Safety Matters

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Safe Attitudes

You can't live without one!

A safe attitude is important in every safety situation. Consider driving: You know how important your vehicle's brakes are, and you have them checked regularly. But in heavy traffic or bad weather you don't rely totally on your brakes. You make it a point to drive more slowly and be even more watchful than usual.

The same kind of safe attitude protects you on the job, too. Even when you're wearing the right personal protective equipment (PPE) and following all the right procedures, you still need to be cautious and alert to prevent workplace accidents.

Here are seven basic principles of an effective safety attitude:

1. You are responsible for your own safety, and well-being.
2. You share responsibility for your co-workers' safety.
3. Accidents will happen unless you do your part to prevent them.
4. The safest way to do any job is the only right way to do it.
5. It is common sense to follow work rules and practices designed by experts to promote your safety.
6. Before starting any job, check for hidden hazards that require special protective measures.
7. When PPE is called for, wear it. When special procedures are required, follow them.

In short, to have a safe attitude, first you have to believe that your actions count—that they can prevent accidents and create a safe workplace. Then you have to know the difference between safe and unsafe actions and be determined always to choose the safe way.

With all the emphasis on safety programs, safety training, and safety rules, it's easy to forget that when you come right down to it, safety is really a matter of personal responsibility. When you begin every workday with a safe attitude and then add your knowledge, skill, experience, and common sense, you have a winning formula for a safe and productive shift.

Don't Let Your Guard Down

A study of industrial accidents in the United Kingdom found that the rate of accidents in the last half hour of work was more than double that of accidents in the first half-hour. This finding indicates that you need to be very cautious near the end of your shift.

When you're tired, ready to quit for the day, and thinking about what you'll do after work, you're more apt to be inattentive to your work. Keep safe all day. Don't let your guard down as quitting time approaches.

News & Notes

NO EXCUSES! BUCKLE UP!

Have you ever heard—or used—these excuses?

- "I drive a big, heavy vehicle. I don't need a seat belt."
- "If I wear my seat belt and it jams, I'll be trapped in an accident."
- "I'm an excellent driver and my reflexes are great. I don't need a seat belt."

The fact is these statements are all wrong. Crash tests and other scientific evidence provide reasons to wear your seat belt:

- Seat belts save your life in a crash.
- Seat belts reduce your risk of a serious injury in a crash.
- Thousands of people who die in car crashes every year might still be alive if they had been wearing their seat belts.

And here's one more good reason: It's easy. It takes 3 seconds to buckle up.

May 21-28 is **Buckle Up America Week** so buckle up!

ASSIGNED PROTECTION FACTOR (APF)

The APF of a respirator is the level of protection that a properly functioning respirator provides. An APF of 10, for example, means that the user will inhale no more than one-tenth of the airborne contaminant present. Make sure the respirator you use always has the right APF for the contaminants in your work area.

Seconds later, Steve would learn an important lesson about safety.

Riddle of the Month

The person who makes it doesn't want it. The person who buys it doesn't use it. The person who uses it doesn't see it. What is it?

Answer on page 2 in Safety Bits & Pieces

Safety Bits & Pieces

OFFICE SECURITY & SAFETY TIPS

The following tips can help you make your office safer and prevent you from becoming a victim of crime at work. By taking a few simple precautions, you can reduce the risk to your office and yourself, discourage those who commit crime and make your office a safer place to work.

Office Security

* Never leave your purse or billfold in plain view or in the pocket of a jacket hanging on the door. Wallets and purses should be kept in a locked metal drawer when unattended.
* Don't leave cash or valuables unsecured or at the office.
* Ensure your office personal computer is secure.
* Ensure all confidential information and data is secure.
* Large sums of cash should be banked at the end of the day and safes locked.
* Stop and challenge strangers in your work area.
* If you work alone or before/after normal business hours, keep the office door locked. If you work late, try to find another worker or a security guard to walk out with you
* If you are in the elevator with another person, stand near the control panel. If you are attacked press the alarm and as many of the control buttons as possible.
* Be alert for pickpockets on crowded elevators.
* Report all suspicious people and activities to the proper authorities: office management, building security, law enforcement.
* Be aware of escape routes for emergencies, and post the phone numbers of the police and fire departments near telephones.
* Report broken locks, blown lights, overgrown trees and shrubs that may provide hiding places and other security deficiencies in your work area to management.

Office Safety

* Know the location of the nearest fire alarm; know how to use it and be familiar with its signal.
* Learn the location of the two nearest emergency exits from your work area.
* Count the doors, desks, work stations, etc. between your work space and the nearest exit. Because of smoke or power failure, an escape in the dark may be necessary.

More Safety and Security Tips next Month!!

RIDDLE OF THE MONTH ANSWER:
A coffin

Near Miss

Is there an accident in your future?

If you've ever had a near miss at work, you probably breathed a sigh of relief and thought yourself lucky for avoiding an accident. You may have even forgot about the whole thing. But don't rest easy so soon—not before you answer three very important questions.

When you had the near miss, did you:

1. **Try to figure out what went wrong?** If you had a close call, something must have gone wrong. If you don't know what that was, it could go wrong again—except this time it WILL cause an accident.
2. **Correct hazardous conditions or behavior?** If you leave things the way they were or keep doing things the way you did at the time of the near miss, sooner or later there will be another incident and probably an accident. Safety experts say that near misses are accidents waiting to happen.
3. **Tell your supervisor about the incident?** You need to report close calls just as you would report an accident. Supervisors need to examine near misses to determine if they need to take any action to prevent an accident. They may decide to change a procedure, for example, or use different materials or get a machine repaired.

The one thing you can't do in these situations is walk away. Odds are, if you don't act after a near miss, somebody will eventually have an accident.

Notable Quotation

"If there are things you don't like in the world that you grew up in, make your own life different."
R. David Thomas

Safety Tip of the Month

Never drive in the rain or on slippery roads with your cruise control engaged. If you do, and your car hydroplanes, when your tires leave the roadway your car automatically accelerates to a high rate of speed. This acceleration makes an unpleasant situation unmanageable.

On the Lighter Side

A boy scout was out trying to raise funds for his troop by collecting bottles and cans. He went to one house and asked the lady if she had any old beer bottles.

The self-righteous woman retorted, "Do I look like the kind of person who would drink beer?"

"Pardon me," apologized the Boy Scout. "Do you have any old vinegar bottles?"

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Savings accounts are like toothpaste... easy to take out but hard to put back.

It's a Real Shocker

Don't be careless with electricity

May is **National Electrical Safety Month,** which makes this the perfect time to review these electrical safety precautions:

- **Inspect work areas daily** for such hazards as flickering lights, warm switches or receptacles, sticking switches, burning odors, loose connections, and damaged wires.
- **Report problems** to a supervisor immediately.
- **Leave repairs and adjustments to authorized personnel.**
- **Select proper cords and connectors for each job** as well as portable cords that are suitable in terms of gauge size, flexibility, strength, and ability to withstand chemicals. Never use extension cords as permanent wiring.
- **Make sure electrical equipment is grounded.**
- **Use ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCI)** in wet areas and outdoors.
- **Disconnect energy sources before performing maintenance** and repairs, and lock out and tag out the disconnected power sources.
- **Don't use a metal ladder** or wear a metal hard hat around electricity.
- **Don't touch anything electric when your hands are wet,** when you're standing on a wet floor, or when you're in contact with a wet surface.
- **Don't overload outlets** or circuits.
- **Use an ABC or CO_2 fire extinguisher on electrical fires;** never use water.