

# SAFETY matters

NEWS AND INFORMATION FROM THE UTAH SAFETY COUNCIL

## Supervising a Multicultural Workforce

The American workforce is growing increasingly diverse. Projections based on the 2000 U.S. Census predict that by 2020, more than one-third of the workforce will be made up of minority populations. It is vitally important to understand the culture of the employees you will be managing and supervising. Being mindful of language barriers and cultural norms will help protect your workers' safety and the safety of those around them.



The National Safety Council offers the following advice to help you effectively supervise a diverse workforce.

- Be aware of any biases or preconceived notions you may have about others' culture. Fairness toward all individuals is imperative.

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- Particularly where safety instructions are concerned, be certain you are issuing orders in a language each employee can understand. When working with a translator, encourage feedback and interaction to be sure the employee has a full understanding of your message.
- Provide for open communication between you and your employees throughout a project.
- Be very specific in your words. Try to avoid using jargon or slang terms, as these may not translate well into other languages or may be misinterpreted.
- Pay attention to nonverbal clues. Sometimes a worker will be reluctant to speak up. If you notice someone hesitating or looking confused, double-check to verify the worker understood your instructions.
- Do not treat minority workers differently, either positively or negatively. Overcompensating by being extremely friendly or permissive may be viewed as insincere.

### **Managing Cultural Conflicts**

Cross-cultural conflicts between workers cannot be ignored. When personal conflicts between employees heat up to the point where racial or ethnic slurs are being used, it is your job to step in and resolve the issue as quickly as possible. To correct a situation, it is important that as a supervisor you adhere to these simple rules:

- Do not take a side in the disagreement. Stress the similarities between the workers, rather than the differences.
- Maintain an unemotional stance. Remaining levelheaded can help diffuse a situation quickly.
- Act as a mediator, giving employees an outlet to help them resolve their conflict on their own.

*Source: National Safety Council*

## Beware of Black Ice

Driving during the winter presents a number of hazards, not the least of which is the risk of encountering black ice. Black ice is formed when the air is warmer than the pavement, causing moisture to quickly form into a transparent layer of ice. Auto emissions can cause black ice to form on heavily congested roads as well as on shaded areas, near lakes and rivers, in tunnels and on overpasses and bridges.

Black ice can look similar to a dry road, and many motorists may not even realize ice is present until their vehicle begins to slide. Drivers can help neutralize the risk of black ice by taking the following precautions:

- Make sure your vehicle's tires are in good condition and provide good traction.
- Keep a safe distance between you and the vehicle in front of you. Stopping on ice takes twice as long as stopping on a dry road, so maintain a minimum three-car distance from the vehicle ahead of you.
- Shift into a lower gear if you suspect an area is icy. If you see cars ahead of you skidding, shifting into a lower gear will slow down your vehicle and increase your control.
- If you feel your vehicle begin to skid, take your foot off the accelerator. When your vehicle begins to skid out of control; your first inclination may be to slam on the brakes, but this will only make the skid worse. Turn in the direction the car is skidding, rather than against it. This will help you regain control of the vehicle and get it back on the right track.



For current Utah weather and traffic conditions visit [www.commuterlink.utah.gov](http://www.commuterlink.utah.gov) or call 511.

Source: *Safety+Health*, December 2008

### NEW ONLINE SAFETY TRAINING

The Utah Safety Council has implemented an online safety training program that features OSHA recognized and approved outreach training for the construction and general industries. Self-paced online safety courses can be accessed by you or any of your employees 24x7. Satisfy and standardize all of your compliance training needs without sacrificing valuable time and money. All courses come with a printable certificate upon successful completion.

**Members of the Utah Safety Council receive a 20% discount on all online courses.** Just enter in the promo code upon checkout. If you do not have the current promo codes please contact Anthony Sudweeks, our Training Coordinator at (801) 478-7878 ext. 304, or (800) 933-5943 ext. 304 or via e-mail at [asudweeks@utahsafetycouncil.org](mailto:asudweeks@utahsafetycouncil.org).

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#### 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](http://www.utahsafetycouncil.org)

**President:** Robert F. Parenti

**Editor:** Sarah Barrett

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## Safe Scaffolding Use



Fall protection is an important part of any safety plan, and scaffolding is part of fall protection. Employers should always install, inspect, maintain and repair scaffolding in a

accordance with standards, regulations and manufacturers' instructions. The Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety, Hamilton, Ontario, suggests doing the following when using scaffolds:

- Use an access ladder, not the scaffold frames, unless the frame is specifically designed to be climbed. Build a staircase if the scaffold will be used for a length of time.
- Build a rest platform beside the ladder for every 30 feet in height.
- Ensure that scaffolding is securely attached to the building structure.
- Adequate ventilation for the work activity inside must be applied if the scaffold is completely hoarded.
- Protect all planked or working levels with proper guardrails, mid rails and toe boards

along all open sides and at the ends of scaffold platforms.

- Remove snow, and ice from scaffold platforms, ladders and access areas.
- Replace any guardrails that were removed while hoisting materials

### **In addition, do not:**

- Jump on planks or platforms
- Force braces to fit. Level the scaffold until a proper fit can be made easily
- Climb or stand on cross braces or guardrails
- Work on scaffolds during storms or high winds
- Use ladders or makeshift devices on top of scaffolds to increase height
- Overload scaffold frames or platforms
- Rest materials or equipment on guardrails
- Work below a scaffold without any head protection
- Use scaffolds near electrical wires

For additional help with scaffolding training utilize the Utah Safety Council's Media Library. There are over 30 titles that address Scaffolding Safety, Ladders and Fall Protection. View the entire list online at [www.utahsafetycouncil.org](http://www.utahsafetycouncil.org). **Safety Media Library rentals are free for members of the Utah Safety Council.**

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## Online Scaffolding Training

The Utah Safety Council has implemented an online safety training program that features OSHA recognized and approved outreach training for the construction and general industries. In about an hour this scaffolding course provides a general overview of the safety measures that are required when working on a scaffold. The course begins with an introduction into the various types of scaffolds, and goes on to outline the OSHA safety requirements and safety measures that can be taken to ensure that employees working on scaffolds are at little risk of injury or death. Upon successful completion this course comes with a printable certificate. The cost of this course is only \$25 per person.

### **LEARNING OBJECTIVES:**

- Identify the various classifications of scaffolds.
- Understand the basic OSHA safety requirements.
- Learn the measures that can be taken to ensure safe working conditions on a scaffold.

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## Effective Discipline

Disciplining an employee can be one of the more difficult tasks a supervisor undertakes. However, when done correctly, discipline is a helpful and necessary tool to keep your operations running smoothly, effectively and safely.

It is important to remember that discipline should not be done out of revenge or doled out as arbitrary punishment - the goal is to improve the employee's future behavior.

The National Safety Council cautions that disciplinary action should always be handled privately and with sensitivity. A public reprimand can have a negative effect on all workers and decrease overall morale.

### Just Cause

It is vital to ensure that any disciplinary action meets 'just cause' requirements. This means any action management takes against an employee needs to apply equally to all individuals at the organization. Many unions and government agencies have 'just cause' clauses written into employees' contracts.

The National Safety Council suggests asking the following questions to determine whether disciplinary action is justified:

- 1) Was the employee forewarned about possible disciplinary action that would result as a consequence of his or her conduct?
- 2) Was the rule under which the employee is being reprimanded fair, reasonable and related to the safety operations?
- 3) Before administering discipline, did management make an effort to verify whether the employee did in fact violate the rule or order?
- 4) Was the investigation conducted fairly and objectively?
- 5) Did the investigation uncover substantial proof or evidence of the employee's guilt?
- 6) Are the organization's rules applied to all employees without discrimination?
- 7) Was the degree of discipline administered related to both the seriousness of the offense and the employee's past record of service?



### Progressive Discipline

Most organizations employ some form of progressive discipline, where the consequences of an employee's action become increasingly more severe with each offense. A common sequence is to give the employee an oral warning on a first offense, followed by a written warning, a suspension and, finally, termination after repeated offenses.

The standards for determining just cause must be applied at each level of a progressive discipline action. The employee should understand exactly what is happening and why, and what additional steps will be taken if the behavior does not improve.

*Source: National Safety Council*

## STRUGGLING TO FIND SAFETY TRAINING DOLLARS?

Apply now for the Utah Safety Council's Workplace Safety Scholarship Program. Go online to [www.utahsafetycouncil.org](http://www.utahsafetycouncil.org) to view a complete list of the many classes that qualify for scholarships. Also download the application right there online as well. If you have any questions contact our Training Coordinator at (801) 478-7878 ext. 304.



## Cold Weather Safety Tips

Many areas of the nation have already experienced the harsh, sometimes damaging effects of winter. OSHA is encouraging employers and employees to take necessary precautions to prevent and treat cold-related health problems. Employees who work outside, such as in construction, commercial fishing and agriculture, are especially vulnerable.

OSHA offers the following tips on how to protect employees:

- Recognize the environmental and workplace conditions that may be dangerous.
- Learn the signs and symptoms of cold-induced illnesses and injuries and what to do to help employees.
- Train employees about cold-induced illnesses and injuries.
- Encourage employees to wear proper clothing for cold, wet, and windy conditions, including layers that can be adjusted to changing conditions.
- Be sure that employees in extremely cold conditions take frequent, short breaks in warm dry shelters to allow their bodies to warm up.
- Try to schedule work for the warmest part of the day.
- Avoid exhaustion or fatigue because energy is needed to keep muscles warm.
- Use the buddy system: work in pairs so that one employee can recognize danger signs.
- Drink warm, sweet beverages (sugar water, sports-type drinks) and avoid drinks with caffeine (coffee, tea, sodas, or hot chocolate) or alcohol.
- Eat warm, high-calorie foods such as hot pasta dishes.

Remember that employees increase their risks when they take certain medications, are in poor physical condition, or suffer from illnesses such as diabetes, hypertension, or cardiovascular disease.

*Source: OSHA.gov*

## Work Gloves: Select the Right One

Work gloves alone can't prevent hand injuries, but selecting the right work gloves for the job offers substantial protection. Whenever protective gloves are required for your job, make sure that the gloves fit well, are comfortable to wear and are rated to guard against the particular hand hazards you face. Replace gloves if they become damaged. Here are five of the most common hazards and the types of work gloves that protect against them:

**Mild Irritants:** Use disposable gloves, usually made of lightweight plastic, to help guard against mild irritants such as cleaners or detergents.

**Chemical Agents:** No single glove material can provide complete resistance to chemical agents. When you work with chemicals, consult the manufacturer/distributor of the chemical agent and/or protective gloves. They can let you know if the glove material you're planning to use is appropriate for particular chemicals.

### Handling Slippery

**Objects:** Use gloves made of cotton or fabric blends, to improve your grip.

They can also help insulate hands from mild heat or cold.

**Electricity:** Wear leather gloves in combination with an insulated liner.

**Cutting Tools:** Wear metal mesh gloves to protect your hands from accidental cuts and scratches.



*Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*

# Thank You!

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## EMERGENCY! Fast, Calm Action Required

If a co-worker suddenly becomes ill or injured, do you know what to do? First stay calm. Then, remember these basic immediate first aid steps.

**EVALUATE** the situation. Call for help. If the victim isn't in immediate danger, don't move him or her, especially if there's a possibility of a neck or spine injury. Have someone else go for help while you administer care.

**KEEP** the person lying down and covered to hold in body heat and prevent shock.

### CONDITIONS & WHAT TO DO:

- **Shock:** Call 911. A person in shock needs immediate medical treatment. Have the person lie down on his or her back with feet elevated above the heart. If the person vomits or bleeds from the mouth, place the person on his or her side to prevent choking. Keep the person warm by covering with a coat or blanket. Loosen any tight clothes that might restrict blood flow.
- **Heavy Bleeding:** Control by applying direct pressure to the source. Elevate the wound above the victim's heart.

- **Chemical Burn:**  
Flush eyes or skin with cold water for at least 15 minutes. Then get the victim to the emergency room.

- **Nonchemical Burns:** Soak a small burn in cold water (a first-degree burn or a second-degree burn covering 15 percent or less of an adult's body or 10 percent of a child's body). Don't treat large burns with water. Instead, make the person as comfortable as possible and get help.



*Source: National Safety Council*

**Remember:** A first-aid course provides the best training. The Utah Safety Council offers monthly classes. Visit [www.utahsafetycouncil.org](http://www.utahsafetycouncil.org) or call (801) 478-7878 for more course information or to register. And in the meantime, know your limitations. If you're not sure, call 911 immediately.

# CEOs Who Get It! Davis Mullholand

## President and CEO, CCI Mechanical, Inc.

Mr. Davis Mullholand, President and CEO of CCI Mechanical, Inc., has recently been featured in the February Issue of the National Safety Council's Safety+Health magazine as one of several "CEOs Who Get It" throughout the United States.

### **Why is safety a core value at your company?**

We have gone away from "Safety is No. 1" or "Safety is our priority" because our culture goes beyond that. We produce a quality product or service, safely. We do not do one without the other. We do not compromise safety or quality. We have implemented a policy committee to ensure that we are consistent in our application of policies, and that we do the right thing for the right reasons at the right time, every time.

### **How do you instill a sense of safety in your employees on an ongoing basis?**

Safety is part of every meeting we have. We produce weekly safety bulletins that are distributed with the employee's paychecks and reviewed on the job as well. We have an incentive program that rewards going beyond the expected. Safety is an individual decision and a group effort. Employees, foremen, project managers, officers and company executives are involved in site evaluations and inspections. We are always looking for safer, more productive ways to do our work and encourage employees to find the next best thing. We also not only encourage, but require and empower employees to have enough guts to correct someone when they are being unsafe, and enough humility to accept correction with thanks. We are all on the same team and working toward the same goal.

### **What is the biggest obstacle to safety in your workplace, and how do you work to overcome it?**

The biggest challenge has been helping employees understand that their decisions affect not only them, but their families, friends, co-workers, their co-worker's families, and the viability of the company as a whole. That decision to take a shortcut may affect the company's ability to even bid on work. We do a lot of training to ensure that everyone knows how to work safely and has the

right equipment, but also knows the "why" behind it. The employees should feel the support behind why from every level of management. With an open-door policy, if that support is not felt, they can come directly to me.

### **How does safety "pay" at your company?**

Our incentive program "pays," but we believe that the real payoff comes from a sense of accomplishment, safety and family. We want each employee to be part of the team. We are a union shop and value experience. Many of our employees have been with the company for more than 25 years. To be part of a long-term team these days is unusual and, during these hard economic times, is a real value.

### **How do you measure safety? What are the leading indicators that show you how safe you are, and where do you see room for improvement?**

We measure safety with pre-task planning, daily logs, inspections, weekly safety meetings, housekeeping, personal protective equipment use and a variety of other indicators. Our incident rates and other lagging indicators are evaluated and distributed weekly. We believe that when people know how and why and are empowered to act, we progress. We view safety as a journey, not a destination. We are continually looking for better ways. When employees know and, more importantly, feel that they are cared for, safety becomes part of our nature. We are willing to do it the right way the first time.

Congratulations to Mr. Mullholand and CCI Mechanical for their continual dedication towards a safe working environment.

## **SUCCESS THROUGH SAFETY!**

We want to brag about our members! Let us hear about your safety and health success stories so that they can be highlighted in Safety Matters. Please fax or e-mail your story to:

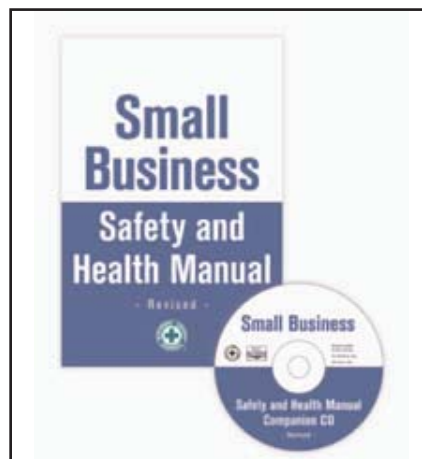
(801) 478-0884 Fax  
safety@utahsafetycouncil.org

## Small Business Safety & Health Manual

Written with the small business manager in mind, this guide offers easy step-by-step methods for setting up a safety and health program. You'll appreciate the companion CD with printable checklists and inspection report forms. Softcover, 6" x 9", 86 pages, 2006. CD-ROM requires Adobe Acrobat Reader, Windows only. (Product #13020-0000)

**Member Price: \$26.51**  
**Non-Member Price: \$34.46**

To order contact Mona at (801) 478-7878 ext. 302,  
(800) 933-5943 ext. 302 or via e-mail at  
mkimbrough@utahsafetycouncil.org



## S-T-R-E-T-C-H and Feel Better

Our bodies were meant to move, but many of us do not move enough to maintain adequate ranges of motion around our joints. As we lose flexibility we may be more prone to injury from muscle pulls, or if the muscle/fascia imbalance is one-sided, a joint may be pulled out of alignment creating discomfort or pain. Stretching is an easy and relaxing way to maintain your range of motion, and to increase it if needed.

For best results, stretch gently enough to feel a pull, but no pain, and as you hold the stretch over 30 seconds to a minute or two, wait to feel the area loosen. If you feel a tightening sensation as you are holding the stretch, you are probably stretching too hard, and the muscle is contracting in order to prevent injury, which ultimately defeats the purpose. Be certain that you feel the stretch between the joints and not at the joints, as it is important not to stretch the ligaments that hold your bones together, nor the tendons that connect the muscles to the bones. For example, as you stretch your hamstrings on the back of your upper leg, you do not want to feel the stretch behind the knee. Try bending your knee slightly, or adjusting the angle of your leg to move the stretch into the muscle.

You may notice as you stretch, that one side feels tighter than the other. Your stretching goal is to achieve balance, so stretch the tight side twice as long. A few weeks to months later, when both sides seem even, stretch them equally, and congratulate yourself on correcting a muscle imbalance!



Stretching needs to be done a minimum of five days a week to be effective. Once or twice a week will not achieve results. So schedule 15 to 20 minutes daily, and enjoy the luxury of a relaxing stretch. It will feel wonderful, and is a soothing way to let go of some of the day to day stress that infiltrates our being.

your

# SAFETY matters

PUBLISHED BY THE UTAH SAFETY COUNCIL

*The MISSION of The Utah Safety Council is to promote safety and health by providing education, services and products.*