Safety Matters

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Don't Be Fooled

Beware the enemies of workplace safety!

On March 15, over 2,000 years ago, one of the greatest generals of the Roman Empire was murdered by enemies among his own people. Julius Caesar, who conquered large parts of Europe for the Roman Empire, was stabbed in the back by men he never suspected would try to kill him.

What has all this to do with safety? A warning. Beware! Don't get stabbed in the back by the enemies of workplace safety—Carelessness, Complacency, Ignorance, Haste, and Overconfidence.

Carelessness will stab you in the back if you let down your guard even for a minute. Carelessness is just waiting for people who don't bother to take precautions, who fail to wear their Personal Protective Equipment, and who don't pay attention while they work. And then, bam! You're hurt in an accident.

Complacency is a cunning enemy who will lull you into thinking you're safe when you're really at risk of having an accident. Complacency whispers in your ear and tells you, "Hey, you've done this job so many times, you could do it in your sleep." Beware Complacency! It's your enemy. It's luring you into an accident.

Ignorance will get you every time. Not reading instructions or safety warnings, not asking questions, not paying attention to safety training—Ignorance encourages all this dangerous behavior. Sooner or later, the person who doesn't know about the hazards and precautions is going to get hurt. It's just a matter of time.

Haste is an enemy of safety because it makes people take short cuts, rush their work, and bend the safety rules to get things done faster. But faster isn't better, and it sure isn't safer. So watch your back, and don't let Haste cause an accident for you.

Overconfidence has contempt for safety rules, Personal Protective Equipment, training tips, safety devices, and other precautionary measures. Overconfidence leads people to think they're invulnerable, that other people have accidents, not them. They never see it coming when Overconfidence stabs them in the back.

SAFETY TIPS OF THE MONTH

Here are some tips for handling poisoning incidents:

Poison in the eyes: Flush eyes immediately with a flow of room-temperature water for 10 to 15 minutes. Rinse from the top of the nose toward the side of the face and away from the other eye. Don't splash water into the eye, wipe it with a wet cloth or use eye drops. Call **Poison Control** at **1-800-222-1222**.

Ingested Poison: Do not wait for symptoms to appear. Don't make the victim vomit before calling the Poison Control Center. Describe the product and take the container with you if you are instructed to go to the emergency room.

Poison on the skin: Remove contaminated clothing and rinse the areas with room-temperature water and soap. Call the Poison Control Center.

Inhaled poison: Get the victim to fresh air and avoid the breathing of more fumes. If the victim is unconscious or not breathing, call 911. Begin mouth-to-mouth resuscitation.

News & Notes

BE A SAFETY EXPERT

Who knows most about the hazards of your job and the precautions that must be taken to prevent accidents and injuries? If the answer to that question isn't "you," then you're not as safe at work as you think.

You need to be an expert in job hazards and protective measures because you're the one who actually faces the risks, not your supervisor. If you have any doubt, any lack of knowledge or skill, any hesitation about the safe thing to do, you could get hurt.

So make sure you know every single hazard you could possibly face and have a fool-proof strategy for protecting yourself against each hazard. Also make a checklist and use it at the beginning of every shift to make sure everything's ship shape. If you're not sure about hazards or protections, ask your supervisor what you should do. They'll be happy to help you.

TRAIN LIKE A PRO

Let's say your boss comes up to you tomorrow and asks you to help train a new employee to perform a particular task safely. Follow these tips to ensure success:

- **Set a training objective.** All training has to have an objective. Maybe you're going to teach the new employee how to inspect Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) or how to use a piece of equipment. Explain the purpose of the training and what the trainee is expected to learn.
- **Demonstrate the task.** Show the trainee how to perform the task step by step. Ask questions to make sure the trainee understands each step. Then let the trainee practice the task. Hands-on experience is usually the best way to learn.
- **Reinforce good performance and correct poor performance.** Watch the new employee perform the task and give positive feedback for correct, safe performance. Correct mistakes and unsafe performance immediately. But be positive and helpful rather than critical. Say, for example, "You could run into a problem doing it that way. Let me show you again."
- **Monitor performance.** The last point is to keep an eye on your trainee for a while after training until you're sure that he or she has really learned the lesson and is doing the job safely and correctly.

RIDDLES OF THE MONTH

1). When is an Irish potato not an Irish potato?
2). Why should you never iron a 4-leaf clover?
3). What do you get if you chase a leprechaun for his pot of gold?
4). How late do leprechauns stay up?
5). Why do frogs like St. Patrick's Day?

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Safety Bits & Pieces

POWER TOOL SLOGANS

Keep these sound bites in mind as you work with hand and portable power tools:

→ **Are you grounded?** Make sure portable electrical equipment is grounded or double-insulated.

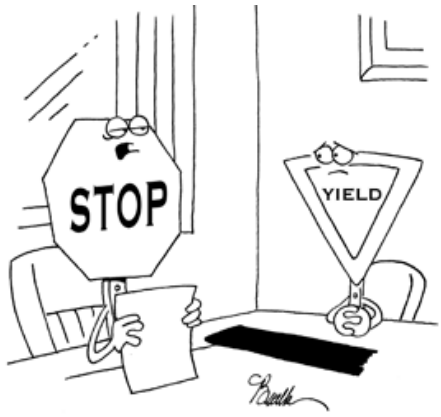
→ **Cut it out!** If your saw resists cutting, stop and get it fixed. Don't force it!

→ **Don't sacrifice safety**—respect your utility knife!

→ **Handle power tools with care—**an accident can have severe and permanent consequences!

RIDDLES OF THE MONTH ANSWERS:

1). When it is a French fry
2).You don't want to press your luck
3). Tired!!
4). Until the wee, small hours of the morning
5). Because they are always wearing green



"I'm afraid we have to find someone with a little more backbone for this position."

QUOTATION OF THE MONTH

"My basic principle is that you don't make decisions because they are easy; you don't make them because they are cheap; and you don't make them because they are popular. You make them because they are right."

Theodore Hesburgh (b. 1917)
President Emeritus of the University of Notre Dame

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE...

An elderly gentleman had a serious hearing problem for a long time. He finally saw a doctor who fitted him with a device that gave him normal hearing. When the man returned in a month, the doctor said, "Your hearing is perfect. Your family must be pleased."

"Oh, I haven't told them yet," the gentleman replied. "I just sit around and listen to their conversations."

"I've changed my will three times!"

Poison Prevention Steps

It was 1962 when the first National Poison Prevention Week was declared by Presidential Proclamation.

Poison prevention is more complicated than it was 50 years ago. We now have many more cleaning products, pesticides and lawn and garden products, virtually all of which are poisonous. Any product on which the label includes the words "warning," "caution," "danger" or "poison" should be stored securely.

That's especially true if children live in your home or come to visit, but adults can make mistakes with dangerous products too.

About half of the 2 million poisonings reported each year are for children younger than six years old. They like to taste things and put pills into their mouths. Experts generally recommend locked storage for harmful chemicals, especially when children are around.

Sounds easy, but a Home Safety Council study shows that 80 percent of homes with small children don't do it.

Another safety factor in preventing poisoning is pill safety. If you or someone you are caring for takes multiple medications, be sure pills are organized properly to prevent incorrect dosing. Check with the pharmacy for a 7-day pill holder that can accommodate morning, noon, and night medications.

Prescription bottles look pretty much alike, so always read the label before taking the medication or loading it into a pill holder. The Home Safety Council shows that one in 10 caregivers of an elderly person reported having a poisoning incident at some time.

Keep handy the Poison Control Center telephone number, 1-800-222-1222. It works from anywhere in the U.S. and can connect you to one of 61 centers nationwide. The centers give information on immediate steps to take if a poisoning is suspected.

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

Ride Smart

Whether it is the warmer temperatures or soaring gas prices, motorcyclists have taken to the roads across Delaware. That is why OHS is reminding motorists to be alert for motorcycles and reminding motorcyclists to ride smart.

Be alert for motorcycles:

- Always look twice before turning into traffic.
- Be vigilant when changing lanes.
- Always follow the posted speed limits.
- Never drive under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

What does it mean to ride smart?

- Have the proper endorsement on your drivers' license.
- Know your bike and how it handles under different conditions.
- Wear all appropriate safety gear.
- Keep a safe distance from other vehicles.
- Be aware of blind spots.
- Use proper lane position.
- Be alert for debris, wet surfaces, and uneven pavement.

Beginning mid- March through the month of April, Delaware State Police plus 9 other municipal police agencies will be conducting motorcycle safety patrols. Police will be looking for the following unsafe behaviors:

- Exceeding the speed limit.
- Driving aggressively: running red lights and stop signs, unsafe lane changes, and failing to yield the right of way.
- Driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

Ride Smart. Arrive Alive DE. For more information about motorcycle safety and other traffic safety topics, go to www.ohs.delaware.gov.