Safety Matters

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Heard of HAVS?

If you work with heavy duty machinery, you may be at risk for it

Tools like jackhammers, drills, woodworking equipment, chipping tools, chain-saws, grinders, and other vibrating equipment can be hazardous in several ways:

- You can be injured by contact with moving parts and cutting surfaces.
- Prolonged exposure to noise can damage hearing.
- Chips and flying particles mean the risk of eye hazards.
- You could develop HAVS, or hand-arm vibration syndrome.

HAVS is a disease of the hands in which blood vessels in the fingers collapse as a result of repeated exposure to vibration. Skin and muscle tissues in the hands don't get enough oxygen and eventually die.

Early signs of HAVS include:

- **Infrequent numbness and/or tingling** in the fingers, hands, or arms
- **Whiteness** in the tips of the fingers when exposed to cold
- **Trouble buttoning or zipping clothes,** or difficulty picking up small objects

Safe Work Practices Prevent Injury

Safe work practices can help prevent HAVS and protect against other vibrating tool hazards. For example:

- **Use nonvibrating tools** instead of vibrating equipment whenever possible.
- **Maintain vibrating equipment** in good operating condition. Unbalanced rotating parts and dull cutting tools can increase the amount of vibration.
- **Arrange work tasks so that you can alternate** between using vibrating and nonvibrating tools.
- **Limit the number of hours** you use vibrating tools during the workday.
- **Take 10 to 15 minute breaks** from the source of vibration every hour.
- **Keep hands warm** and dry.
- **Don't grip vibrating tools too tightly.** Let the tool do the work instead of applying force.
- **Keep alert to laceration and amputation hazards.** Always know where *both* hands are positioned while working.
- **Wear appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)** such as work gloves, especially when working in the cold because cold can increase the risk of HAVS.
- **Report symptoms promptly** to your supervisor and seek medical treatment.

THANKSGIVING SAFETY TIPS

When cooking, keep young children away from the kitchen, do not wear loose sleeves or dangling jewelry to avoid spills and burns. Cook on back burners when possible and turn pot handles in to prevent accidental spills. Never leave cooking unattended and keep clutter away from sources of direct heat. If decorating with candles, never leave them burning in an unattended room.

News & Notes

SAFE LIFTING Q&As

Q. What's the proper technique for lifting sacks?

A. (1) Assume the safe lifting position.
(2) Grasp the sack at opposite top and bottom corners.
(3) Power your body up with your legs and use your arms to raise the sack to rest on your hip.
(4) Fully stand and move the sack to rest on your shoulder.

Q. What's the safest way to carry long objects?

A. Carry lumber, pipe, and other long objects over your shoulder, but remember the tail end of the object. Watch where you're going and pay attention to who and what's in front *and* behind you so you don't whack someone or something.

Q. What should I do if I have to lift something off a shelf above my head?

A. (1) Use a stepstool or ladder.
(2) Climb until you're safely in position and slide the load close to you, keeping both a solid footing and a firm grasp on the object.
(3) Descend slowly and carefully, letting your arms and legs do all the work.

Q. What's the proper way to lift and carry oversized or heavy loads?

A. Use material-handling equipment or team up with a co-worker and use a two-person lift:
(1) Designate one person to direct the lift.
(2) Lift at the same time.
(3) Keep the load level when carrying.
(4) Move together smoothly and unload at the same time.

"Did they take anything valuable? The leftover turkey, stuffing, pumpkin pie..."

THANKSGIVING RIDDLES

1) What sound does a turkey's phone make?
2) Who is not hungry at Thanksgiving?
3) What did the turkey say to the turkey hunter?
4) What do you get when you cross a turkey with an octopus?
5) What sound does a space turkey make?

Answers on Page 2 Safety Bits & Pieces

Safety Bits & Pieces

OFFICE SAFETY TIPS

About 10 percent of office injuries are caused by slips and falls. Most happen because of wet surfaces and unanchored rugs or mats. Others were caused by falling off a chair when a person was rocking or sitting down without realizing the chair wasn't in the right place.

Trips happen when you hit an obstruction and lose your balance. Causes include clutter, obstructed views, wrinkled carpet, uncovered cables, drawers not being closed, and uneven surfaces such as steps and thresholds.

Electrical. Most office equipment is manufactured with grounded plugs as a precaution (three prong plugs). Never remove the third prong. Overloading electrical circuits and using extension cords can result in a fire.

Bacteria. A study by the University of Arizona found that a desk has far more bacteria than a toilet seat, including plenty of cold and flu germs. Keep your hands, desk and keyboard clean with a disinfectant.

Nodding. If you are often sleepy at work, remember that you need seven or eight hours of sleep a day. If you often have tension or migraine headaches, see a doctor for effective treatment.

Hurting hands. Hands and wrists can become sore with intensive computer use, but many conditions other than carpal tunnel syndrome can cause pain. Check with your doctor to get relief from tendonitis, which can be treated with splinting and anti-inflammatories, such as Tylenol and ibuprofen.

Back, neck and shoulder muscles. Check your computer and chair height so they are appropriate for your work. Chair posture is important, so sit up straight. Take breaks and walk about.

Eye strain. Microsoft suggests increasing your font size so type is easier to read. Look away from your computer frequently to allow your eyes to adjust to different distances. Be sure to blink occasionally to keep your eyes moist. Taking a fish oil capsule every day helps many people avoid dry eyes.

THANKSGIVING RIDDLES ANSWERS

1) Wing! Wing!
2) The turkey because he's already stuffed.
3) "Quack! Quack! Quack!"
4) Enough drumsticks for Thanksgiving.
5) Hubble, Hubble, Hubble!

Emergency Quiz

Test your knowledge

Circle **T** for True or **F** for False.

1. The most common workplace emergencies are weather related. **T F**
2. A fire is an example of a natural emergency. **T F**
3. If you hear the alarm, get your personal belongings and follow the recommended route to the nearest exit. **T F**
4. If a natural or weather-related emergency occurs while you are at work, you will always be told to leave for home promptly. **T F**
5. In case of a medical emergency, call 911 right away. **T F**
6. Workers trained in first aid or CPR can help the victim until emergency medical personnel arrive. **T F**
7. If there is a threat of violent behavior, stay calm. **T F**

Answers:

1. F. The most common workplace emergencies are fires. **2.** F. Natural emergencies include floods, earthquakes, tornados, or hurricanes. **3.** F. Do not stop to get your personal possessions. **4.** F. Depending on the circumstances, you may be told to stay at work until existing dangerous conditions subside. **5.** T **6.** T **7.** T

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

Safe Travels for the Holidays

Are you looking forward to taking a road trip during the holiday season? If so, you are not alone! According to AAA, last year over 25,000 Delawareans traveled more than 50 miles from home during the year-end holidays. Now more than ever you need to take steps to protect yourself, your friends, and your family while on the roads. Delaware is experiencing an extremely high number of traffic deaths where the victims were not wearing seat belts. Not buckling up doesn't cause a crash, however it has a significant impact on whether or not you'll survive it. So regardless of whether you are traveling around the corner or across state lines, be sure to take these tips along for the ride:

- **Always wear your seatbelt** – It doesn't matter how far you are driving, who you are with, or whether you are sitting in the front or back seat, it is important that you always buckle up. Unrestrained occupants hit others in the vehicle on impact or may be ejected, where they are four times more likely to be killed in the crash. Don't be a statistic.
- **Encourage others to wear their seatbelt** – If you are the driver, it is your responsibility to make sure that everyone is buckled up. And, if you are the passenger, simply remind the driver that unrestrained passengers can equal big fines. You probably know better ways to spend $70 than in fees and court costs, and officers will be stepping up seat belt enforcement this Thanksgiving.
- **Respect the sign** - Police will be out in force this holiday season looking for people who are speeding, and driving aggressively. Don't draw attention to yourself by breaking the law. Pace yourself and show respect for the rules of the road.

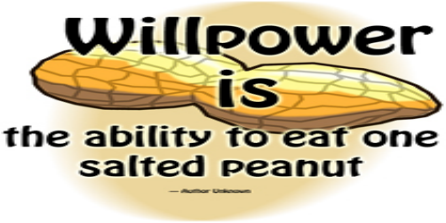
You can find more information about these topics at www.ohs.delaware.gov. From all of us here at the Delaware Office of Highway Safety, Have a Safe and Happy Thanksgiving.

Drive Safe. Arrive Alive DE.

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

"It's for Thanksgiving. Now, you won't have to talk with your mouth full."

QUOTATION OF THE MONTH

"I've failed over and over and over again in my life and that is why I succeed."

Michael Jordan: former professional basketball player