

SAFETY matters

NEWS AND INFORMATION FROM THE UTAH SAFETY COUNCIL



Your Safety Matters is published quarterly by the Utah Safety Council. If you would like to submit items for use in the newsletter, send them to:

Utah Safety Council
1574 West 1700 South,
Suite 2A
Salt Lake City, UT 84104

Phone: (801) 478-7878
Toll Free: (800) 933-5943
Fax: (801) 478-0884
Web Site:
www.utahsafetycouncil.org
President: Robert F. Parenti
Editor: Sarah Barrett

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Give New Co-Workers Your Support!

Once the initial orientation to the company is over and the basic requirements of the job and the safety program have been covered, it's time to move the new employee into the workforce and introduce the people he or she will be working with. Co-workers play an important role in getting the new person off to a good start.



What is a veteran employee's role when it comes to orienting a new employee? Remember that new people are nervous when starting a new job. They probably don't remember all the instructions they are given and aren't familiar with the new surroundings. This is often a time for information overload. So how can an experienced hand help out? The Utah Safety Council recommends the following:

- Introduce yourself to this person, explain your job and offer assistance.
- Encourage the new hire to ask questions if he or she is not quite sure. Remember how hard it was to admit you didn't know everything when you started a new job?
- Remember too, that the new person may be highly skilled and experienced in his or her trade, but not necessarily used to your company's ways of doing things.
- Point out locations of first aid kits, fire extinguishers, restrooms and break rooms.
- Be sure your new co-worker is wearing the right PPE, and is using it properly.
- Volunteer to serve as a mentor to the new employee, to assure that safe work procedures are understood and followed.
- If you spot this person doing something wrong, tactfully explain the proper procedures. It's easier to do this if a "coaching" role has been assigned or agreed-upon.
- During lunch and breaks include him/her in the group so everyone can get better acquainted.
- Resist any temptation to complain about aspects of your job that you don't like-get the new person started out on a positive note by passing on what's good about the company.
- **Perhaps most importantly, lead by example with correct work habits.**

Continued on page 2



Injury Facts 2010 Edition

The *Injury Facts* publication is a valuable reference tool that provides safety and health managers and supervisors with fast access to injury information as well as facts for benchmarking costs and creating safety programs.

Use the data in *Injury Facts* for:

- Evaluating/benchmarking injury rates
- Safety Committee meetings
- Training & orientation
- Presentations
- Speeches & articles
- Research
- Management reports
- Employee newsletters
- Material for in-field "tool box talks"

Member: \$66.50
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To order this publication contact Sarah Barrett, Membership Services Coordinator at (801) 478-7878 ext. 302 or e-mail her at sbarrett@utahsafetycouncil.org.



(Continued) Give New Co-Workers Your Support!

Getting a new employee started off on the right foot is very important. Statistics indicate that up to 60% of all job injuries occur to new employees with less than six months experience on the job. Repeated, friendly reminders of safety procedures and work rules by a mentor can greatly reduce the chance of an accident with the new employee. Many times new employees will not think of questions until after they have worked a few days and begin to understand the job requirements more thoroughly. As a co-worker, if you make yourself available to answer questions, it shows your willingness to provide a safe workplace for everyone involved.

Pallet Safety

Webster defines a pallet as a "support for freight." As a support, it has the potential to take a lot of abuse. A lot of old pallets are never discarded when they should be. They are stacked in a corner and not used except as a last resort when there are no good ones left. Too many times we hear that a pallet has broken and the freight has fallen to the floor. This not only causes freight damage but can also result in equipment damage--or worse yet, in employee injury or death. Please take a moment to review the following safety tips for working around palletized loads:



- Develop a pallet inspection program. Before you use a pallet, inspect it for cracks, weaknesses and other damage. If you find damage, mark it unsafe for use until it is either fixed or thrown away. This can prevent a lot of potential problems.
- When loading a pallet, make sure the load is centered and not out of balance.
- If the pallet is holding several loose items, make sure the entire load is secured with shrink wrap or banding.
- Exercise caution when stacking several pallets high. Make sure the stack is not leaning, because of weak or broken segments, which may cause the whole pile to fall over.
- Always know the load limit of the pallet jack or forklift you are using. Neither the pallets nor mechanical lifting devices should ever be over loaded.
- Load limits should also be established and marked on warehouse floors -- balconies, mezzanines, etc. Always comply with these.
- Make sure your forklift has an overhead cage or screen to protect the driver from falling objects when merchandise is being stacked overhead.

Remember--thinking ahead can save a lot of trouble. It is a waste of production time and effort to reload a pallet that has fallen. But, more importantly, an effective pallet/warehouse safety plan can prevent injuries and save lives!



Fact

There are over 5 million people who sustain motor vehicle-related injuries that require an emergency department visit in the U.S. each year.

Source: www.cdc.gov

Traffic Safety Management Seminar

June 23, 2010
10 AM - 3PM

Participant Cost: FREE

This one-day course, sponsored by the Utah Network of Employers for Traffic Safety (NETS), will introduce a program that employers can use to improve traffic safety performance and minimize their risks of motor vehicle crashes. Don't miss this great learning opportunity! Lunch will be provided.

Register online at www.utah-safetycouncil.org or by calling us directly at (801) 478-7878, (800) 933-5943.



Ten Steps to Minimize Crash Risks

Every 5 seconds a motor vehicle crash occurs in the United States. Every 10 seconds an injury occurs, and every 12 minutes someone dies in a motor vehicle crash, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). These alarming statistics, combined with the fact that crashes on and off-the-job have far-reaching



financial and psychological effects on employees, their families and coworkers, as well as employers, has prompted organizations such as OSHA, NHTSA and the Network of Employers for Traffic Safety (NETS) to take steps to address this issue.

According to NHTSA, the average crash costs an employer \$16,500. When a worker has an on-the-job crash that results in an injury, the cost to their employer is \$74,000. Costs can exceed \$500,000 when a fatality is involved. Off-the-job crashes are costly to employers as well.

Although vehicle crashes can be the result of weather, speed, fatigue, driver distraction, or a variety of other reasons, they are largely preventable. To assist employers in protecting their human and financial resources, the agencies outlined ten steps to minimize crash risks that employers can use to build a driver safety program in their workplaces.

Ten-Step Program

1. **Senior management commitment & employee involvement** – Provide leadership, set policies and allocate resources.
2. **Written policies and procedures** – Create and communicate clear, comprehensive, and enforceable traffic safety policies.
3. **Driver agreements** – Establish a contract with all employees who drive for work purposes.
4. **Motor vehicle record (MVR) checks** – Screen out drivers who have poor driving records.
5. **Crash reporting and investigation** – Establish and enforce a crash reporting and investigation process.
6. **Vehicle selection, maintenance and inspection** – Review and consider the safety features of all vehicles to be considered for use.
7. **Disciplinary action system** – Create a system that provides for progressive discipline if a driver begins to develop a pattern of repeated traffic violations and/or preventable crashes.
8. **Reward/incentive program** – Programs typically involve recognition, monetary rewards, special privileges or the use of incentives to motivate.
9. **Driver training/communication** – Provide continuous driver safety training and communication.
10. **Regulatory compliance** – Clearly establish which, if any, local, state, and/or federal regulations govern your vehicles and/or drivers.

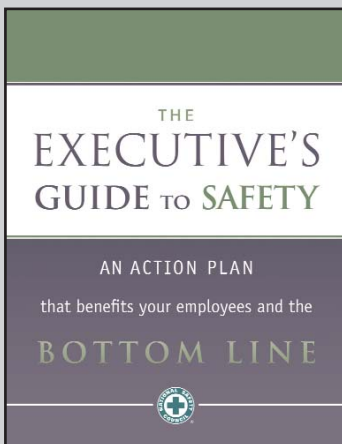


The Executive's Guide to Safety

The Executive's Guide to Safety: An Action Plan that Benefits Your Employees and Your Bottom Line addresses all the components of a Safety Management System and explains why an effective Safety Management System is critical to the success of any organization. The Executive's Guide will help HR professionals and all levels of management customize, implement, maintain, and improve your organization's overall safety culture.

Member: \$39.00
Non-Member: \$50.70

To order this publication contact Sarah Barrett, Membership Services Coordinator at (801) 478-7878 ext. 302 or e-mail her at sbarrett@utahsafetycouncil.org.



Personal Ergonomics

What is Ergonomics? Ergonomics is the science of matching tools and tasks to the work environment. In other words, ergonomics tries to make your job fit you, rather than making you fit your job. The purpose of ergonomics is to reduce or eliminate injuries and illnesses that can result from stress on muscles, nerves, and joints. These types of injuries have been common to workplaces for a long time, but safety standards concerning them are new. If OSHA finds that poor ergonomics is a threat to employee well being, it can cite a company for violating its duty to provide a safe and healthy workplace.

A variety of ergonomically-related injuries take place and a variety of terms exist to describe them. The most common terms used are musculoskeletal disorders or cumulative trauma disorders (CTDs). They are also known as repetitive motion or stress disorders. Whatever they're called, they account for approximately one-half of all reported workplace illnesses each year. These are technically called "illnesses" because the problems generally build up over time, rather than being the result of a single event, as in the case of an accident.

Physical problems from cumulative trauma: These usually involve pain and damage to muscles, tendons, and nerves in the back, neck, shoulders, wrists, hands, and elbows. Discomfort can be mild and periodic, or long lasting. Typical ailments include: Tendonitis, "Tennis Elbow," Trigger Finger, lower back pain, Carpal Tunnel Syndrome which causes hands and wrists to tingle or become numb, and Reynauds Syndrome which causes fingers to become white.

Disorders can be caused by making the same motion over and over, staying in one position too long, or working in awkward positions. They also result from working with tools that don't fit the body, using a great deal of physical force, and exposure to long periods of heavy vibration.

How To Avoid Discomfort

Ergonomically related disorders occur to all types of workers, from laborers to office personnel. You can often help yourself by learning and practicing basic ergonomic principals. There are many ways to reduce or eliminate the disorder; here are a few:

- Use two hands instead of one for a task to reduce excess demand on a single muscle group.
- Use tools that are right for the job and proportioned for your body.
- Use power tools instead of manual tools when possible.
- Take frequent breaks from repetitive motion tasks.
- Avoid repeating awkward movements or holding yourself in awkward positions.
- Wear protective gloves that reduce pressure or tool vibration on your fingers.
- For computer use keep the screen 12 to 18 inches from your face and just below eye level.
- Position the keyboard so that your wrists are straight and your elbows are close to your body.

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Demonstrate Safety Progress

Employees may not always be aware of the many changes and safety fixes your Safety Committee or safety professional puts into place. Here's an idea that will help to demonstrate to your employees that safety issues are being addressed while at the same time reminding those employees to keep thinking "safety."

Develop distinctive Safety Fix tags that your Safety Committee or your safety professional can attach to those items or areas in the workplace that need attention or which are out of compliance. The tags are attached to those items or conditions discovered during walk-throughs or workplace audits that cannot be corrected immediately. (Obviously, issues of immediate hazard have to be addressed at once.) Needed Safety Fixes can be added to a master "fix" list.

The tag should include a date, the issue or problem, the person or area responsible for correcting it, and the date corrective action is expected to be completed.

The action list allows the Safety Committee or safety professional to monitor progress. Once corrective actions have been taken, the tag can be sent to the safety professional or the Safety Committee and the problem can be removed from the action list.

This shows your workers that safety issues are important, that problems are being found and addressed, and promotes the overall safety culture.

- Change positions, stretch often to improve blood circulation, and take breaks regularly.

Report Early Symptoms

Repetitive motion injuries are a growing concern in the workplace. Anyone who experiences numbness, tingling or pain in their hands, arms or neck should seek the advice of a supervisor. Changes in work stations and equipment can often alleviate these problems before they become chronic, and medical attention should be sought if the problem persists. Following this simple advice can help eliminate physical stress and keep employees feeling good all day.

Source: Safety+Health | February 2010

Get the Answers You Need During Accident Investigation

Learn from the past by investigating any accidents or near misses that occur. Effective and thorough accident investigations show employees that you are concerned for their safety and well being.

A thorough investigation will help you identify the causes of a near miss or an accident and suggest ways to change processes to prevent future injuries. Keep an open mind during the investigation, and consider all the variables. You may think you know the reason an accident occurred before you start, but there may be additional factors of which you are not aware.



- Talk to those involved and any witnesses as soon as possible after the incident. Conduct the interviews privately so that the comments of one person do no influence the responses of others. Here are some additional interviewing tips:
- Put the employee at ease through words and body language. Remind the employee that the goal of the investigation is to prevent future injuries, not place blame.
- Conduct the investigation at the scene of the injury as soon after the injury as safely possible.
- Ask the employee to tell you in his/her own words exactly what happened. Do not interrupt or ask for more details at this time.
- Repeat the employee's version of the event back and allow him/her to make any corrections or additions.
- After the employee has given his/her description of the event, ask appropriate questions that focus on causes. Avoid using words that suggest fault or blame.
- When you are finished, remind the employee the investigation was to determine the cause and possible corrective action that can eliminate the causes of the accident.

Once you have completed your investigation, you can determine the causes or possible causes of the incident, and plan what can be done to prevent any future occurrences.

Source: J.J. Keller



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Thank you to all of our members for their continued support of the Utah Safety Council.

Thank You!

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Chapter of the National Safety Council

