Safety Matters

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News & Notes

SHOVELING SAFETY CHECKLISTS

Use these checklists to remember and follow safe shoveling techniques.

When shoveling snow, do you:

- ❑ Stretch before you start shoveling to warm up muscles?
- ❑ Pace yourself?
- ❑ Lift smaller amounts when snow is wet and heavy?
- ❑ Breathe in while lifting and out while throwing snow?
- ❑ Keep your feet shoulder width apart for balance?
- ❑ Hold the shovel close to your body for better leverage and less strain?
- ❑ Push snow rather than lift snow when possible?
- ❑ Bend your knees, keep your back straight, tighten your stomach muscles, and lift with your legs when lifting a shovelful of snow?
- ❑ Avoid twisting your body when throwing snow?
- ❑ Shovel stairs safely?
- ❑ Take breaks to allow muscles a chance to relax?
- ❑ Avoid smoking when shoveling?

To avoid slips, trips, and falls while shoveling, do you:

- ❑ Wear sturdy work boots with nonslip rubber or neoprene with grooved soles?
- ❑ Look where you're going as you move around?
- ❑ Look for obstacles?
- ❑ Take special care when moving through deep snow?
- ❑ Move slowly and slide your feet on icy surfaces?

RIDDLES OF THE MONTH

1). Why do seals swim in salt water?
2). Where can you find an ocean without any water?
3). What vegetable was forbidden on the ships of Arctic explorers?
4). What's white, furry, wears sunglasses and lazes in the sun all summer long?

Answers on page 2
Safety Bits and Pieces

Snow and Ice Removal

Clear out safely

In many parts of the United States, February means snow and ice. In these areas, removing these treacherous elements from vehicles, steps, walkways, and roadways is crucial to getting around safely. The very removal of snow and ice itself can be very hazardous, however. **Potential hazards include:**

- Equipment hazards
- Poor visibility
- Noise
- Overexertion
- Back injuries
- Cold
- Slips, trips, and falls
- Fatigue

Protect yourself from these hazards by taking these precautions:

- Assess conditions.
- Inspect equipment.
- Use appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), which may include:
  - Eye protection
  - Hearing protection
  - Warm clothing
  - Gloves
  - Safety shoes
  - Head protection

If you use a snowblower:

- Clear the area of debris.
- Direct snow away from people and vehicles.
- Don't exceed the blower's capacity.
- Always stop the engine before cleaning snow from blades or chute.
- Never put your hand in the discharge chute; clear away snow or debris with a shovel handle.
- Shut off engine and remove the spark plug wire before making repairs or mechanical adjustments.
- When clearing slopes, work up and down the slope, not across the face.
- Never leave a running snowblower unattended.
- Always handle and store gasoline safely.

If you use a snow plow:

- Watch out for vehicles and pedestrians.
- Maintain good steering control.
- Approach snow piles at a safe speed.
- Look out for obstacles.
- Know your drop point for the plowed snow.

SAFETY TIPS OF THE MONTH

To walk safely on ice and snow follow these safety precautions:
1). In cold temperatures, appoach with caution and assume that all wet, dark areas on pavements are slippery and icy.
2). Use special care when entering and exiting vehicles; use the vehicle for support.
3). Never walk where your eyes have not been - look ahead when you walk. Walk in designated walkways since shortcuts can be hazardous. Use grassy edges for traction when necessary.
4). Point your feet out slightly like a penguin! Spreading your feet out slightly while walking on ice increases your center of gravity.
5). Take short steps or shuffle for stability. Go S-L-O-W-L-Y.
6). Extend your arms out to sides to maintain balance. Keep your hands out of your pockets.
7). If you fall, try to fall on a fleshy part of your body, such as your side. Avoid landing on your knees, wrists or spine. Try to relax your muscles if you fall. You'll injure yourself less if relaxed.

Safety Bits & Pieces

WORKPLACE DRUG USE

Drugs in the workplace are bad news. Don't come to work under the influence. And report any behaviors from co-workers that lead you to suspect they may be under the influence.

Hazards of workplace drug use include the following:

Increased accidents and safety violations
- Distorted perceptions of time, space, and distance
- Slower reaction times
- Increased carelessness
- Unsafe machine operation

Increased absenteeism and tardiness
- Increased workload of other workers
- Difficulties in reaching production goals
- Lower morale of other employees
- Other health problems

Increased number of criminal incidents
- Theft of property from the workplace to support a drug habit
- Theft of money from other employees to buy drugs
- Irrational or violent encounters with other employees

Increased errors and defective products
- Expensive rejections and reworking
- Customer dissatisfaction and complaints
- Loss of sales

WINTER WARMTH

Here's how to keep warm outdoors:

❄ **Wear several layers** of loose-fitting, natural-fiber clothing. Air trapped between the layers helps to insulate your body. Outer garments should be of tightly woven,waterproof material.

❄ **Wear a hat.** Half of the body's heat is lost through the top of the head.

❄ **Wear earflaps,** a hood, a scarf, and/or a face mask if it's windy. Use the scarf to cover your mouth in order to protect your lungs from frigid air.

❄ **Wear mittens** or gloves that fit snugly at the wrist, sturdy shoes, and two layers of warm socks to protect your extremities.

RIDDLE OF THE MONTH ANSWERS

1). Because pepper water makes them sneeze.
2). On a map
3). Leeks
4). A solar bear

Brrrrring Down Cold Risk

Prevent frostbite and hypothermia

When working or playing in the cold outdoors, keep moving. Take extra care if it's wet or windy. Wear warm, loose, layered clothing. Cover your feet, hands, face, and head. Get to a warm area and into warm, dry clothes or blankets if you're having frostbite or hypothermia symptoms, or you're wet, cold, or numb.

Frostbite = Frozen Tissues and symptoms include:
❄ Feeling extremely cold, numb, and possibly tingly or aching
❄ White or grayish yellow glossy skin, sometimes followed by blisters

Treat frostbite with these steps:
❄ Warm frozen part with blankets or warm (not hot) water.
❄ Don't rub the body part, drink caffeine, or break blisters.
❄ Don't warm with a hot stove, heat lamp, or hot water bottle.
❄ Exercise warmed body part (but stay off frostbitten feet).
❄ Get medical attention.

Hypothermia = Dangerously Low Body Temperature and symptoms include:
❄ Chills, shivering, and numbness.
❄ Slurred speech, poor coordination, confusion, drowsiness.

Treat hypothermia with these steps:
❄ Cover with blankets and/or provide body heat.
❄ Don't give hot baths, or use electric blankets or hot water bottles.
❄ Keep person awake.
❄ Get medical attention.

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE...

A man came home from a game of golf to be greeted by his young son. "Daddy, Daddy," he cried, "did you win?" "Well," explained the father, "in golf it doesn't matter so much if you win. But I tell you one thing - I got to hit the ball more times than anyone else!!

QUOTATION OF THE MONTH

"What would it be like if you lived each day, each breath, as a work of art in progress? Imagine that you are a masterpiece unfolding, every second of every day, a work of art taking form with every breath."

Thomas Crum
Author and Speaker

From the State of Delaware's Ofice of Highway Safety...

Day and Night. Click It or Ticket.

Did you know that in Delaware 9 out of every 10 people are buckling up? It's true. So why is OHS partnering with Delaware Law Enforcement again this month to enforce the seatbelt laws – specifically at night? The answer is simple: To save lives.

Fewer people wear their seatbelts at night than in the daytime, often 10% less. In 2009, just 23% of drivers and passengers killed in night time crashes after 9 p.m. were buckled up. Not surprisingly, this also happens to be when the riskiest drivers are on the road.

Here are some things that you need to know:

- Delaware's law requires everyone in the vehicle, including the driver and all passengers, even those in the back seat, to buckle up. The fine for violations is $25, plus court processing costs. Total fines could be $70 or even more in some municipalities.
- During the week of February 20th, you can expect to see increased night time enforcement of Delaware's seat belt laws. Police statewide will be conducting night time Traffic Safety Checkpoints to check for seat belt violators, as well as roving patrols.

What can you do?

- Wear your seat belt, every trip, every time. And ensure all passengers are properly secured in a safety belt or child safety seat before you put your vehicle in gear.

Buckle Up. Arrive Alive DE.

For more information, go to www.ohs.delaware.gov.