Safety Matters

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The Shock That Saves

What you should know about AEDs

Normally when we think of electric shocks in the workplace we think of a potentially deadly hazard. But there's one case where the right kind of shock at the right time can actually save a life.

An automated external defibrillator (AED) is a medical device that analyzes heart rhythm and delivers an electric shock to victims of ventricular fibrillation to restore the heart function to normal. Ventricular fibrillation is the uncoordinated heart rhythm most often responsible for sudden cardiac arrest.

Use of AEDs began in the 1970s but only became common in the workplace in recent years. Defibrillation is just one part of the treatment that also includes calling for emergency medical assistance, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), and the administration of medications and other life support measures. Early defibrillation, however, is the most critical of all the steps because it is the most important therapy for ventricular fibrillation, which is involved in so many heart attack cases.

There are many good reasons for having AEDs on the job:

1. 61 million Americans have cardiovascular disease, resulting in approximately 1 million deaths per year.
2. One-third of these deaths (300,000-400,000) are due to cardiac arrest.
3. Survival rates for out-of-hospital cardiac arrest are only 1 to 5 percent.
4. Most often cardiac arrest is due to ventricular fibrillation, which can be restored to a normal rhythm if treated early with electric shock (defibrillation).
5. The sooner defibrillation is started, the more likely the victim will survive.
6. The ideal time for defibrillation is 3 to 5 minutes after the onset of the cardiac arrest.
7. AEDs are safe, effective, and easy to learn how to use. They are also compact, lightweight, portable, and battery operated.

AEDs may be located in various parts of a workplace, such as areas where many people work closely together, e.g., shops, break rooms, offices, and cafeterias.

SAFETY TIPS OF THE MONTH

Since June is **National Safety Month**, here are some safety tips from Underwriters Laboratory, an independent product safety certification organization:

* Install smoke detectors on every floor of your home and carbon monoxide detectors near sleeping areas. If already installed, test them!

* Avoid overload. Check for overloaded extension cords. Usage should not exceed the recommended wattage. Extension cords should not be placed under rugs or heavy furniture, tacked up or coiled while in use.

* Keep fire extinguishers handy. Place them in key locations in your home, in the kitchen, bedroom and basement. Be sure to check expiration dates regularly.

News & Notes

GOLF CART SAFETY CHECKLIST

You know you face safety hazards on the job. And you should know that you face more hazards at home. But what about when you're enjoying summer recreation? Take golf, for instance. Aside from getting beaned by a stray ball, are you aware of the safety hazards associated with the use of golf carts?

Here's a golf cart safety checklist to follow when you're driving around the links:

- **Make sure every passenger has a seat.**
- **Secure golf bags** so they don't fall out.
- **Walk around the cart** before getting in to make sure there are no obstacles in front of or behind the vehicle.
- **Check the horn and brakes** before you drive.
- **Look behind you** before backing up.
- **Remind passengers to keep feet, legs, and arms inside** the cart.
- **Make sure passengers remain seated** while the vehicle is in motion.
- **Don't drive faster than a quick-paced walk.**
- **Allow sufficient clearance between your cart and oncoming carts.** If there isn't sufficient room to pass safely, pull over, stop, and let the other cart pass.
- **Reduce speed when turning.**
- **Try not to make turns on an incline** to avoid tipovers.
- **Drive only in designated areas.**
- **Always give golfers on foot the right-of-way.**
- **Slow down and sound the horn on blind turns** or other areas where visibility is blocked.
- **Don't leave valuables in an unattended cart.**

RIDDLES OF THE MONTH

1) He who has it doesn't tell it. He who takes it doesn't know it. He who knows it doesn't want it. What is it?

2) What is it that goes with a carriage, comes with a carriage, is of no use to a carriage, and yet the carriage cannot go without it?

3) What walks all day on its head?

Answers on page 2 Safety Bits & Pieces

Safety Bits & Pieces

LIGHTNING AWARENESS

Lightning can be a beautiful, awe-inspiring spectacle and, as most know, it can also be deadly.
Lightning is an atmospheric discharge of electricity accompanied by thunder.
The leader of a lightning bolt can travel at a speed of up to 140,000 mph. It can reach temperatures up to 54,000 degrees.

There are three types of lightning injuries:
Direct strike: The bolt strikes a person before striking another object, which is the most serious type of strike.
Side flash: The bolt strikes another object, then strikes the person.
Ground current: It strikes an object, then the electrical current travels through the ground to a person.

The National Weather Service reminds us that there is little you can do to substantially reduce your risk if you are outside in a thunderstorm. The only completely safe action is to get inside a safe building or vehicle.

*A safe building is one that is fully enclosed with a roof, walls and floor, and has plumbing or wiring. Once inside, you should take some basic precautions: stay away from showers, sinks, hot tubs, and electronic equipment, such as TVs, radios, telephones and computers.
* A safe vehicle is any fully enclosed metal topped vehicle.
Unsafe vehicles include convertibles, golf carts, riding mowers, open cab equipment and boats without cabins.
* If you drive into a thunderstorm, slow down and use extra caution. Pull off the road into a safe area, DO NOT leave the vehicle during the storm.
* If you are at a beach or a lake where no safe building is nearby, go to your car. Wait 30 minutes until after the last thunder before going back to the beach.
* If you are stranded outside while camping or hiking, on a motorcycle or a bicycle, avoid open fields, the top of a hill or a ridge top.
* Stay away from tall, isolated trees. In a woods, stand near smaller trees.

RIDDLES OF THE MONTH ANSWERS

1) Counterfeit Money
2) Noise
3) A nail in a horseshoe

Bring It Home

Practice safety on and off the job

June is **Home Safety Month.** What are the top five causes of fatal accidents at home? According to the Home Safety Council, the answer is:
1. Falls
2. Poisoning (ingesting or inhaling toxic substances)
3. Fires
4. Suffocation (often involving choking on food)
5. Drowning

Interestingly, the five leading causes of nonfatal injuries are not the same. Falls still lead the list, and poisoning is Number 5. In between are striking or being struck by an object (Number 2); cuts (Number 3); and overexertion, such as sustaining back injuries and muscle pulls (Number 4).
Make the connection between home safety and work safety. The list of parallels between home hazards and workplace hazards is almost endless. They include tripping and falling, hazardous substances, electric shock, fire, power tools, falling and flying objects, eye injuries, back injuries, and more. Take the same precautions against these hazards at home as you do at work, including reading labels, wearing PPE, and removing tripping hazards.

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE...

"I think it's time to stop shopping when the computer asks you if you need another shopping cart."

QUOTATION OF THE MONTH

A true friend knows your weaknesses
but shows you your strengths;
feels your fears but fortifies your faith;
sees your anxieties but frees your spirit;
recognizes your disabilities but
emphasizes your possibilities.

William Arthur Ward (1921-1994)
American philosopher

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

How to deal with *That Guy*

Even though OHS is working harder than ever to prevent unsafe driving behaviors, statistics show that aggressive drivers are still on the road. And the later in the day it gets, the more likely it is that you will come across *That Guy*. You know *that guy*, the one who weaves in and out of traffic, tailgating, and running red lights. How do you safely drive around someone like *that*? Here is what the experts have to say:

- Try to get out of their way as soon as you can safely.
- Distance yourself as much as possible.
- Don't challenge them.
- Do not attempt to match their speed.
- If you're being tailgated, signal and change lanes to let them pass. Don't aggravate them more by blocking them from passing.
- Avoid eye contact.
- Don't be tempted to use your horn at aggressive drivers. This only draws their attention to you.
- Don't make or return gestures.

If you can do it safely, call 911 to report an aggressive driver.

- Give the police a good description of the aggressive driver's vehicle, the license number and the direction it's heading in.
- If you see an aggressive driver who is involved in a crash further down the road, stop a safe distance from the crash scene, wait for the police to arrive and report the driving behavior you witnessed.

Be on the lookout for OHS's '*Are you That Guy*´ aggressive driving campaign over the next several months. Stepped up enforcement and awareness efforts will be ongoing this summer. So keep yourself and your family safe from *that guy.*

Respect the Sign. Arrive Alive DE.