entrance while the top half was resting horizontally on the ground level grass surface.

The maintenance worker was airlifted to the hospital where he died the next day from severe head injuries.

FACE program investigators found that the employer didn't:

- ensure the ladder was secured from accidental movement, and
- provide documented ladder safety training and an on-site safety orientation as part of its accident prevention program.

The investigators also determined that the ladder:

- wasn't in the self-supporting position with hinges locked, which created unstable work conditions that exposed the worker to a fall of around 6 feet, and
- didn't belong to the employer.

Read the story online

New York employer liable for failing to secure scaffolding pole that struck construction worker

A New York appeals court granted summary judgment in a Labor Law case to a worker who was struck on the head by a falling scaffolding pole, finding that the employer failed to properly secure the pole.

The New York Appellate Division, First Department found that the employer was negligent in failing to provide its workers the proper means to secure the pole, resulting in the injury.

Harold Ruiz was injured when a heavy scaffolding pole, which was 10 to 14-feet tall and weighed 80 to 100 pounds, fell on his head and shoulder while he was working on a construction site. A co-worker was trying to hold the pole upright as it was being installed but couldn't do so because it wasn't secured.

Ruiz filed a Labor Law claim against the employer, Phipps Houses, arguing that the company was negligent in failing to properly secure the pole.

Phipps Houses claimed that the injury didn't qualify under the Labor Law since the pole didn't fall far enough to qualify as an elevation risk.

The appeals court found that the pole "fell from a distance that was not de minimis, as the pole was made of iron and was able to generate a large amount of force during its descent."

Because of this, the court said Ruiz sustained his burden of showing that his injury was the result of an elevation risk under the Labor Law.

Read the story online

You Be the Judge

Was fatality due to poor planning, supervision or unpreventable employee misconduct?

"I'm sorry, John," Safety Manager Pete Travers said. "An employee's death isn't easy to discuss this way."

"I understand," John Jenkins, the company attorney, responded. "However, OSHA is citing us over this, so I need to hear your side of things.

"Let's take it from the top, again," said John.

"We had a demolition crew working on a project at a waterpark," Pete began. "The crew was made up of three workers and a project manager. Their job was to remove a footbridge spanning the 'lazy river' and two concrete walls that served as supports for the bridge.

"One of our estimators surveyed the site multiple times along with the project manager, Keith Clark," Pete said. "The two of them developed a written plan for demolishing each of the structures. This plan involved using the 'score, break and remove' method to demolish the concrete walls."

"Score, break and remove?" John asked.

"I'm sorry," Pete said. "That means they would partially cut through the concrete wall in a grid pattern and then break it with a sledgehammer or machine.

Worker cut wall at its base

"It took the crew three days to remove the footbridge and the first wall," Pete continued. "On the fourth day, they began work on the second wall, with Alex Gutierrez operating the concrete saw to make the cuts.

"Keith was in a nearby parking lot, moving some materials with a forklift," Pete added. "He looked up just in time to see Alex cutting along the bottom of the wall, contrary to the demolition plan. Keith called out as the wall began to tip and then fall onto Alex."

"They couldn't do anything for him?" asked John.

"No," Pete said. "They tried to rescue Alex, but he died from his injuries before they could get him out from under the wall."

"You said that Alex cut the wall contrary to what the plan called for. Is that correct?" John asked.

"Yes, for some reason he just began cutting at the base instead of making the grid pattern like he was supposed to," said Pete. "They demolished the first wall by following the plan. No one knows why Alex deviated from the plan for the second wall."

"This is clearly a case of unpreventable employee misconduct," John said. "We can definitely fight this."

Pete's company fought the citation. Did it win?

The decision

Yes, Pete's company won when an administrative law judge with the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission (OSHRC) found that the company had a proper demolition plan and made reasonable efforts to ensure its workers were properly supervised.

OSHA claimed that the company's demolition plan was inadequate because it didn't take into account the possibility of unplanned collapse. The agency also accused the company of failing to properly supervise its employees, pointing to the fact that the worker's death may have been prevented if the project manager had been watching him make the cuts with the concrete saw.

The company argued that its demolition plan took unexpected collapses into consideration, which is why it decided to demolish the two walls in sections. Likewise, it argued there was sufficient supervision onsite. The problem was that its supervisor couldn't have reasonably

You Be the Judge

Was fatality due to poor planning, supervision or unpreventable employee misconduct? (continued)

expected an employee to deviate from the demolition plan and cut the wall at its base.

Evidence supported the company's defense

The judge found that the company's demolition plan included the details of the project and how the job was intended to be completed. The plan noted site conditions, specified the equipment to be used, what structures were to be removed and the intended demolition method.

In front of the judge, the project manager "credibly testified he considered each of these matters ... when developing his plan for demolition of the concrete walls." The judge found that the evidence supported the fact that the company completed a compliant demolition plan.

As for supervision onsite, the judge stated the question was whether the company acted reasonably under the circumstances.

OSHA suggested that the company's failure to detect the instability of the wall that was cut across its base was evidence of the company's lack of diligence.

However, the judge said, "To the contrary, the Commission has held an employer's failure to detect every hazard does not establish its failure to take reasonable measures to inspect its worksite."

The foreman admitted that he knew cutting across the bottom of the wall would create a hazard. He also said he didn't know why the deceased employee chose to cut the wall in that manner, contrary to the demolition plan as well as to how they demolished the first wall.

With that in mind, the judge found that there was insufficient evidence to establish that the company failed to provide reasonable supervision.

Analysis: Sticking to the plan

In this case, the deceased employee was killed when a wall he was demolishing fell over on top of him. The demolition plan, which he followed to safely demolish a similar wall the previous day, called for a series of cuts in the concrete that would allow the wall to be removed in sections. Instead, he ignored the plan and cut the wall at its base, causing a hazard that took his life.

Safety plans are there for a reason. Sometimes employees don't understand all aspects of the plan and may see it as a less efficient means to accomplish a task compared to their idea of how things should be done.

This is where communication is key. Explaining that a job must be performed a certain way to insure that everyone goes home safely at the end of the shift will have a greater impact than just saying, "That's the way we've always done it," or, "That's what the engineer came up with."

Even better is to explain exactly how doing the job differently could result in a hazardous condition.

Cite: *Secretary of Labor v. Wildcat Renovation LLC*, Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission, No. 21-0387, 3/16/2023. Dramatized for effect.

Read more You Be The Judge in your Membership Dashboard

Company cited in fatal forklift incident proves compliance in court: Worker still deceased

by Merriell Moyer

Many employers worry about compliance. They want to make sure they do what it takes to keep government agencies like OSHA at bay. However, compliance and safety aren't the same thing.

For example, a company accused of violating OSHA's General Duty Clause in a fatal forklift under-ride incident has proven in court that it was actually compliant with a specific forklift standard, leading the court to vacate the citation.

By proving it was compliant with 29 CFR 1910.178, Chewy Inc. was able to get the General Duty Clause violation vacated by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 11th Circuit.

However, as safety professionals know, compliance with a safety standard is the absolute minimum expected under law. For those employers who want to see their workers go home safe every day, compliance is simply a starting point.

While Chewy's forklift safety efforts met OSHA's standards according to the appeals court, the bottom line is that the company experienced one serious under-ride injury and one under-ride fatality leading to the citation.

2 under-ride incidents in 6 months

An under-ride incident occurs when the rear part of a forklift is short enough that it can pass under warehouse shelves without colliding with them. This can lead to the operator being hit or crushed by the shelving.

Chewy was cited after two of its warehouse workers had under-ride incidents within a six-month period. One occurred in July 2018 and involved an employee getting severely injured. The second incident happened in December 2018, resulting in the employee getting killed.

The company had two measures in place to prevent under-ride incidents:

- training forklift operators to look in the direction of travel, maintain full control of the forklift and operate forklifts at safe speeds, and

- making warehouse aisles significantly wider than the minimum safe width for forklifts.

The company could have also modified the shelving or the forklifts in ways to prevent under-ride incidents but it chose not to do so. OSHA cited Chewy for violating the General Duty Clause for failing to modify the shelving or forklifts.

Chewy contested the citation before an Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission (OSHRC) administrative law judge, arguing that an existing OSHA safety standard for forklift operation, 29 CFR 1910.178, addressed under-rides and preempted any statutory general duty regarding that type of hazard.

The judge upheld the citation, finding that since 29 CFR 1910.178 didn't prevent all under-ride incidents, Chewy wasn't excused from its general duty to protect workers from them. The OSHRC denied a review of the case, leading Chewy to file an appeal with the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 11th Circuit.

OSHA's use of General Duty Clause was overreach of authority

The 11th Circuit found that:

- OSHA should have cited Chewy under 29 CFR 1910.178
- Chewy's efforts to prevent under-ride incidents were in compliance with that standard, and
- OSHA incorrectly used the General Duty Clause in this case.

Because Chewy "complied with the safety standard that specifically addresses under-rides, the Secretary cannot cite Chewy for failing to protect its workers from that hazard," according to the appeals court.

The appeals court vacated the citation on these grounds. The court said that failing to vacate the citation in this case would have allowed OSHA more authority under the General Duty Clause than it was intended to have and could have upset the regulatory balance.

Compliance is never enough

That's all well and good for Chewy and for the U.S. government's regulatory efforts. If Chewy was compliant and wrongly accused of violating a standard, then a citation isn't warranted. If OSHA overreached its authority, then the agency should be reined in.

However, Chewy's compliance with an OSHA standard or OSHA's overreach in attempting to incorrectly use the General Duty Clause is overshadowed by the fact that one employee was severely injured and another killed due to the hazard in question.

Was Chewy in compliance with OSHA standards? According to the 11th Circuit, yes. Did that compliance prevent the injury of one employee and the death of another? No, it did not. That's because compliance is the bare minimum required by law. It's a baseline for safety, nothing more.

If Chewy would have modified the shelving or the forklifts to prevent under-ride incidents along with its other efforts, it would have prevented the tragic incidents it was cited for.

The company had already taken the extra effort to widen its aisles to help mitigate the hazard. Chewy had two options it could have chosen to further protect its employees:

- add manufacturer-approved vertical posts to protect the forklift's operator area, or
- lower the shelving enough to prevent the possibility of an under-ride incident.

Cost and reduced storage space kept the company from committing to either modification even after the first under-ride incident injured a worker. The company continued to insist that its efforts, which were compliant with OSHA's forklift standard, were enough to keep employees safe. Then tragedy struck a second time, less than six months later, this time resulting in a worker's death.

Compliance is never enough. Compliance is just the beginning of actually making the workplace safe for employees.

Read this story online

Manufacturer in hot water after new employee loses 3 fingers in unguarded machine

A New Jersey manufacturer is in hot water with OSHA after a new worker lost three fingers while operating equipment that didn't have machine guards.

On the employee's first day on the job, they were operating a press brake that didn't have required machine guards. Three fingers had to be amputated after the employee's hand got caught in the machine.

OSHA had previously cited the company for machine guard violations in 2010 and 2015.

Forklift and chemical safety violations were also found during the recent OSHA inspection. The agency had cited the company for similar violations dating back to 2010.

The company has been placed in OSHA's Severe Violator Enforcement Program.

Fine: $498,464

Company: United Hospital Supply Corp., Burlington, New Jersey

Business: Metal products manufacturer

Reasons for fines:

Three willful violations for failing to:

- provide effective information and training on hazardous chemicals in the work area
- guard point of operation on machinery to prevent employees from having any part of their body in the danger zone during operation
- remove unsafe forklift from service

16 serious violations for failing to:

- ensure that walking-working surfaces were maintained free of hazards
- ensure that employees used appropriate eye or face protection when exposed to eye or face hazards
- provide respirators to employees when necessary
- establish a written respiratory protection program
- provide a medical evaluation to determine an employee's ability to use a respirator before the employee was required to use the respirator
- fit test employees using tight-fitting facepiece respirators prior to initial use of the respirator or annually thereafter
- provide emergency eye wash stations and showers in areas where employees were exposed to corrosive materials
- provide proper ventilating systems to reduce the maximum allowable concentration of toxic fumes, gases or dusts
- prevent employee exposure to airborne concentrations of copper fumes and titanium dioxide listed in excess of the 8-hour time weighted average concentration

Who Got Fined & Why

Manufacturer in hot water after new employee loses 3 fingers in unguarded machine (continued)

- develop a written hazard communication program
- develop an adequate energy control program
- train employees to recognize hazardous energy sources, the type and magnitude of the energy available in the workplace, and the methods for energy isolation
- ensure forklifts were examined before being placed into service
- evaluate the performance of forklift operators at least once every three years
- provide methods of machine guarding to protect employees from hazards created by point of operation, ingoing nip points, rotating parts, flying chips and sparks
- ensure overcurrent devices for circuits rated 600 volts, nominal or less, were readily accessible to employees or authorized building management personnel

One other-than serious violation for failing to:

- record each injury or illness on the OSHA 300 Log within seven days of receiving information that an injury or illness had occurred

Read more Who Got Fined & Why in your Membership Dashboard

Training Tips

Should training sessions have a 'dread' factor?

Should workers dread safety training? Turns out the answer is yes.

The best safety training contains something called the "dread factor," according to safety studies.

Experts looked at 40 years of safety studies to figure out what made training stick.

Their findings: When workers feel a sense of dread about the hazards they face, they become more engaged in their training.

How to do it: Take the time to teach workers about the hazards of the work, have a conversation about the injuries they could face and then give them hands-on training.

Read more Training Tips in your Membership Dashboard

Case Study

Trouble with noise hazards? Try Dow Chemical's 2-pronged method for hearing conservation

Traditional methods of noise control and hearing conservation include area and personal monitoring, enrolling employees into a hearing conservation program and providing hearing protection. However, hearing loss can still occur even after doing all of these things.

An alternative path, introduced at Dow Chemical facilities, using a two-pronged approach can be a more effective way to address noise hazards.

Typical approach still saw some employees suffering hearing loss

"The approach most people take is to follow the program and do some area surveys and then you circle back and do personal monitoring," said Sara Joswiak, Environmental Health and Safety Expertise Improvement Manager at Dow Chemical, during a presentation at the 2023 American Industrial Hygiene Conference & Expo in Phoenix, Arizona.

"You put people in a program and every year you give them an audiogram, do some training and keep all of those records," Joswiak continued. "After all of those resources, time and money are spent you still have employees who lose their hearing."

That's what happened at Dow, according to Joswiak. Their lagging indicators showed that some long-time employees were starting to lose their hearing even though the company was going to great lengths to prevent hearing loss through its program.

"Dow isn't the type of company where people do not wear their hearing protection," Joswiak stated. "We know that they do. We just couldn't understand (how this happened)."

Management didn't want employees to suffer hearing loss, so it worked with the safety department to change the company's perspective on the hearing conservation program, move away from the "compliance hamster wheel" and move from managing risk to controlling, and ultimately eliminating, it.

Joswiak and the rest of the safety team at Dow decided to use a two-pronged approach to address the problem.

Prong 1: Fit-tested hearing PPE, targeted training

The first prong was to protect their employees better by:

- providing better hearing protection that involved fit testing the PPE, and
- creating targeted training that helped identify gaps in the program.

"We made a bold change and started implementing custom-molded hearing protection for the high-risk group and then we started fit-testing all hearing protection, both custom and ear muffs," Joswiak said.

High-risk employees are defined as those who are exposed to noise at or above 85 decibels for eight hours as a time-weighted average.

The company also had a medium-risk group that was only occasionally exposed to hazardous noise. This group also received custom-molded PPE, fit-tests and training.

This is being done at all Dow plants across the globe, from the U.S. to China and South America to Europe.

Custom-molded hearing protection involves taking an impression of the inner ear since everyone's inner ear is vastly different. These custom pieces only fit in the ear one way and have been proven to be a better fit than off-the-shelf earplugs, according to Joswiak. Custom-molded hearing protection isn't disposable and can last from three to eight years depending on the manufacturer.

A skill check was introduced along with the fit-test. This is a hands-on check that's conducted face-to-face with a safety professional involving the employee demonstrating that they know how to properly insert and remove hearing protection.

The company also added a 10-minute microlearning session to this training to focus on the importance of hearing protection

Case Study

Trouble with noise hazards? Try Dow Chemical's 2-pronged method for hearing conservation (continued)

and the reason why Dow is addressing it in this way. This led to good employee buy-in for those who had to be in the company's hearing program.

Prong 2: Fixing noise issues, getting engineers on the same page

Prong two involved:

- identifying high priority noise risks
- working with the company's chemical and mechanical engineers to fix the noise issues
- tracking the high priority risks
- setting goals to fix the problems, and
- tracking progress over time.

Dow's chemical and mechanical engineers had no real experience dealing with noise issues at the time and they were uncomfortable with their new role, so Joswiak and her team provided training to help with that.

The training goes over the fundamentals of sound and the basics of noise. All engineers who purchase equipment are required to take this training. Those engineers have also been encouraged to buy equipment that runs at 80 decibels or lower, when possible. Engineers who are directly working on correcting the noisy equipment have also received this training.

The company also created a list of certain pieces of equipment that were identified as high-priority noise hazards, set goals to fix a certain amount of them within a specified time and then tracked the progress of this project over time.

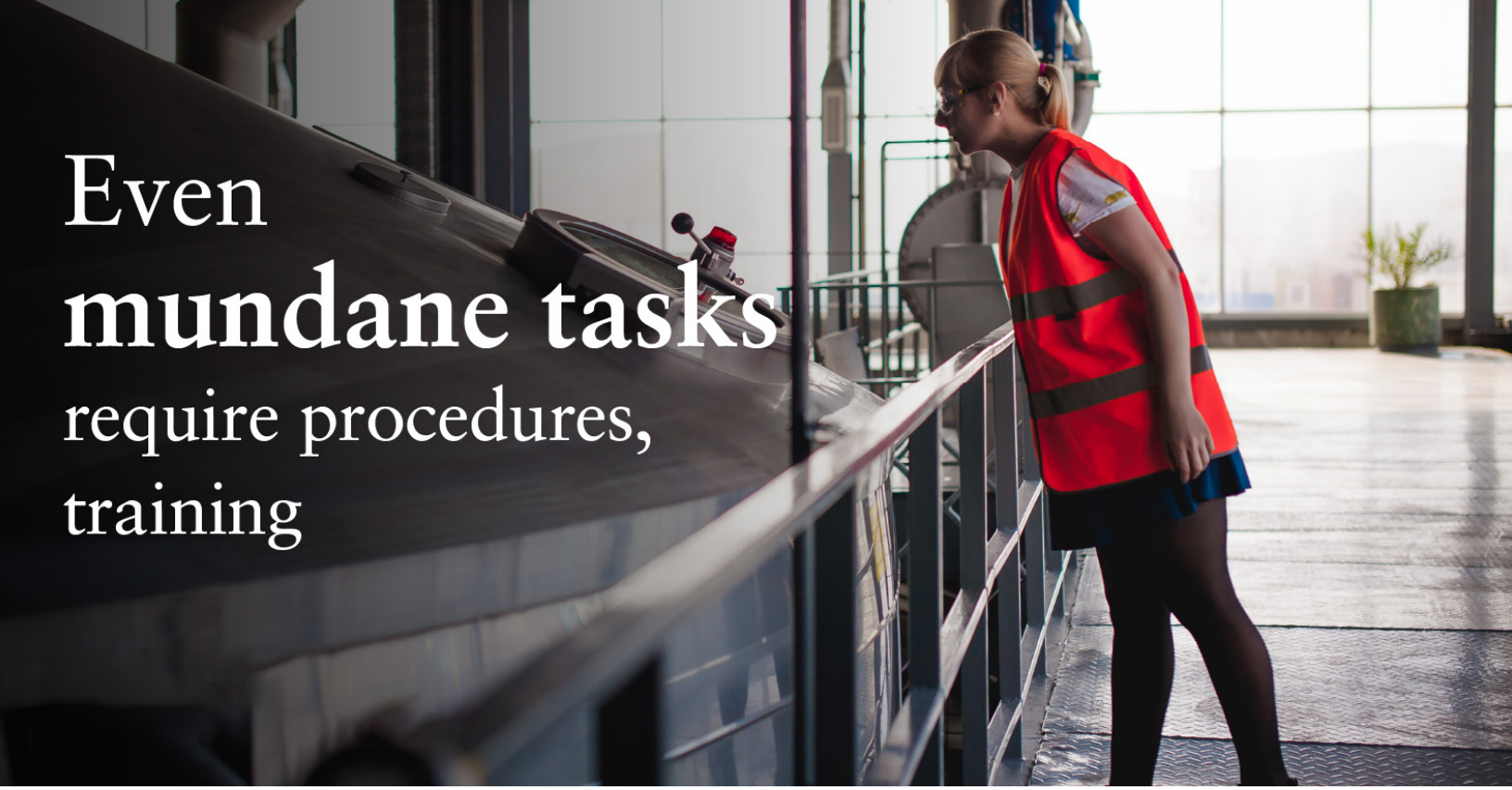
Once these pieces of equipment were fixed, preventive maintenance geared toward maintaining these noise reduction efforts was also introduced. Equipment that received this treatment included everything from air ratchets and cooling fans to forklift horns and steam leaks.

Eliminating hazards led to groups being removed from program

Certain corrections, such as replacing older cooling fans that ran at more than 85 decibels with quieter ones and adding additional sound curtains in certain areas, saw whole groups of employees being able to be removed from the hearing program because the noise hazard was eliminated.

Other efforts toward reducing noise hazards with engineering controls saw noise levels from things like forklift horns and beepers dropping below the 85-decibel threshold.

Read More Case Studies in your Membership Dashboard



Even **mundane tasks** require procedures, training

HAZARDS

When ‘simple tasks’ turn deadly: 2 lessons learned from the fatal La Porte chemical release

by Merriell Moyer

Risks associated with “simple tasks” can often be overlooked by employees and management despite the fact that those risks are very real and could lead to injury or death.

An investigation report issued by the U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board (CSB) illustrates just how deadly underestimating the risks of a simple task can be.

The accidental removal of certain pressure retaining components of a plug valve caused the release of 164,000 pounds of an acetic acid mixture, killing two contract workers in a July 2021 incident in La Porte, Texas.

The report states that the unintentional dismantling of plug valves has led to similar incidents in the past.

Removing equipment connected to the plug valves is typically considered a simple task, according to the CSB. However, it can turn deadly when a plug valve is inadvertently taken apart while removing the other equipment.

“It is time to improve the design of these valves and take other protective actions, such as signage and training, before more workers are killed or injured,” said CSB Chairperson Steve Owens.

Accidental removal of bolts releases 164K pounds of acid

The incident occurred on July 27, 2021, at the LyondellBasell La Porte Complex in La Porte, Texas. In the days leading up to the incident, a small leak was found on methanol piping upstream of the acetic acid reactor. A short time later, an adjacent unit was shut down that also required the shutdown of the reactor.

LyondellBasell used the shutdown opportunity to have contractors repair the leak. The company decided to isolate the piping using

the plug valve located between the leaking pipe and the acetic acid reactor. This involved removing an actuator connected to the plug valve.

The contractors began removing bolts they thought were necessary to take off the actuator unaware that they were actually removing bolts that secured the pressure-retaining valve cover. The plug ejected from the valve, releasing 164,000 pounds of an extremely hot acetic acid mixture.

Two of the contract workers were killed after being sprayed by the hot acid. Two other workers were seriously injured and 29 more employees were transported to medical facilities for evaluation and treatment after inhaling toxic fumes.

The facility's property damage, including loss of use from the incident, was estimated to be $40 million.

To avoid repeating this incident, the CSB brought up two things that need to be addressed:

1 Simple tasks still require training, procedures

Investigators found that both the company and the contractor considered the removal of the actuator a simple task that didn't require any training or procedures. They both failed to adequately assess the potential risk of the operation before work began.

These simple tasks aren't unique to chemical processing. They exist in every job and in every industry. Simple tasks could be what workers consider easy jobs that they do every day or they could seem like relatively mundane assignments that "anyone with a brain" could do.

Despite how simple or easy such tasks actually are, they can still carry unseen risks, as the La Porte incident illustrates. That means:

- risk assessments must be performed on them
- procedures must be created covering the proper way to perform the task, and
- workers need to be trained on how to safely accomplish the job.

2 Use engineering to remove potential for human error

The CSB identified four similar incidents involving the accidental removal of pressure retaining components of a plug valve while employees were attempting to remove other equipment.

This points to a need to re-design plug valves to make it more difficult to remove pressure-retaining components while attempting to remove actuating equipment.

Human beings, even well-trained ones, can make mistakes. They can be fatigued, distracted or complacent.

If engineering out the risk of human error is possible to make a piece of equipment or process safer, then it's probably a good idea to do so.

Read this story online

Who Got Fined & Why

Contractor cited following death of 23-year-old worker in trench collapse

A Colorado contractor was cited by OSHA following the death of a 23-year-old employee in a trench collapse at an Aurora residential worksite.

The collapse occurred while the sewer and water contractor's employees were installing residential pipes in an unprotected trench.

Fire and rescue workers later recovered the body of the deceased worker.

Fine: $112,508

Company: Coronado Excavation of Sewer and Water Repairs LLC, Brighton, Colorado

Business: Water and sewer line cleaning, repairs and installations

Reasons for fines:

Three willful violations for failing to:

- instruct employees in the recognition and avoidance of unsafe conditions
- protect employees in excavations from cave-ins by using an adequate protective system
- ensure design of support, shield or other protective systems were made in accordance with the specifications issued by the manufacturer

Four serious violations for failing to:

- provide a stairway, ladder, ramp or other safe means of egress from trenches 4 feet or more in depth
- protect employees from excavated materials or equipment that could pose a hazard by falling or rolling into an excavation
- keep written manufacturer's specifications and approval to deviate from those specifications at the jobsite during construction of the protective system
- have a competent person make daily inspections of excavations, adjacent areas and protective systems

---

Read more Who Got Fined & Why in your Membership Dashboard

What Would You Do?

Is carrying a roll of shrink wrap in the cab of a forklift really a safety issue?

Manager Mike Kelly was walking through the manufacturing department with Ken Dawson, the department's supervisor.

"I'm not sure what's going on with my crew and safety," Ken said. "We've been busy, but we've been busy in the past and haven't this many injuries."

"I know," Mike replied. "That's why I wanted to go over some ideas I have with you in a place where we can get a good view of the manufacturing floor."

As the two men approached the elevated department office, Mike saw Laura Miller, one of Ken's employees, driving by on a forklift. She was bracing a roll of shrink wrap against the interior of the forklift's cabin with one hand while operating the vehicle with the other hand.

"Hello," she said as she drove past, nodding her head instead of waving at Mike and Ken since both of her hands were occupied.

Mike and Ken looked at one another before they both started to yell at Laura to stop.

'Walking over to get a roll is a waste of time'

"What's wrong?" she asked as the two men approached.

"You shouldn't be transporting that roll of shrink wrap like that," Mike said. "It's not safe."

"This is how we do it all the time," said Laura. "Otherwise we'd have to waste time walking over to get a roll."

"I've never seen you transport shrink wrap that way before," Ken said.

"Well, we do," Laura replied.

"There are other, safer ways to do that," Mike said.

"Oh yeah, like wasting the time to go get a pallet to place it on only to have it roll off anyway," Laura said.

If you were Mike, how would you handle this situation?

What if she lost her grip on the roll?

Mike should insist that it's unsafe to transport the roll of shrink wrap the way Laura was doing it.

For one thing, if she lost her grip on the roll, she could potentially panic, try to recover it and end up running into a rack or, worse-case scenario, a co-worker.

Also, holding onto the roll of shrink wrap is preventing her from having both hands on the steering wheel and keeping her from being able to operate the lift's other controls.

Should've went to management about the problem

If other methods aren't working, then Laura should take the problem to her supervisor or the safety manager to come up with a safer solution.

Transporting awkward materials or equipment in the cabin of a forklift just isn't a good idea.

What if it fell to the cabin's floor and suddenly pressed Laura's foot down onto the accelerator or the brakes? That could potentially cause a crash.

Backhoe operator killed when tool in cab fell onto controls

A Washington State Fatality Assessment & Control Evaluation (FACE) program investigation of a Nov. 9, 2022, fatality involving an equipment operator highlights the dangers of carrying tools and other objects in the cab of an industrial vehicle.

On the day of the incident, the 54-year-old equipment operator was using a backhoe at a job site where new single-family homes were being built.

He used the backhoe to excavate around an electrical junction box before using the vehicle's loader to place gravel around the box. Then he moved the backhoe to the street and parked it with the engine running and the boom elevated. He exited the cab and walked to the rear of the backhoe.

There were no witnesses, but investigators determined that the

What Would You Do?

Is carrying a roll of shrink wrap in the cab of a forklift really a safety issue? (continued)

operator was standing at the rear of the cab where the backhoe boom was attached and reached into the cab to retrieve a metal tool, called a post pounder, that he was storing there.

While pulling the post pounder from the cab, he dropped it onto one of the two foot pedals that controlled the backhoe swing, causing the boom to swing sideways toward him. The boom pinned and crushed him between it and one of the machine's retracted stabilizers, killing him.

'Never place tools, objects in cab'

FACE program investigators found a variety of issues that led to the fatality, including the fact that the boom hadn't been lowered, the brake hadn't been set and the operator was standing in an equipment pinch point.

Investigators also pointed out that a Washington safety regulation states, "You must not leave tools on the cab floor. You must not store spare cans of oil or fuel, and spare parts, in cabs, except in approved racks provided for that purpose."

To prevent similar incidents from occurring, the FACE program report recommends that equipment operators and workers on foot should be instructed to "never place tools, parts or other objects in the cab that have the potential to activate foot pedals or other controls."

Read more What Would You Do? in your Membership Dashboard

Training Tips

Target the two most common injuries in the workplace

One way to reduce the chance someone gets hurt?

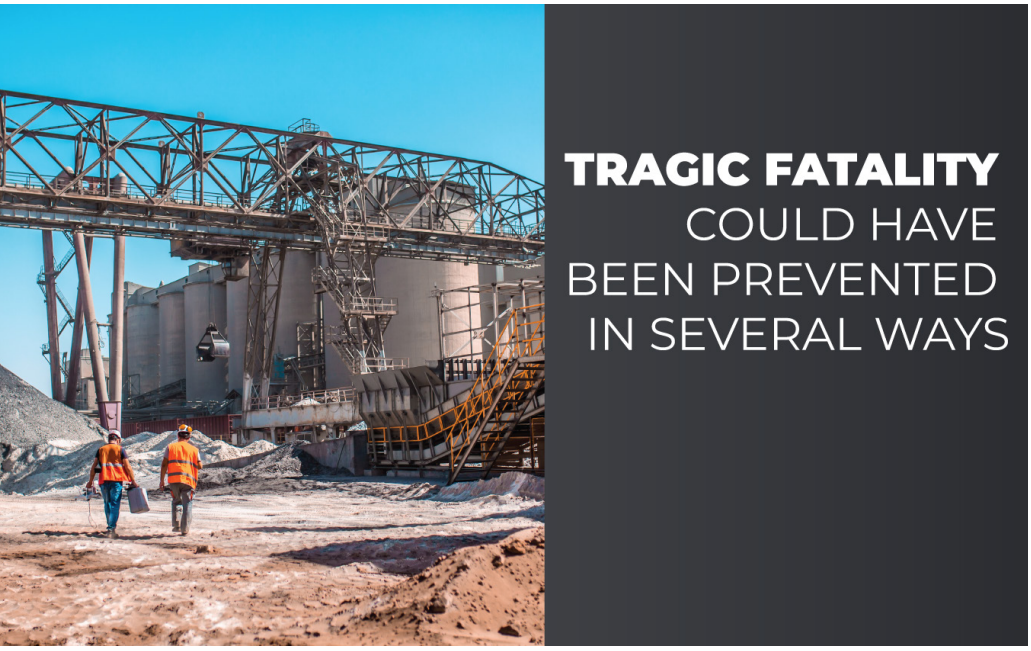
Focus on two of the most common workplace injuries with a grain of common sense!

1. **Back injuries.** Lifting leads to many workplace injuries every year. Train your workers to use hand carts or dollies if an object is too heavy to pick up.
2. **Falls**. Slips, trips and falls lead to a lot of injuries every year. Make sure folks wear slip-resistant shoes and know how to handle liquid spills that can lead to slips and falls.

Read more Training Tips in your Membership Dashboard

Worker's grisly death was due to lack of training, machine guards, lockout/tagout procedures

by Merriell Moyer



A 43-year-old worker at a cement manufacturer died from injuries he received when his right arm became entangled in an auger conveyor. Why? Because there were no guards, no lockout/tagout and poor training.

Investigators with the U.S. Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) found that the mine operator failed to properly guard dangerous machinery, ensure lockout/tagout rules were followed and adequately train miners on safety protocols.

Job included monitoring machine with history of problems

On July 21, 2022, Travis Cason arrived at 6:46 a.m. to begin his shift at the Giant Cement Company in Dorchester County, South Carolina. Giant Cement removes marl, an unconsolidated sedimentary rock consisting of clay and lime, from a surface mine and processes the substance into cement.

Cason was a shift utility worker with 47 weeks of mining experience. His job duties included housekeeping tasks and walking through the mine's finish mill area to make sure machinery was working properly.

Shift utility workers were also assigned to monitor the mine's auger conveyor, a machine with a history of maintenance problems, to confirm it was functioning properly.

Conveyor was going to be replaced

The auger conveyor was installed horizontally 48 inches above the floor, was more than 28-feet long and had a 10-inch diameter auger that rotated inside a trough, which conveyed material as the auger turned. The entire length of the conveyor was designed to be covered by guards held in place by spring clamps. In addition to the maintenance problems, material would clog at or in the machine's discharge pipe, so an air lance was installed for shift utility workers to use to clear blockages.

The mine operator considered replacing the auger conveyor in August 2021, but later decided to just repair it anytime it broke down. The mine's maintenance manager put a work order in to fully replace the machine in June 2022, but that work hadn't been started.

Workers heard scream but there were no witnesses

At 9:30 a.m., Cason was instructed to verify that an air compressor was operating properly and then use it to air-lance dust from underneath the mill's feeders. Twenty minutes later, several other workers heard a distress call over the radio. One of the workers called Cason on the radio to check in, but Cason didn't answer.

At around the same time, a contractor crew working near the finish mill heard someone scream. The crew stopped working to investigate and found Cason lying on the ground in front of the doorway to the mill, having

descended the stairs from the third floor of the facility.

One of the contractor crew members contacted the mine operator while the others began administering first aid.

There were no witnesses to the incident.

At 10:02 a.m., 9-1-1 was called with emergency medical personnel arriving on scene at 10:22 a.m. Cason's right arm was amputated due to injuries apparently sustained from entanglement in the auger of the auger conveyor. He was transported to a local hospital where he died from his injuries at about 11:31 a.m.

Lack of training, guards, lockout/tagout protocols caused fatality

MSHA investigators found that while Cason had completed all of his required safety and task training, his training on workplace examinations was dedicated to correctly filling out inspection forms. Adequate training on workplace examinations would have included training on:

- hazard recognition techniques
- requirements to alert others to hazards found, and
- how to document hazards that weren't immediately corrected.

While shift utility workers were considered competent persons to conduct workplace examinations at the mine, investigators found that exams either weren't conducted or weren't documented and miners weren't notified of uncorrected hazards. Miners told investigators that the reasons these exams stopped was because they would document hazards but those same hazards would remain uncorrected, so they stopped documenting them.

The lack of proper training on workplace examinations and failure to adequately document and perform workplace examinations contributed to the fatal incident.

The mine operator's failure to ensure the auger conveyor was properly guarded and that lockout/tagout procedures were followed also contributed to Cason's death.

Investigators determined that spring clamps used to keep the auger conveyor's guards in place were loose and inconsistently spaced along the length of the machine. Some guards were missing, exposing miners to entanglement hazards.

Shift utility workers were told to look at the ends of the auger shafts to ensure the shaft was rotating. This was done by separating guard sections to expose the moving parts. Investigators found that it was common practice to do this without de-energizing the equipment first and to generally run the auger conveyor without having the guards in place.

Mine removed conveyor, developed rules to address deficiencies

MSHA stated that four root causes led to Cason's death, including the mine operator's failure to:

- assure that the guard for the auger conveyor was in place while the conveyor was in motion
- de-energize and block machinery and equipment against hazardous motion before performing maintenance
- perform adequate workplace examinations, and
- provide adequate training to miners for tasks in which they had no previous experience.

The mine operator has since permanently removed the auger conveyor from service and doesn't plan to replace this equipment. Miners have been trained to ensure all guards are secured in place while any equipment is in operation.

Written procedures were developed requiring a supervisor and electrician to verify machinery and equipment is de-energized and blocked against hazardous motions before maintenance work can begin. Procedures and a tracking system were also developed to assure workplace examinations were properly completed.

Additional task training was completed for all miners for each assigned task within the mine to address the general lack of training. This training included:

- guarding
- construction and maintenance of guards
- illumination
- safe means of access
- safety defects on equipment, machinery and tools
- maintenance and repair of equipment and machinery, and
- workplace examinations.

The mine operator said it will also provide task training for each new task assigned to miners.

Read this story online

Who Got Fined & Why

Chemical company, maintenance provider fined $178K for exposing workers to arsenic

Two companies operating at a Georgia wood treatment chemical manufacturing facility were cited by OSHA for exposing workers to arsenic.

An inspection was opened at Arch Wood Protection Inc. after screening tests by the Georgia Poison Center found workers at the facility had elevated levels of arsenic.

OSHA also opened an inspection against the facility's maintenance contractor, Mullins Mechanical & Welding LLC.

Fine: $124,780 (Arch Wood); $53,574 (Mullins)

Companies: Arch Wood Protection Inc., Conley, Georgia; Mullins Mechanical & Welding LLC, Carrollton, Georgia

Businesses: Chemical manufacturing (Arch Wood); Maintenance services (Mullins)

Reasons for fines:

Arch Wood:

Nine serious violations for:

- exposing workers to inorganic arsenic at up to 20 times above allowable exposure limits
- allowing hazardous inorganic dust to accumulate on desks, food packaging, lockers, refrigerators and inner surfaces of respirators
- not requiring employees using respirators to remove facial hair that could prevent a proper fit and seal
- allowing workers to enter regulated areas without a respirator
- not requiring contractors to change clothing and decontaminate properly at the end of their shifts
- allowing pallets of materials to block emergency eyewash and shower stations
- not providing adequate eye protection for workers handling inorganic arsenic acid samples

Mullins:

Four serious violations for:

not providing, and ensuring employee use of, appropriate decontamination procedures and equipment after working in regulated areas

---

Read more Who Got Fined & Why in your Membership Dashboard

Real Life Safety

Company didn't tell contractor how to do a job or oversee it: Can injured contractor still sue?

"Does the name William Valdez ring a bell with you?" asked Marie Esposito, counsel for Gemini Engineering Services.

"Hmm," thought Allen Dugan, CEO of Gemini. "Can't say that I do offhand. Should I?"

"He worked on the 377 Broadway renovation," said Marie.

"Oh sure, I remember that project!" laughed Allen. "A lot of work and a nice payday for the company."

"He's suing us," said Marie.

"Oh that guy!" groaned Allen. "Yeah I can't stand him!"

"Come on, be serious for a minute," said Marie. "Valdez is the worker who fell and hurt his neck working demolition on a … let me check the paperwork … a concrete vault, sounds like."

"OK. That rings a bell," said Allen. "We weren't the general contractor on the job obviously! I'm guessing Valdez worked for one of the several subcontractors on the job?"

"Yes," said Marie, checking her notes. "Right."

"Which we had no control over whatsoever," said Allen. "We were a consultant on the project. I may get hazy on a lot of jobs I've worked on over the years, but I can assure you I didn't know about or offer any feedback on a concrete-lined vault."

Did company owe a duty of care?

"Here's the problem," said Marie. "Valdez is suing the building owner, the general contractor, another contractor he came into contact with and of course his own employer.

"The court's let those motions to sue move forward," said Marie.

"Let me guess," sighed Allen. "Valdez's lawyer found out we were on the job too. So the goal here is to sue everyone and see what sticks."

"Pretty much," said Marie. "That's why I'm a little worried. If we ever went to trial, which is highly unlikely, we'd probably win. The goal is keeping us from ever going that far."

"I agree," said Allen. "So tell me how Valdez thinks we're even 1% responsible for his injury."

"Valdez was assigned to demolish a vault on the second floor of 377 Broadway," said Marie. "He broke up the walls using a jackhammer all day. Then he says someone told him to climb above the ceiling and break that up."

"Go on," said Allen.

"He wore a safety harness of some kind which he tied to a support beam above him," said Marie.

"Smart move," said Allen. "If I was his boss, I'd have told him to do the same thing."

"So he starts hammering into the ceiling. But the structure gave way, for some reason. His lawyer found an expert to testify the vault was structurally unsound," said Marie.

"That could be," said Allen. "First I'm hearing about that or the vault, just saying. Go on."

"You can guess the rest," said Marie. "The roof collapsed. Valdez's safety vest kept him from hitting the ground. But he sustained, and I quote here, 'serious' neck and back injuries as a result."

"That's a shame," said Allen, before pausing for a few seconds. "So what's your legal advice?"

"I say we try to get the case dismissed," said Marie. "If the judge declines, then I'd move to settle ASAP."

"Let's take it one step at a time," said Allen. "I agree, go for summary judgment. And hope for the best."

Court struggles to find any connection between the company's role and the worker's injury

Result: A state appeals court ruled in favor of the company's motion for summary judgment. This came after a lower court came to the same conclusion.

While the company had to fight this case for two rounds to score a win, it made a compelling case that it had no input or involvement whatsoever in the subcontractor's accident or resulting injuries. Had the worker been able to show the company was consulted on the demolition work, or offered some advice on its own, chances are the courts would've ruled differently.

Bottom line: Companies get sued all the time! There's a time to fight and this case is a clear example of when to do so.

Cite: *Bonilla v. Verges Rome Architects, et al.*

Read more Real Life Safety in your Membership Dashboard

Standing under or near elevated loads: 4 lessons learned from 2 fatal incidents

by Merriell Moyer

Safety professionals know that workers shouldn't stand under, or even near, elevated loads that are being carried by equipment.

Experienced workers typically know better, too, but they can still have momentary lapses of judgment that put them in extreme danger. New employees may have no idea what sort of danger they're in when they get too close to an elevated load.

What's the best way to remind workers about this hazard? Training them that this is truly a life or death situation and reminding them that their bodies don't stand a chance against loads that weigh thousands of pounds.

Here are two incidents involving workers who died when elevated loads fell on them, followed by four tips to help employees avoid having it happen to them.

Mechanic killed when crane's hoist rope is severed

On Oct. 1, 2022, Darren Miller, a mechanic at the RJ Valente Grafton Quarry surface limestone mine in New York, died when he was struck by the overhaul hook ball on a crane being used to lift an engine.

Miller was working with the mine manager, Anthony Valente, to install

the engine into a haul truck. Valente operated the crane, even though he had never been trained on the equipment, while Miller signaled him from the ground. The crane, which was tagged "out of service," had known mechanical problems and several safety overrides were in effect to allow it to be used.

Guided by Miller, Valente raised the engine and moved it slowly into place with the crane. When the engine was above the truck's engine compartment, Miller climbed up onto the truck frame behind the engine compartment and out of Valente's line of sight. Valente raised the engine again to align it with the engine mounts. At one point, Miller yelled, "we're almost there."

Miller gave Valente the hand signal to move the crane's boom. When Valente made this adjustment, the overhaul hook ball was pulled up into the sheave, severing the hoist rope. The overhaul hook ball fell and struck Miller, killing him.

Mine Safety and Health Administration investigators found that one of the root causes of the incident was that the mine operator failed to ensure that Miller stayed clear of suspended loads while replacing the engine.

Warehouse 'spotter' dies when double-stacked pallet falls on him

On May 13, 2022, a 39-year-old worker at a California warehouse was acting as a spotter for a forklift operator who was moving pallets of cased bottled water. The pallets were shrink wrapped and double stacked. The double stack stood almost 10 feet high.

When the forklift operator attempted to remove the top pallet the forks made contact with the pallet, causing it to move and tilt backward slightly. The forklift operator pulled the forks out to reposition as the spotter moved behind the pallet, out of the operator's line of sight.

As the forklift operator reinserted the forks, the cased water on the top pallet shifted against the shrink wrap, causing it to give way. The cased water tumbled onto the spotter.

Because the forklift operator didn't realize the spotter had been behind the pallet, it took him a few minutes to realize the spotter was buried under the cases of bottled water. The forklift operator and several co-workers uncovered the spotter, who was unresponsive but breathing. They moved him away from the pallets and called 9-1-1.

Paramedics arrived but were unable to revive the spotter, who died from his injuries.

To avoid similar incidents, employers should:

1 Establish exclusion zones

Exclusion zones should be established around the lift equipment and employees should be trained to stay outside of the zones at all times, according to a California Fatality Assessment & Control Evaluation program investigation report on the warehouse incident.

The exclusion zone established by the employer following the warehouse incident was defined as 10 feet in the direction the lift equipment is moving and four feet on all other sides.

This exclusion zone rule should be enforced by supervisors. This is especially important with inexperienced staff who may not realize the performance expectations associated with safety requirements.

In both incidents, if the victims hadn't been standing so close to the raised loads, their deaths would likely have been prevented.

2 Ensure that operators, spotters maintain line of sight

Employees working as spotters or guides around lift equipment should position themselves to maintain line of sight with the operator.

Both incidents involved equipment operators and workers on foot who failed to maintain line of sight with each other. If line of sight is broken, it's the responsibility of the equipment operator to warn the worker on foot and then re-establish line of sight.

In the warehouse incident, the forklift operator lost sight of the spotter but didn't call out or attempt to locate him prior to lifting the unstable pallet. In this situation, the forklift operator was trying to lift an unbalanced load and since it was a problematic lift, it would be conceivable that a spotter would approach the load to survey it and provide the operator information to assist.

An experienced operator would typically anticipate this and call out, wait for the spotter to respond and get clear of the load, then make the lift.

If the equipment operators in both incidents had been aware of the

victims' locations and instructed them to move, the fatalities may have been avoided.

3 Create standards for correcting unstable loads

Employers should have a written standard covering what to do with unstable or unbalanced loads.

This means doing more than simply pointing out that unstable loads are hazardous and need to be handled with care. Employees need to be told specifically how to handle these situations. This is especially true in warehouse operations where stacked pallets are handled.

A procedure for correcting unstable loads should tell workers that they:

- shouldn't attempt to move the unstable load once they've encountered it
- should obtain assistance from one or more co-workers
- should manually break down product stacked on an unstable pallet and either use a hand truck to move it to its destination or stack it onto a new pallet, or
- should gently lower the load and reassess the situation for a safer way to move the object.

In warehouses, consider the following when palletizing stock to maximize pallet load stability:

- use as much of the pallet space as possible without having product overhang the edges
- limit pallet weight, keeping in mind that the standard wooden pallet has a maximum load capacity of 2,500 pounds
- distribute weight as evenly as possible with the heavier product kept as close to the pallet deck
- keep stack heights low enough that forklift operators can see over the top of the pallet and that it will fit into storage racks, keeping in mind that the average pallet height in most warehouses is about 60 inches, and
- secure product firmly to the pallet using plastic shrink wrap to cover the product and all four corners of the pallet.

4 Provide thorough training for operators, pedestrians

Equipment operators aren't born with the innate ability to use powered industrial trucks. The same can be said for employees working on foot around heavy equipment: They aren't born with the knowledge of how to stay safe while being in close proximity to such vehicles.

Both equipment operators and the pedestrians working around them need to be trained properly on how to work safely in regard to elevated loads, among other things.

Read this story online

Training Tips

Workplace noise levels: How loud is too loud?

Noise exposure causes irreversible damage to the ear. That's why OSHA's top limit for workplace noise exposure over an eight-hour period is 90 decibels.

Here are some noises and their decibel levels:

- **80 decibels:** City traffic, manual machines, tools.
- **90 decibels:** Subway train, lawn mower, motorcycle, tractor.
- **95 decibels:** Electric drill.
- **100 decibels:** Woodworking shop, factory machinery.
- **105 decibels:** Snowblower.
- **110 decibels**: Chainsaw, leaf blower.
- **120 decibels:** Ambulance siren, heavy machinery.
- **130 decibels:** Jackhammer, power drill.
- **140 decibels**: Airplane taking off, rock concert.

Read more Training Tips in your Membership Dashboard

about Safety News & Training Alert

Safety News & Training Alert, part of the **Success*Fuel*** Network, provides the latest Safety and employment law news for Safety professionals in the trenches of small-to-medium-sized businesses.

Rather than simply regurgitating the day's headlines, Safety News Alert delivers actionable insights, helping Safety execs understand what Safety trends mean to their business.

But we don't stop there.

Our editors read and vet hundreds of sources and hand-select the most relevant, practical content. Then we add our seasoned perspective and deliver actionable insights to help you understand what today's trends mean for your business.

Merriel Moyer

Merriell researches and writes about occupational health and safety. He was an investigative and breaking news reporter for the Lebanon Daily News -

Scott Ball

Scott is the Senior Staff Writer for Safety News and Training Alert with more than 20 years of experience writing for working professionals. He served as editor-in-chief for the trade publications: Facility Manager's Alert, Environmental Compliance Alert and Supervisors Safety Bulletin.

Get In Touch

Phone:
484-207-6261

Email Customer Support:
support@safetynewsalert.com

Mailing Address:
660 American Avenue, Suite 203
King of Prussia, PA 19406

About SuccessFuel

at Success*Fuel*, we equip professionals to do great work with news and analysis, online workshops, step-by-step training guides, digital newsletters, and much more. Our sister brands include:

Resourceful Finance Pro
HR Morning
BetterBuys
Premier Learning Solutions
Convenient. Affordable. Actionable.
Resourceful Compliance
resourcefulmanager
SWAG ENVY

Not an SNA INSIDER yet?

This monthly newsletter is just one of the benefits of being an Safety News Alert INSIDER. Find out more at www.safetynewsalert.com/join-insider

become an Insider