

# WEEKLY SAFETY MEETING

FOR THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

 SAFETY MEETING OUTLINES

Box 700, Frankfort, IL 60423

815-464-0200

No. 31

Vol. 21

Week of 8/3/15

Company Name \_\_\_\_\_ Job Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## FALLING OBJECTS

On a construction site there is a wide variety of objects which can fall — materials, tools, equipment, even other workers — and if any of them fall on you, you could be seriously injured, or even killed. The best way to avoid injuries from falling objects is to prevent those objects from falling in the first place. “An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.” Consider the following suggestions.

All materials should be piled on a sound base, straight and steady, and only to a reasonable height. Piling materials on scaffolds requires special care. You have to be sure to allow space for work operations, to make the piles stable, and to **not** overload the scaffold. Safe stacking is important at ground level too. If a stack of pipe begins to slide, for example, you could very easily end up with a crushed foot or a broken ankle.

Use hand lines and containers or buckets when you want to lift or lower materials, tools, or equipment. Never throw them from one level to another. Hand lines should be used instead of carrying items in your hands while you climb ladders. When using a hand line, keep an eye on the load, and make sure everyone is clear — including you! When you have to lift or lower materials that can't be placed in a container, fasten the load securely to the hand line. If materials like pipe, conduit, and rods aren't properly fastened, a piece can be jarred loose and hit a worker below.

Take extra care when loading materials that will be moved by machinery like hoists, cranes, and forklifts. Stack materials and boxes on skip pans and pallets safely and securely, because the load may swing, twist, or jerk while it is in motion. Forklifts often lean and rock when they roll over uneven ground — make sure that your load is secure enough to handle this situation. Avoid the area under any suspended load.

Always be on the alert for anything that can fall when you are working near operations that are being performed overhead. Remember that tools or materials can roll or be vibrated off a work platform. A good rule to follow is to stay clear if there is any danger; and **always** wear your hard hat when you're exposed to any possibility of falling objects.

**Every injury costs suffering, time, and money.**

**SAFETY REMINDER**

**Don't become a victim; avoid injuries.**

**Think safety, all day, every day.**

Special Topics For Your Project \_\_\_\_\_

Employee Safety Recommendations \_\_\_\_\_

Reviewed MSDS # \_\_\_\_\_ Subject \_\_\_\_\_

Meeting Attended By \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

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## OFF-THE-JOB SAFETY

Whenever you meet someone you know but haven't seen for a while, you usually ask each other two questions: "How are you?" and "How's the family?" Wouldn't it be great if both of you could always answer with a carefree, "Fine" and "Great"? Off-the-job deaths and injuries result from fires, drownings, auto accidents, slips, and falls. They occur in bathrooms, kitchens, and garages; on sidewalks, golf courses, and highways; at campgrounds, in bowling alleys, and in swimming pools — wherever there are people. Well, there are no immunization shots against accidents. It may look as though accidents just happen, but there is always a cause, and there's a lot you can do to prevent them.

First, apply the safety rules you follow at work to your home and family. The regulations you follow on the job in regard to fire and accident prevention are just good common sense and they'll work at home too. Keep hallways and stairs free of tripping hazards. Don't overload electrical circuits. Don't use unsafe tools or ladders. Get prompt treatment for injuries, even minor cuts and scratches. Store flammable materials safely. Respect moving machinery like saws, lawnmowers, and snow blowers. Wear appropriate personal protective equipment at home as you would at work. Think through a project before starting.

Second, teach children how to **live** safely by setting a good example. Wear your seat belt whenever you drive and insist that passengers, especially children, buckle up too. Learn to swim or tread water and make sure your children learn also. When cycling, make sure everyone on a bike wears a helmet. Safety at home is like safety on the job — it's a habit, a frame of mind, a way of looking at things. As they do with other habits and attitudes, your children learn safety habits and attitudes from you. Having parents who practice safety is the best guarantee that kids will **live** safely.

Third, start your own off-the-job safety program. Get the family interested in safety. Make it a contest for the kids. Give awards for the best ideas and plans for making your home safer. If you can't think of a place to start, consider your fire escape plan — does everyone know **two** ways to get out? Make it a rule to practice your plan regularly.

Off-the-job safety affects all of us. One accident can ruin a weekend trip or spoil that long over-due vacation. Remind everyone not to take unnecessary chances. For the sake of your family, practice safety at home.

### SAFETY REMINDER

**Wear a lifejacket anytime you are in a boat.  
Be sure every child on board wears one too.**

Special Topics For Your Project \_\_\_\_\_

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Week of 8/17/15

Company Name \_\_\_\_\_ Job Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## FIRST DAY ON THE JOB

The first week on the job is a difficult time for a new employee. It's a period of adjustment and learning. The first and second days are perhaps hardest of all. Every effort should be made by the supervisor and crew to give the new employee a good first impression and to **set the standard for safety**. We want to have a safe job, and the only way for that to happen is for everyone — including new hires — to practice safety all the time.

The new employee is eager to learn and it is up to each of us to make sure we set the **safe** example. The safe way of doing each job and each operation must be shown. Safety should be worked into each step of the operation as an integral part of the work procedure. Good safety know-how comes with experience. Share your experience and knowledge. Help new employees develop an attitude toward safety that will protect them for the rest of their lives. If we do the job safely long enough, the safe way becomes a habit, and we want all new employees to develop those safe habits.

Some of you will be working along side the new employee. Even though it may be very tempting to send an unsuspecting rookie for a left-handed screwdriver, this is not a time for horseplay and practical jokes. Keep an eye on him or her, offer advice to avoid mistakes, lend a helping hand here and there, help him or her recognize hazards and prevent accidents. Keep in mind that you may get hurt if the new person has an accident. Above all, stick to safe and effective work practices.

Remember that "new employee" doesn't just mean a twenty-year-old apprentice. Even a seasoned professional qualifies a new employee when starting a new job, or working on a jobsite for the first time. Each job has a unique set of hazards, some of which may not be obvious to a newcomer. It's everyone's job to help new employees learn about those hazards and how to work safely. Take the opportunity of having a new employee around to review your own habits and practices.

What you do and how you do it will send silent signals to new employees. Because they will see you working, you will be training them whether you want to or not. Be sure that you make a good impression and **set the standard for safety**.

### SAFETY REMINDER

**Think safety — act safely.  
Share your expertise with new employees.**

Special Topics For Your Project \_\_\_\_\_

Employee Safety Recommendations \_\_\_\_\_

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Company Name \_\_\_\_\_ Job Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## FLAMMABLE LIQUIDS

Flammable liquids are used on most construction sites. Functionally, a flammable material is one that will catch fire easily and burn fast. Inflammable, although it may sound like it means the opposite, means essentially the same thing. These materials present very serious fire and injury hazards. When you see either word on a can, tank, or drum, you must keep fire, sparks, and other sources of ignition away from that container.

A fact that may surprise many people is that flammable liquids themselves do not burn; their vapors burn. In particular, this means that even an apparently empty container could catch fire or explode if it still contains flammable vapors. Note too that since it's the vapors that ignite, the spark or flame doesn't need to touch the liquid to start a fire. For example, a construction worker needed to do a small welding job on a nearly empty 55-gallon drum. He rolled it outside, disposed of the remaining contents, and left it there to air out. The next morning when he began welding, the vapors remaining in the drum ignited and the drum exploded. The worker was seriously injured and had to be hospitalized.

All liquids evaporate. Whenever you have a container of any kind of liquid, you can be sure that there are some vapors in the air just above the surface of the liquid. If it's a flammable liquid, then these vapors will burn violently if ignited. The vapor-air mixture is what would catch fire if you lit a match near an open can of gasoline. The leanest vapor-air mixture that will burn is called the lower explosive limit of a substance. The richest mixture is called the upper explosive limit. The spread between the two is called the explosive range. If ignited in the open, vapor-air mixtures in the explosive range will likely produce a big puff and a sheet of flame. While there is no explosion, the heat and flame can cause burns and damage equipment. Inside a building or tank however, the pressure builds in a fraction of a second, resulting in an explosion.

Remember, your safety depends on using flammable materials with caution. Read the appropriate material safety data sheets. Never smoke around any flammable materials. Store them only in approved, labeled containers. Keep container lids closed. Clean up spills promptly. Know the locations of fire extinguishers, how to use them, and how to report a fire. Using flammable materials is an everyday occurrence — avoid fires, explosions, and injuries by handling them safely.

### SAFETY REMINDER

**Your best defense against accidents is  
your knowledge and use of safe practices.**

Special Topics For Your Project \_\_\_\_\_

Employee Safety Recommendations \_\_\_\_\_

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Meeting Attended By \_\_\_\_\_

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Supervisor's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

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## FLOOR OPENINGS & GUARDRAILS

Unguarded floor and wall openings present serious hazards. How many times have you walked past a wall opening and thought nothing of it? Even worse, how many times have you **worked** next to an unguarded floor opening? Floor and wall openings are killers that are waiting for you on the jobsite. A large number of construction injuries result from falls to another level, and most of these injuries can be prevented.

Not long ago a laborer working on the second level of a building picked up a piece of plywood laying on the floor. The plywood was not marked "HOLE" or "COVER", nor was it nailed down. It was however, covering a hole which had been left for the HVAC system. He stepped forward as he picked it up and fell fifteen feet to the floor below.

This kind of accident can be prevented by using covers or guardrails to protect floor openings. Covers must be strong enough to support any traffic or other loads placed on them. Covers must be secured to prevent anyone from picking them up by mistake, and to keep them from moving due to vibration or traffic. They should be clearly marked so that everyone, including new employees, will instantly recognize what they are. [See 29 CFR 1926.502(i) for details on covers.]

Guardrails can also be used to protect floor and wall openings, as well as openings and platforms for ladderways and stairways. A standard guardrail consists of a top rail 42" high and a mid rail at 21". Toeboards may also be necessary to provide falling object protection. All guardrail systems must be capable of withstanding a 200-pound load applied along the top edge in any outward or downward direction. [See 29 CFR 1926.502(b) for more information about guardrails.]

Openings or platforms for ladderways and stairways require special consideration because there must be an opening in the guardrail to access the ladder or stairs. A standard railing with toeboards must be used on all sides, except the opening. The opening must be protected in one of two ways: 1) by offsetting the entrance so that a worker cannot walk straight through the entrance and down the ladder or stairs, or 2) with a swinging gate. If a gate is used, install it so that it swings away from the opening or platform.

Does your job have any death traps? Don't wait...cover or protect them now! It will take less time to protect that hole than it will to fill out the admissions paperwork at the hospital.

**Stay alert, look where you're going,  
notice what's around you,  
and eliminate unsafe conditions!**

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