

August 2013
Morning Safety Focus



Make **SAFETY** A Way of Life!" one day at a time!

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Four Ways to Prevent a Dog Bite

August 1

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that over 4.7 million people are bitten by dogs each year. Tragically, children and the elderly are the most frequent victims. What's more, statistics prove that the majority of biting canines are not stray Pit Bulls, but our own household dogs!

Why dogs bite

Most dog bites are reported as "unprovoked." However, something causes a dog to bite, and victims are often taken by surprise.

Many people see dogs as gentle, devoted creatures that live to serve and rescue. But beneath that soft fur is a predatory hunter. Domesticated or not, dogs live by their instincts. These instincts tell them to chase prey, guard their territory, protect their young and defend themselves when cornered.

Learn how to protect yourself

Some people think that if you encounter an aggressive, frightened or otherwise dangerous dog, you're bound to receive a nasty bite. But there are ways you can protect yourself. Here's how.

1. Learn the warning signs

Dogs constantly communicate and usually give some type of warning before they bite. Most warning signs you can see; others you hear. They include:

- Growling, snarling or aggressive barking

- Shyness or fear, such as when a dog crouches, has his head low or tail between his legs

- Fur raised up, ears erect, body stiff, tail high

- An unnaturally still or unresponsive dog (many fighting breeds have been bred for their ability to disguise aggressive intentions)

- A dog in pain will bite anyone that touches him -- even his owner

2. Avoid dangerous situations

Follow these tips to avoid coming face-to-face with a biting dog:

- Stay away from dogs that are in cars, chained or cornered -- they often feel vulnerable and will bite to protect their territory

- Never run past a dog -- joggers and children on bicycles can trigger their instinct to chase and attack

- Don't go near a dog that's eating, chewing, sleeping or caring for puppies

- Never tease a dog or play too rough

- Be careful around older dogs -- they may be blind, sensitive to touch or hearing-impaired

- Never leave infants or children alone with a dog -- according to the CDC, infants top the list for dog-related deaths

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Never try to break up a dog fight with your hands; use a water hose, stick, or throw a blanket over the dogs to disorient them (children should call an adult for help)
Keep your face away from your dog's face, especially when disciplining

3. Know self-defense moves

Many people are bitten because they unintentionally provoke or escalate an attack. If you're approached by an aggressive dog, don't make eye contact or move suddenly, says Mitzi Robinson, who runs Bulli Ray Enterprises, a dog-bite prevention company in San Diego, CA. This can challenge a dog and cause him to attack. Stand motionless, like a statue. Face the dog, but turn your head away.

If a dog lunges at you, don't try to overpower him. If you're holding something, put it into his mouth. "If you don't have anything in your hand, put your arm up to protect your face," Robinson says. If you're knocked to the ground, don't move or scream. Pretend that you are a turtle: curl up in a ball face down, and cover your head with your arms. Stay in this position until the dog leaves.

4. Make your dog people-safe

Take your dog to training classes -- develop his respect for humans

Your dog should be part of the family -- unsocialized, "outdoor" dogs bite more frequently than "indoor" dogs

Establish house rules and standards of behavior for your dog -- this will make your pet happier, more respectful and safer to be around

Dogs are magnificent creatures, but you must fully understand them to safely co-exist together. Once you've learned to respect dogs, they can truly be your best friend.

What to Do If You're Bitten

If you are bitten and don't know the dog, try to remember what he looked like and where he went. Your doctor needs to rule out the possibility of a rabies infection.

Wash your wounds with plenty of warm, soapy water or saline solution, and cover with a clean, dry dressing. Call your doctor immediately. Renee Ralls, a home-care nurse in Sonoma County, CA, warns, "Be sure your tetanus vaccination is up to date. Tetanus is a common virus, and infections can be fatal."

Report the incident to the police, your local health department, and an animal control agency.

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You're the loser

August 2

Cost of living, inflation, and taxes—these are the topics we are all concerned about. They're topics that creep into every conversation at home and at work because they deal with money.

But it is funny how many people express concern over living costs and then ignore a very important factor in keeping costs at a minimum. I'm talking about safety. If you think that safety doesn't have much to do with the cost of living you'd better listen to this:

On the job accidents cost the US economy about 3.4 Billion dollars every hour of every workday. The people who compile these statistics go on to say that this adds up to 6.8 Billion dollars per year.

The total includes 1.5 Billion dollars in lost wages, 3.8 Billion dollars in lost production, and 1.5 Billion dollars in medical expenses and that is just the measurable part of the costs.

This is a substantial drain on the economy and we all pay for it in our rolls as taxpayers, wage earners and consumers. But each of us as an individual is a big loser when we're injured. This is why safety should be important to cost-conscious people. It's not the only reason for being safe, however it may be the only reason some people understand.

Safety is part of doing a good job. You can't get hurt and still do a good job. When an injury occurs, there's something wrong, and the injured person is the first to find out about it. That's in the form of pain and suffering.

You might ask, if this is true, then why do some people ignore safety rules? There are many good answers to that, but we'd all have to be psychiatrists to understand them. However there are some that are quite obvious.

Many people are likely to break safety rules that they consider unimportant or contrary to their philosophy of life. This might be based on an over-inflated sense of self-importance.

People who disregard safety rules may also be reckless both on and off the job. They're confident that accidents always happen to the other guy. They have manufactured a false sense of security.

As previously noted, there are many good reasons for being safe, but it all narrows down to just one—you. You either play it safe or trust your luck. There is no in between. You either make safety a part of your job or you become a chance taker. A chance taker's working career can be very short.

Hazards exist in many forms. We attempt to keep them at a minimum around here and our goal is to send you home in good condition at the end of each workday. However we can only do it with your cooperation. You are important to this job or you wouldn't be here, you're also important to your family and your community.

So don't be a loser. Treat safety with the respect it deserves. When you lose at the game of chance taking, you lose BIG.

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Safety Appeal

August 3

We all have a natural tendency to want to be safe. Put another way, psychologists say that normal individuals possess certain desires through which safety becomes appealing. These desires include:

- Avoiding personal injury
- Avoiding personal loss
- Reward seeking
- Striving for leadership
- Excelling
- Preventing injuries to others
- Avoiding making an unfavorable impression
- Avoiding punishment

It's easy to recognize that all of these things do have safety appeal. However, let's take a look at two of the more obvious ones, the desire to avoid personal injury and the desire to avoid personal loss.

Personal injury and personal loss are things we all want to escape, but many of us do little on our own to help avoid accidents that cause them. There are things that can be done on the job to help prevent painful incidents, particularly those caused by unsafe acts.

First of all, no matter how good you are at your job or how long you you've been around, don't take safety for granted. Always keep you're your personal guard up. When you let it down, you are exposing yourself and others to accidents.

Second, take time to be safe. Don't take a chance that an accident won't happen this time. Taking shortcuts or not taking time to use a safety device is a quick way to get involved in an accident.

A third way to avoid unsafe acts is to form good working habits. There is a right way to do every job, and the right way is always the safe way. Accept the fact that accidents don't just happen to the other guy, or at least be realistic enough to acknowledge that you are the other guy to everyone but you.

The awful truth is that accidents play no favorites. They can happen to anyone.

Take a few minutes to look ahead. Try to visualize your name on an accident report. It could happen, but it doesn't have to if you take the simple precautions we have outlined.

The people who compiled the list of personal desires that can be used to promote safety also suggested that there are certain character traits that can be stimulated to make us safety conscious.

Some of these traits are selfishness, ambition, compassion, pride, and a sense of responsibility, loyalty, imagination, and patriotism.

I guess we all have to be a little selfish, at least to the extent of wanting to keep ourselves safe, but certainly not at the expense of others. A sense of responsibility to our families should certainly be an incentive to do our utmost to stay safe and do a good job.

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Pride and ambition, when applied in the right way are also commendable traits. Pride in our work and a desire to get ahead fit in well with being safe. We can't keep a job and get the things we want out of life if we're injured and unable to work.

Our safety program depends on everyone, so be sure to hold up your end of the effort. Be observant. Regularly attempt to spot hazards in advance. Anyone can spot a hazard after it has injured someone.

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How to Lift and Carry Safely

August 4

Lifting and carrying are power jobs -- when you lift and carry the wrong way, you can damage your back. Back injuries are the most common type of injury in the workplace, causing approximately 900,000 disabling injuries in 2011. Over half of these injuries are from lifting.

Back injuries may be difficult to treat and may have lengthy and expensive rehabilitation times. Whether you are lifting at home or at work, make an effort to take care of your back. The National Safety Council recommends a number of tips to prevent unintentional injuries and to keep your back strong and healthy.

Power warm-ups

You will work better if you start each day with slow stretches. These warm-ups let you ease comfortably into your workday and help you avoid injuries.

Leg and back warm-up

- Prop one foot on a chair or a stool for support.
- Take a deep breath.
- Ease forward slowly -- keep your back slightly curved.
- Blow slowly outward as you ease forward to a seven count.
- Repeat seven times.
- Switch and do the same with the other foot.

Backbend

- Stand with your feet about 12 inches apart.
- Support the small of your back with your hands.
- Hold your stomach in firmly and take a deep breath.
- Arch backward -- bend your head and neck as you go, blowing air slowly out for seven counts.
- Repeat seven times.

Power lifting tips

- Protect your hands and feet by wearing safety gear.
- Size up the load -- tip it on its side to see if you can carry it comfortably.
- Get help if the load is too big or bulky for one person. C
- Check for nails, splinters, rough strapping and sharp edges.
- Lift it right -- make sure your footing is solid.
- Keep your back straight, with no curving or slouching.
- Center your body over your feet, get a good grip on the object and pull it close to you. Pull your stomach in firmly.

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☐ Lift with your legs, not your back; if you need to turn, move your feet and don't twist your back.

Tough lifting jobs

Oversized loads -- do not try to carry a big load alone; ask for help. Work as a team by lifting, walking and lowering the load together. Let one person call the shots and direct the lift. Use proper mechanical devices for heavy loads.

High loads -- use a step stool or a sturdy ladder to reach loads that are above your shoulders. Get as close to the load as you can and slide the load toward you. Do all the work with your arms and legs, not your back.

Low loads -- loads that are under racks and cabinets need extra care. Pull the load toward you, then try to support it on one knee before you lift. Use your legs to power the lift.

Always ... use your stomach as a low back support by pulling it in during lifting.

Remember ... a strong, healthy, powerful back is vital to your job. It also helps you enjoy life. Take pains to avoid injuries by making it a full-time job to take care of your back!

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Evasive Maneuvers **August 5**

A car stops suddenly in front of you...

An oncoming vehicle strays into your lane...

A frightened animal bounds onto the road...

You know you are a good driver. But are you prepared for action when the unexpected or someone else's poor driving puts you in a tight spot? Keep these principles in mind:

Maintain an Escape Route

Try not to get boxed in when driving on multi-lane roads. That way if some-one makes a wrong move, you'll be able to go left or right rather than having to stop dead in your tracks. On a two-lane road, your escape route is to the right, off the roadway. Watch for roadside hazards that can make this difficult. Adjust your speed so you meet up with oncoming cars at a spot where you have room to maneuver.

Use Brakes Carefully

The impulse in a dangerous situation is to hit the brakes. If your vehicle is not equipped with anti-lock brakes, slamming on the brakes can cause you to skid completely out of control. Press the brakes evenly and smoothly, backing off the brakes slightly if the wheels start to lock up. This way you'll slow down without losing control.

If your vehicle has anti-lock brakes, do not stab at the brakes but apply firm pressure until the vehicle comes to a stop.

Swerve, Don't Brake

Whenever possible, use your steering wheel instead of your brakes. Be prepared to swerve around an unexpected obstacle. Drive with your hands on the left and right sides of the wheel (at "9 and 3 o'clock"), so you have leverage to turn it 180 degrees in either direction while keeping your hands firmly engaged. Be prepared to swerve sharply and then return the wheel to its normal position as quickly as you swerved. Guide your vehicle back to the path it was following before the emergency. If necessary, go right off the road to avoid hitting a vehicle head-on. Even going into a ditch is better than a head-on collision.

When It's Best to Speed Up

Sometimes you can get out of a jam by speeding up. If you're already in an intersection and someone is coming at you from the side, it's best to step on the accelerator rather than slamming on the brakes. If you did stop suddenly, you could not only lose control and swerve into oncoming traffic, but you could also be hit by the car coming from the side and the one behind you.

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Making a Hard Choice

What if you can't avoid hitting some-thing? Even then, you may have some choices.

If you have a chance to choose what you hit, the best thing to hit is some-thing soft, like bushes or shrubs. The next best choice is a vehicle that is moving in the same direction as you. Pick a stationary object rather than one that is coming at you. A target that will absorb energy, such as a parked car, is better than one that is rigid, such as a wall. Whatever you hit, try to sideswipe it rather than hit it head-on.

You can't control all that happens on the road. But being prepared for an emergency by driving defensively, keeping an escape route open, and knowing how to handle your brakes and steering wheel in an evasive maneuver can help you avoid becoming a victim of the unexpected.

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Storms: Protecting Yourself, Co-workers, and Family

August 6

Residents in many areas of the United States are aware of the hazards presented by thunderstorms. But do you know, to borrow an expression from Paul Harvey, "the rest of the story." How do you protect yourself, your co-workers, and your family during thunderstorms? The first step is to know what is happening in your area. When severe weather is imminent, do you know what to do?

If a **tornado** strike is imminent, take the following action:

In Open Country

Seek inside shelter if it is close by and time permits. If there is not time to escape, lie flat in the nearest depression, such as a ditch or ravine. A parked vehicle is unsafe as a shelter during a tornado or severe windstorm and should be avoided.

In Office Buildings

The basement or an interior hallway on a lower floor of an office building is safest. Upper stories are unsafe. If there is not time to descend, a closet or small room with stout walls (bathroom), or an inside hallway will give some protection against flying debris. Otherwise, get under heavy furniture. Select and mark shelter areas in office buildings.

Auditoriums, and Other Large Buildings with Wide, Free-Span Roofs

Buildings of this type are particularly vulnerable to tornado wind damage due to the large roof expanse upon which the wind force may act and also the relatively large area between roof supporting walls. Basements of these buildings offer reasonably good protection, as do smaller interior rooms at ground level or nearby sturdy buildings.

In Homes without Basements

Take cover in the smallest room with stout walls, or under heavy furniture, or a tipped-over upholstered couch or chair in the center part of the house. Stay away from windows, doors, and outside walls. Protect your head.

When **lightning** (thunderstorms) threatens, get inside a home or large building. Keep away from windows, exterior doors, water faucets, main distribution frame, switch equipment, electrical appliances, etc. If outdoors, with no time to reach a building or vehicle, follow these rules:

Get out and away from open water. Get away from bicycles, motor cycles, and wheeled and track equipment. Stay away from aerial lines, down-guys, pedestals, towers, wire fences, clotheslines, metal pipes, rails, or other metallic paths which could carry lightning to you. Stay away from small, isolated sheds or other small structures in open areas. Avoid being the highest object on the surrounding landscape. In open areas, go to a low place such as a ravine or valley. In a forest, seek shelter in a low area under a thick growth of small trees. Don't get under a natural lightning rod such as a tall tree. If you are isolated in a field and your hair stands on end (indicating lightning is about to strike), drop to your knees and bend forward putting your hands on your knees. **DO NOT LIE FLAT ON THE GROUND.**

When sitting in, or driving a vehicle, you are protected by the shell of the vehicle. Do not touch the door handle or any metal object in the vehicle. Thunder, the sound of lightning, travels at 1/5 mile per second. Count the time that elapses between your first sight of the lightning flash and the sound of the thunder to determine how close the lightning is.

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After the storm (or other emergency), our priority is to locate family members who were in different locations when the storm struck. Designate a relative or friend in another city or state as the contact following a disaster. Without a contact plan, families frantically search and add to the already overloaded emergency management communications system. If you don't have a family emergency action plan, take time to develop one. Make certain everyone knows the safest place to seek shelter in the event of a tornado, the rendezvous point to use if lightning strikes the house and starts a fire. Pre-planning saves lives. Reacting at the height of the storm (without a plan) may place you needlessly in harm's way.

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Don't Spoil Your Summer Fun!

August 7

Don't take a vacation from safety! Summer activities have many hazards, so don't let an accident spoil your fun.

Here are some reminders for summer recreational safety:

- When traveling - whether to a nearby lake or across the country - drive safely. Allow enough time to drive within the speed limit and to rest frequently. Wear your seat belt and insist everyone does the same.
- Wear the appropriate Personal Flotation Device in a boat. You can be thrown into the water unexpectedly if the boat collides with another watercraft or an underwater object, or if a sudden storm swamps the vessel. Even in the summer, lakes and rivers can be cold enough to cause hypothermia leading to death.
- Don't mix alcohol with water sports, boating or driving. Fatal collisions, diving accidents and drowning are too often the result of alcohol consumption.
- Protect your skin from exposure to the sun. Sunbathing can be an unsafe activity because it can lead to skin cancer without proper protection. Wear hats and clothing to protect your skin when outdoors, and apply sunscreen.
- Drink water frequently to prevent dehydration and heat illness. Soft drinks and coffee do not count because they can actually deplete the body's supply of fluid.
- Get in shape before trying strenuous sports. If you don't, the result can be strained muscles or worse injuries. Warm up slowly, and take the time to cool down after your workout.
- Wear the right gear to prevent injuries. Helmets and pads are necessary for rollerblading. Sturdy boots with ankle support help prevent hiking injuries.
- Never use a candle or a heater in a tent. The result can be a fire from which there is no escape.
- Prevent forest fires to protect lives and property. Build a campfire only where permitted, and make sure it is completely out before you move on.
- Keep your eye on the weather, so you can get to shore or shelter before lightning or winds put you in jeopardy.
- Protect your personal security at all times - on the road, in parking lots, at parks and campgrounds. Most people are there to have a good time just like you, but a few will prey on unwary vacationers. Lock your doors and stay alert. Know where your family members are at all times when you are traveling away from home.
- Eat a nutritious diet, and get enough sleep and rest. Good health habits will help you stay alert, strong and able to ward off accidents.

The summer season is a time to escape from your everyday concerns and really enjoy life.

Just be sure to take safety with you!

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Know Your Enemies - Workplace Hazards

August 8

If you and your buddies were facing a dangerous, deceptive enemy, you'd want to find out all you could about it and share any information you come up with. The fact is you do have such a treacherous enemy - the workplace hazard. An unnoticed hazard can take your life in an instant, or cause you a lifetime of suffering and disability. It only makes sense to learn all you can about workplace hazards. Sharing information with your co-workers helps keep all of you safe.

Training and communication are the basis of an injury prevention program in the workplace. The company provides you with the information and training you need to identify and avoid hazards. It is important for you to also seek this information on your own, and to be continually alert to new dangers.

Safety information is shared in a number of ways. One person explains things to another person, individually or in a group training session. Training workbooks, videos and live demonstrations make the information easier to remember. Trainees get to try out procedures and safety equipment under the supervision of an experienced person.

Safety communication continues on a daily basis. Signs and posters are common devices for passing along safety information. They point out hazards such as the possibility of objects falling from overhead or the presence of flammable liquid vapors. They also tell you what to do to avoid injury - wear your hardhat, or don't smoke. Signs also point the way to equipment to be used in case of an emergency - fire extinguishers, first aid kits and exits are some of these.

Labels are another common source of safety information. On a container of chemicals, the label will tell you the contents, hazards and what to do in case of a spill or exposure.

The Material Safety Data sheet is another method of communicating safety information about chemicals. It contains the same type of information as the label, but in greater detail. Our company's system of reporting injuries, accidents and close calls is another important link in safety communications. This gives your co-workers valuable information about the kinds of hazards lurking in the work area.

If you know or suspect a workplace hazard, report it.

If you have safety information, share it.

Keep the lines of communication open to defeat the enemy - the workplace hazard.

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The individual's responsibility

August 9

We are all aware of the fact that a very large percentage of the injuries that occur on the job are caused directly by the person injured. Only about ten-percent of the injuries are caused by defective equipment or other factors. These facts indicate that each individual must be primarily responsible for his or her own safety.

Management and supervision are often looked upon as being responsible for safety. It is certainly a fact that without proper interest on the part of management and supervision, a safety program cannot be effective. However, the worker must realize that he or she, more than anyone else, must be responsible for his or her own safety and the safety of their co-workers. In other words a worker must be his brother's keeper.

For example, a simple construction ladder can be built to the best-known safety specifications. It can be properly stored and frequently inspected for defects. However, when an individual uses it and it is not properly placed, if the footing is insecure, or if the ladder has not been properly tie off, it is entirely likely that someone will be injured. So the worker who is using the ladder must realize that he or she, personally, is the most important factor in preventing accidents.

Let us bear in mind that we, as individuals, must constantly be alert to the hazards around us. If we personally cannot remove the hazard, then the hazard must be called to the attention of those in authority.

If any of you have additional thoughts on this subject, let's have them. Remember it takes the one hundred percent cooperation of each individual to make a job safe. Your help in preventing serious accidents on the job is needed. We really are our brothers' keeper!

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Safety is up to you

August 10

Each of us is responsible for his or her own safety. We can tell you and warn you, but you must be the doer. You are the one in the work area and that is where the accidents can take place unless you play it safe all the time. If you do, there will be no accidents, they just won't happen.

Workers' mishandling their jobs causes most accidents. In other words, a worker who does things that he or she should not do or who doesn't do things that he or she should, causes accidents.

If you check through one hundred accident reports, you will find the same ratio—the person who got hurt could have prevented at least nine out of ten accidents. Usually he or she just failed to use good common sense. They did not do as well as they knew how to do, and didn't follow the safe work practices they knew or should have known.

It is easy to keep from getting hurt, but it is also easy to get hurt. In some situations, it is easy to lose a finger or a hand or even be killed. Handling a hammer the wrong way can mean a smashed finger or thumb. Cutting towards you can mean a sliced hand or possibly a more serious injury.

Lack of care in placing and using a ladder can result in a broken leg or arm or even a neck. Failure to watch your walking habits can get you some nasty falls. We could continue all day with such examples, and you could too!

It's the ordinary things that cause most of the injuries. Notice that in every case, the responsibility for acting in a safe manner and avoiding injury lies with the individual. If he or she lives up to his or her own responsibility no one would get hurt.

Why do people get hurt in such ways? No doubt each accident victim has a different version or excuse, but I'll bet the real reason is nearly always the same. The poor guy just never figured out what a bad injury would do to him or her.

If a fellow who fell off the ladder, breaking his leg, had figured out what it would cost in money and suffering they would have played it safe. Every injury cost money, suffering, discomfort and inconvenience. So let's play it safe. There is no profit in accidents.

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Why Safety Belts?

August 11

To understand the value of safety belt use, it's important to understand some of the dynamics of a crash. Every motor vehicle crash is actually comprised of three collisions.

The Car's Collision

The first collision is known as the car's collision, which causes the car to buckle and bend as it hits something and comes to an abrupt stop. This occurs in approximately one-tenth of a second. The crushing of the front end absorbs some of the force of the crash and cushions the rest of the car. As a result, the passenger compartment comes to a more gradual stop than the front of the car.

The Human Collision

The second collision occurs as the car's occupants hit some part of the vehicle. At the moment of impact, *unbelted* occupants are still travelling at the vehicle's original speed. Just after the vehicle comes to a complete stop, these *unbelted* occupants will slam into the steering wheel, the windshield, or some other part of the vehicle interior. This is the human collision.

Another form of human collision is the person-to-person impact. Many serious injuries are caused by *unbelted* occupants colliding with each other. In a crash, occupants tend to move toward the point of impact, not away from it. People in the front seat are often struck by *unbelted* rear-seat passengers who have become high-speed projectiles.

The Internal Collision

Even after the occupant's body comes to a complete stop, the internal organs are still moving forward. Suddenly, these organs hit other organs or the skeletal system. This third collision is the internal collision and often causes serious or fatal injuries.

So, Why Safety Belts?

During a crash, properly fastened safety belts distribute the forces of rapid deceleration over larger and stronger parts of the person's body, such as the chest, hips and shoulders. The safety belt stretches slightly to slow your body down and to increase its stopping distance. The difference between the belted person's stopping distance and the *unbelted* person's stopping distance is significant. It's often the difference between life and death.

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Safe Backing August 12

To many, safe backing of a vehicle seems like a common, ordinary task. Think about how a vehicle is designed, it is designed for forward movement. That is where our unobstructed view is concentrated. Unlike going forward, when we have to back we generally concentrate on our mirrors, thus leaving room for errors.

While concentration is the key to backing any vehicle, there are other aspects of backing that are just as important. In the Accident Prevention Handbook, there are references to a few of these. The #1 on any list is to avoid any unnecessary backing. If you must back, then do it upon your arrival. This is when the surroundings are freshest in your mind. Get into the habit of parking so when you are ready to leave you can simply pull forward. If you must go around the block looking for another place to park instead of backing in then, that's what we need to do.

When two or more employees are present, one of the employees must aid the driver/ drivers when backing any vehicle(s). When working alone and you must back up, proceed slowly and cautiously. Continuously look in all your mirrors for changing conditions.

No matter how long you have been stopped, before you proceed in backing up, get out and visually check behind your vehicle. Make sure no one pulled up between your mirrors or into a blind spot.

These methods are not new to anyone. They are the same tried and true methods that have been around for a long time. The only difference is we do not always practice safe backing or look for ways to eliminate it altogether.

We are still subject to our old habits. We need to make that concentrated effort in order to reverse this habit and practice.

Make SAFETY A Way of Life!" one day at a time!

August 2013 Morning Safety Focus

It's Up To You...

August 13

Who is responsible for your safety on the job? Is it the government, the company, your boss or the other members of the crew? Actually, all of them have a responsibility for your safety. But ultimately, the challenge is yours.

Taking responsibility for your own safety is a full-time job. This is how to do it:

- Be aware of your surroundings at all times. Your work environment can change from one moment to the next with the approach of a vehicle, something falling from overhead or the presence of an intruder. Stay alert.
- Upgrade your workplace safety training on a regular basis. Take advantage of company training sessions. Review the operator's manual for equipment you use, and company safety documents such as the emergency plan.
- Keep up your first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) skills. Community organizations offer sessions at off-work hours. If you have a chance to sit in on some hazardous material information sessions or, in Canada, a Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) orientation, do so.
- Talk about safety with your team members. In the break room, at meetings and in one-on-one conversations, put the focus on safety.
- Perform your own workplace inspections. Maybe other inspectors will have overlooked the faded sign marking the eyewash station or the fire door that won't stay closed.
- Look for solutions to safety problems. When you find something wrong, try to figure out how to make it right. If a machine guard is inadequate, perhaps you can go to your supervisor with a practical plan for beefing it up.
- Don't be afraid to point out unsafe practices by your fellow workers, using common sense and courtesy, of course. And encourage them to do the same for you. When you make a mistake, it is better to be embarrassed than electrocuted.
- Don't let someone else, even your supervisor, direct you do something you believe to be unsafe. If somebody tells you it is okay to enter a confined space unprotected, they are wrong. It's just possible your boss could use some more safety training too.
- Take a term on the joint health and safety committee at your workplace. Regulated by law and made up of employees and management, these committees provide a forum for safety concerns. They make regular inspections, review incidents and try to make the working environment safer.

You can do a lot to keep your fellow workers safe, and they can do a lot for you. But in the end, you are responsible for your own safety.

Make SAFETY A Way of Life!" one day at a time!

August 2013 Morning Safety Focus

Hot Weather Can Kill You August 14

If you work outdoors in hot weather, or work in other hot environments, you are at risk for heat illnesses. The most serious of these illnesses is heat stroke, a life-threatening condition requiring immediate medical attention.

Take these precautions to avoid heat illness:

- Take it easy. Working in a hot environment is a stress on your body, so don't overdo it. Take frequent short breaks.
- Drink plenty of water, and drink it frequently. Avoid alcoholic beverages and drinks containing caffeine which can contribute to dehydration.
- Dress in lightweight fabrics that provide ventilation. Light colors are cooler than dark colors which absorb the sun's heat.
- Know you are at particular risk for heat illness if you are overweight, in poor health, poor physical condition, have heart disease, diabetes or other medical conditions.

Know the symptoms of heat illness:

- Heat cramps are caused by heavy sweating which can deplete the body of salt. They may be accompanied by hot, moist skin and a slightly elevated body temperature. The cramps in the arms, legs or stomach can occur while you are working, or when you are relaxing after your shift. Heat cramps are a danger signal of heat stress.
- Heat exhaustion may be characterized by heavy sweating, strong thirst, cool and moist skin, a quick pulse, rapid breathing, nausea, a feeling of fatigue and possibly fainting. Heat exhaustion indicates the body's mechanism for controlling heat is beginning to break down.
- Heat stroke is a serious medical emergency that can quickly proceed to unconsciousness and death. It occurs when the body loses too much salt and water so that sweating stops. At that point, the body's temperature control mechanism fails and body temperature increases rapidly. Symptoms include hot, red, dry skin, a quick pulse, difficulty breathing, dizziness, confusion, strange behavior, weakness and nausea. Heat stroke can quickly progress to convulsions, coma, loss of pulse and an extreme body temperature. Death can follow rapidly.

Know how to treat heat illness:

- Treat heat cramps by moving into the shade and loosening clothing. Drink a lightly salted liquid. If cramps persist, seek medical help.
- For heat exhaustion, cool the victim as fast as possible, fanning and pouring water on the victim if necessary. Have the victim drink water and call immediately for medical help.
- For heat stroke, immediately begin cooling the victim to lower the body temperature as fast as possible. Immerse him in water or use ice to cool his body. Call for an ambulance immediately.

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Other hot weather hazards:

- Sunburn is another hazard of hot weather. Not only is sunburn a painful condition, but it can contribute to skin cancer. Cover up to prevent sunburn. A hat with a brim, long-sleeved shirt and pants rather than shorts can help prevent burning. Use a sun block with a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 30. Try to stay out of the sun during the peak hours of 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- Too much bright sunlight can cause temporary eyestrain and permanent eye damage. Exposure to the sun can damage the retina inside the eye, and contribute to the development of cataracts which cloud the vision. Protect your eyes from exposure to the sun's rays. Wear sunglasses which provide protection against both UVA and UVB ultraviolet radiation.

Hot weather can bring a host of hazards. Take precautions to prevent heat illness and sunburn.

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Highway Work Zones Are Hazardous

August 15

Look for more construction on U.S. highways this year - and more danger to construction workers and the motoring public. The large federal allotment of money to upgrade the nation's roads means more construction zones than usual. These work zones are hazardous to drivers and construction workers alike. In addition, utility workers who have to move or upgrade services along roadways are also exposed to traffic.

As a motorist, you need to be extra alert this summer to construction zones along the streets and highways. Watch for warning signs which indicate you are nearing a work zone. Lower your speed in preparation for a stop and watch for further signs, barriers and flag persons. Be aware of traffic patterns around you in case you need to make a lane change or sudden stop. Rear-end collisions are the most common kind of crash in work zones, an indication drivers are not paying attention. Other crashes occur when the driver loses control of the vehicle on gravel or because a tire drops off an abrupt pavement edge. When a single lane is used for traffic moving both directions, head-on collisions can occur when someone ignores the directions of a flag person or a pilot vehicle. Motorists are also struck by heavy machinery such as graders and excavators.

It is easy to start ignoring work zone warnings if they are inaccurate, but that can prove to be a fatal mistake. Don't speed up until you are positive there is no obstruction ahead. Road crews should ensure the signs are placed at an appropriate distance ahead of the hazard and are removed when the roadway has been cleared. There may be times when construction signs are left up, even after construction has stopped for the day. It can be frustrating to approach an area with caution only to find all activity has ceased, but don't let your frustrations get to you. All construction zones should be treated with caution. Continue to drive in a controlled manner and to observe highway conditions.

Driving too fast is also a leading cause of work zone crashes. Police are cracking down on construction area speeders, and in some areas fines are double for speeding in work zones. There is good reason for concern. The National Traffic Safety Administration reports that 658 people died in highway work zones in 2010, including workers struck by vehicles.

The construction this year intended to make highways safer will also create more work zones. Fatalities are likely to be increased unless both motorists and work crews are extremely safety-conscious.

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August 2013 Morning Safety Focus

Stay on Guard

August 16

Why do we have these brief safety talks? Why do we have to always think about safety?

One of the major reasons is that in order to be safe, you have to be alert. You must be on guard at all times. By talking about safety you develop and strengthen safe work habits.

One of the worst things that you can do is let your guard down by becoming preoccupied by other things. We all have personal problems that plague us to one degree or another—health, bills, the future—or perhaps preoccupation stems from illness or fatigue.

Such preoccupation is a major factor in many on the job mishaps that are sometime mistakenly labeled “freak accidents.”

When you become lost in thought, you are off guard. You’ve let your defenses down and are wide open for accidents. If a person is blind or deaf, they learn to compensate for their handicap. All the other senses become more alert. When you are preoccupied you are blind and deaf but you don’t know it. Your other senses don’t become more alert you--are unguarded.

So how do you guard against preoccupation? How, indeed, can you detect that preoccupation has reached the point, either in yourself or other, that your easy prey to hazards or hazardous conditions?

If we knew the answer to this, it would mean a major breakthrough in the field of safety. It would be nice to be able to take a reading of someone’s brain waves to see if they were lost in thought and open to an accident. But we don’t have that ability. So we do the best we can.

We do this by trying to make safety something that comes naturally to all of us, even when we are not consciously thinking about it. These safe work habits will then be so strong, that even if you become preoccupied at times, your safe habits will prevent you from having an accident.

Reducing the possibilities of accidents that are caused by a preoccupied mind is a matter of preventative safety we must battle daily.

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A product to produce

August 17

Talking about safety is a good way to develop safety understanding. So, the more talking we do on this subject, the better understanding we'll all have of it, and I'm sure it will pay off for each of us in many ways.

To do something well, it takes the right attitude or state of mind. If we have the right safety attitudes, we'll produce a product called safety. When we're in the right state of mind, we're more apt to have something else that's very important: alertness, concern, and watchfulness. I suppose vigilance would pretty much cover all three.

Well safety is the product. It's what we get back, and there are a lot of benefits that go with it such as health, happiness, peace of mind and freedom from pain and the financial costs of accidents and injuries. All these benefits go with a good safety record.

Of course, you all know there is competition in everything. We're not competing against each other or with accidents. Who wants them? We are competing against the attitudes that lead to accidents: negligence, carelessness and complacency.

With new and faster equipment, there are new and faster ways of getting hurt. The equipment and the ways of being injured may have changed somewhat, but when you're hurt, the pain is always the same. That's why we want you to have proper attitudes with a great deal of alertness, concern and watchfulness to everything and everybody so we can all enjoy the benefits of this product called safety.

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August 2013 Morning Safety Focus

Road Rage - A Father's Wish

August 18

Surrounded by a ton or more of steel and glass, we often feel a sense of power and detachment from others, whether we are driving as part of our jobs or just getting to and from work. But make a mistake behind the wheel, or react with raised fists or a finger to another's flawed driving, and that sense of detachment can evaporate pretty quickly. In an instant, an offended driver can charge from his vehicle, adrenaline pumping, with the intent of giving you a piece of his mind, or worse, the force of his fist. Or he or she can use the vehicle as a weapon against yours, with tragic results.

Joe Edmonds got an early education in aggressive driving. Riding with his father, he learned that other drivers were "idiots". On one occasion when a group of hooting and hollering young people passed his dad's family sedan, his father's response was to floor the accelerator pedal to teach them not to make fun of him.

Joe followed his dad's example, venting his own frustrations with other drivers by yelling and gesturing angrily. But Edmonds' demeanor behind the wheel took an abrupt about-face last year after one of his sons, Jason, 23, lost his life in a collision attributed to road rage.

"I refer to myself as a recovering aggressive driver," says the golf instructor, who, with help from sons Jordan, 20, and Cameron, 18, has been delivering seminars on road rage since his son's death last year. "It's difficult every time, because you're dredging up your emotions, but I get to tell everyone what a great guy he was and I get to show them" (through video clips.) "I also get to feel like his memory is helping somebody, somewhere, avoid what happened to us," says Edmonds. "He's there with me. He gets me through it."

Jason, who was pursuing an acting career, didn't have a driver's license. Had he been a driver, he might have been more vocal against the driver whose actions were to cause his death and those of two other young passengers in the car. The driver had been transporting Jason and three other friends when they got behind a vehicle which was moving slowly. The driver's response was to overtake the slower vehicle and then slow down dramatically. The other driver took the bait and did the same to him. The deadly cat and mouse game progressed until Jason's driver lost control of the vehicle. The car crossed the median, clipped another vehicle, spun sideways and was struck broadside by a minivan and then a second vehicle.

Jason and one friend died at the scene. Another succumbed to his injuries in hospital. The driver of the slow moving vehicle, who sparked the road rage wrath, left the scene. Edmonds says he later found out that Jason's driver, who faces three counts of criminal negligence causing death, had a history of driving recklessly. A former girlfriend says she broke up with him because she feared she'd die as a result of his driving.

"There's less and less patience in society nowadays, partly because of the pace of society. We want everything now. There's also less respect for people in general and for authority," he says. Edmonds is speaking publicly about his son's fate in hopes of getting people to assess their own aggression behind the wheel, and take steps to control it. He also provides tips on how to avoid engaging the attention of a road rage incident.

"If recounting the details of this tragedy can save even one other family from experiencing what we've gone through, my son's death will have had some positive meaning," he says. Joe Edmonds quotes American behaviorist Redford Williams, who says people should ask themselves three questions when they are starting to lose control:

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- Is this situation important to me?
- Is my reaction justified by the facts?
- Is there anything I can do to fix the situation?

“If you can’t answer yes to any of these questions, then don’t do anything,” says Edmonds.

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Get A Handle On Stress!

August 19

Stress is unavoidable. It's your natural response to the challenges and changes of life. You do have a choice in how you deal with stress, though. You can learn to relax physically and mentally. You can let off steam through physical exercise. You can reduce the causes of stress in your life.

Here are some healthy ways to deal with stress:

- Keep your sense of humor. There's usually something to laugh about no matter how bad things are.
- Get regular exercise. This will improve your fitness for dealing with all of life's physical and mental challenges. It is also a good way to shift your focus away from things which upset you or make you angry. A simple and effective response to an unhealthy stress problem is to rid yourself of the excess energy by doing something physical such as sports, running or walking.
- Eat right to maintain your health. Eat a variety of fruits and vegetables, the fresher the better. Fill up on complex carbohydrates such as whole grain bread, rice, pasta and potatoes. Skip the foods filled with fat and sugar.
- Get enough sleep. Individual sleep needs vary, but you should sleep long enough to wake up feeling rested and refreshed. Sleep patterns are often disrupted when a person is stressed.
- Cigarettes, alcohol and caffeine kick your body into high gear and can add to your stress level over the long run, so cut back or quit. If you need help in staying off alcohol or drugs, get help from a treatment program or self-help group.
- Manage your time wisely. Do the most important things first.
- Talk about your problems. The listener may not be able to offer solutions, but talking them out helps put your problems in perspective.
- Learn some relaxation techniques. Here's a simple one: Close your eyes for a few moments and breath in and out deeply and slowly. Concentrate on the sensation of breathing. Obviously, you can't do this while you are doing something like driving or operating a drill press, but you can do it while you are taking a break.
- Look on the bright side. Optimism is a good antidote for stress.
- Most people are well into unhealthy stress situations before they realize it. People around them can help by noting their symptoms and letting them know.

When you are feeling worried, remember that most of the things we fear never actually happen. Save the heavy stress reactions for genuinely threatening situations. **In the meantime, relax and try to enjoy your life today!**

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Deer Mice Carry Deadly Virus

August 20

Deer mice can carry a virus, which causes a deadly respiratory disease.

Hantavirus Pulmonary Syndrome is an illness, which kills about half of its victims. It is spread through the droppings of deer mice and several related animals.

First recognized in the early 1990s in the US Southwest, the disease has probably been around for at least 40 years. It has spread in the last decade to many locations in the United States and Canada.

The virus is found in the mouse's urine, feces, saliva and nesting materials. Workers can be exposed to Hantavirus by inhaling dust from nests and areas frequented by the rodents. This can occur during demolition or cleaning of sheds, basements, attics, camps, field offices, woodpiles and other locations favored by the deer mice.

Symptoms start several weeks after exposure with flu-like complaints including fever, chills, and muscle aches. Nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, coughing and shortness of breath may also occur. Respiratory distress then develops, with the lungs quickly filling with fluid.

These are some of the precautions for cleaning areas where rodent droppings or nest materials may be present:

- Wear rubber or plastic gloves, an air-purifying respirator with a HEPA filter, and disposable coveralls.
- Ventilate the area before attempting to clean.
- Apply a bleach solution with sponges or mops. Saturate nesting areas, droppings and carcasses before moving them. Do not vacuum, dust or sweep because these methods will raise the dust. Be careful not to pull contaminated materials down onto yourself from overhead surfaces.
- Damp-wipe all surfaces the rodents may have touched.
- Double-bag contaminated material before disposing of it.
- Wash your hands and face and change to clean clothes when you finish.

Prevent rodent infestations by sealing openings into buildings. To make sure the building is rodent-proof, set some traps to see if any have entered.

Although hantavirus is rarely encountered by the general population, it is of concern for people who work outdoors or in structures attractive to rodents. If you suspect you may have contracted hantavirus, seek medical help immediately

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Food Poisoning Can Kill

August 21

Think twice before you bite into a sandwich, which has been sitting, in your locker at work for a couple of days. Use a clean knife to slice the apple in your lunch bucket -- not your grimy pocket jackknife. Don't accept a partially cooked hamburger at the neighborhood barbecue. It is estimated in the United States alone over 9,000 people a year die from food borne illnesses, and millions get sick. Careful food handling is the key to preventing these food illnesses.

You also need to make sure foods are free from contamination when you eat in restaurants. Take note of cleanliness and food handling practices, and if you have doubts about the safety of the food, don't eat it. Food poisoning symptoms can range from mild stomach upset to death. Nausea, vomiting and diarrhea are common symptoms. Bloody diarrhea and kidney failure can also result, for instance from E. Coli, a micro-organism found in insufficiently cooked meat. Salmonella and campylobacter are two kinds of bacteria found on raw chicken and eggs, as well other meat and unpasteurized milk. The liver disease Hepatitis A is spread through dirty kitchens and unclean food preparers.

Food safety starts when you go shopping. Here are some guidelines:

- Check dates on all food, especially meat. Do not use this food after the "sell by" or "expiration" date.
- Keep raw meats separate from other foods, especially produce, in shopping baskets, grocery bags and your refrigerator. Because meat packaging often leaks, you should wash your hands after handling meat at the store. Meat should be packed in an additional plastic bag so the juice does not contaminate other foods.
- Shop for meats, poultry and seafood last, so they will spend a minimum of time away from refrigeration. Save your grocery shopping for your last errand so you can go straight home and put the foods such as meat and dairy products away.
- Skip the day-old prepared foods such as barbecued chicken or deli salads.
- Dig down into the frozen food bins to select your items. Packages on the top may be partially thawed.
- Check for leaks and bulges on canned goods which can indicate a growth of dangerous microorganisms. Discard any suspicious-looking cans.

Food poisoning is no fun, and it can be fatal. Keep safety in mind with the foods you purchase and the foods you prepare at home.

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Hazardous Waste around Your Home

August 22

Hazardous waste isn't a problem just for large industries. Your home is full of hazardous products you must dispose of safely to protect the environment. When these products are just dumped into a landfill, they can leach into the ground and pollute the water table. They also contribute to air and soil pollution for years to come.

Check out this list of common products that can be unfriendly to the environment: Batteries, drain cleaners, herbicides and pesticides, paint, motor oil, pool chemicals, polishes, solvents, anti-freeze, pharmaceuticals, stain removers, toilet cleaners, wax strippers, oven cleaners, some bathroom cleaners, bleach, lye, wood stains and preservatives, varnish removers and paint thinner.

Try safer alternatives:

- Baking soda makes a good scouring powder.
- Vinegar and water cleans windows and smooth surfaces.
- To make an all-purpose cleaner, mix a half cup of ammonia, a half cup of white vinegar, a quarter cup of baking soda and a half gallon of water.
- For a disinfectant, mix a half cup of borax per gallon of hot water.
- For a dishwasher detergent, mix one part of borax and one part of washing soda.
- For a dishwashing liquid, try a natural soap or a phosphate-free product.

Alternative drain cleaners:

- Use a handful of baking soda and a half cup of white vinegar. Cover the drain tightly for one minute while the mixture fizzes. Flush.
- Put a half cup of salt and a half cup of baking soda down the drain. Follow with six cups of boiling water. Let it sit for a few hours or overnight. Flush with water.
- Pour hot water with a half a cup of washing soda down the drain.
- Use a plunger, a coat hanger or a mechanical snake to clear drains.

Painting:

- Use old paint as primer.
- Before disposing of oil-based or enamel paint cans, take outdoors and remove the lid to allow the contents to air-dry and harden.
- Allow used turpentine to sit in a closed jar until the paint particles have settled. Pour off the clear turpentine and use again.

Air quality:

- Instead of aerosol products, use pump spray bottles.
- Make your own air fresheners by boiling or simmering sweet herbs, flower petals or spices. A good mixture is cinnamon and cloves.
- Keep house plants to clean the air in your home.
- Keeping your home clean and aired out will help eliminate odor problems.
- Clean heat registers, air ducts and vents on a regular basis to improve air quality.

If you use dangerous products:

- Don't purchase more than you need.
- Use them up, or give leftovers to someone who can use them.
- Separate hazardous materials from your household garbage.
- Never dispose of hazardous materials in the sewer system, in storm drains, soil or open bodies of water.
- Contact your local government for information on how to dispose of them safely.

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The average household has a surprising number of products which can cause damage to the environment. Use them sparingly, and dispose of them with care

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On your own time

August 23

Safety is important not just to you and your family but to your employer as well. We encourage you to be safe and to think about safety all the time. This takes place on the job, but off the job safety is just as important.

What you do on your own time is your own business, but we're all part of a team, and it's only natural that we're concerned about each other's welfare both on and off the job. At work your part of a safety network that extends into many areas. Here there are rules and regulations to follow. But off the job you're on your own. You can leave your safety glasses off when remodeling your kitchen, and you can balance a ladder on a box when you're painting the peak of your house and you might not hear a word out of anyone. However it takes a pretty immature person to deliberately leave safety at work. Still there are times we all get a little careless and we need to guard against those times.

The highways are prime areas of concern for safety away from work. I won't attempt to go into all the aspects of traffic safety. They're emphasized almost everywhere. However I certainly caution you to keep a cool head while on the road. Be patient getting out of the parking lot and always watch the other driver.

To some degree, most of us are do-it-yourselfers around the home, and this is where an awful lot of people get injured. You have to be careful when using ladders. Making sure your ladder is safe to use before you climb on it, and don't over reach or climb with your feet above the second from the top rung.

When using tools, pick the right tool for the job. If you have a tool in poor condition, don't use it. Most all of us have power tools, make sure they are always properly grounded with a three prong plug or they are double insulated.

The weather is something we can't do anything about. Yet it affects our safety, so we must take precautions against it. Don't work too long in the hot sun. This can catch up to you fast, particularly if you've worked hard all week at your regular job.

Off the job safety should be second nature if you practice it in earnest at work. So keep an eye for hazards whether you're on a golf course, on a boat or doing yard work. National statistics show that accidents away from work account for 70% of all deaths and 55% of all injuries to workers.

(Continued)

You are a valuable employee and each of you fits into our overall operation and the overall manpower picture in the country. Your contributions to the economy would be difficult to replace if you're injured on or off the job. Add this to the fact you are priceless to your family and it's easy to see why a 24 hour safety effort is necessary.

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Safety attitude

August 24

Most of us have had some type of safety training during childhood. We we're taught to look both ways before crossing a street and not to play with matches. As adults, we are warned by others and by the media not to smoke in bed, not to stay out in the sun too long, and not to drive while under the influence of alcohol. And yet as common as these safety rules may be, how many can truthfully say that we have not turned a light on and off with wet hands, smoked in bed, got sunburned or have driven home from a party after having one too many drinks.

When employees are aware of the safety rules and disregard them anyway, we say they have an unsafe attitude. While at work you need to know all the safety rules and be able to demonstrate the safe way to do a job. But knowing every safety rule ever written will not protect you if you fail to use that knowledge daily on the job. If you have a habit of doing things the wrong way because that's the way we were taught, the habit may be difficult to break or change, but it can be done. The next time you are about to break a safety rule, stop and think about what could happen to you, you're co-worker or you family. Imagine the pain, inconvenience and lost time that could result. Then do the job correctly, the safe way. At first you will be slowed down a bit, but before long you will start to notice the safe way is becoming a habit. Safety will turn out to be one of the best habits you have ever had because it will decrease your chances of joining those who are disabled or killed in accidents each year. Let's start by reviewing a few basic safety rules:

- Report all accidents to your supervisor, even though they may seem minor at the time. Studying the causes of an accident point out ways in which they can be avoided in the future.
- Know which types of fire extinguishers may be used safely on each class of fire. Using the wrong one can be fatal.
- Use good body mechanics when lifting or moving an object. Get help when you need it and let your legs instead of your back do most of the work.
- Wear eye protection when needed: there may be flying particles that can enter an eye in an instant.
- Practice good housekeeping to avoid slip and falls. Are all sharp objects covered to protect against accidental injury.
- Take the time to teach your co-workers, in a tactful way of course if you see them violating a safety rule.

No one can say when an unsafe act or condition will result in an accident, when an accident will result in an injury, or when that injury will cause a permanent disability of even death. So don't take chances with your life or health; let's resolve to work safely.

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Use The Correct Hand Tool

August 25

Misuse and lack of proper maintenance are the cause of many injuries from hand tools.

Specific safety rules will vary greatly from one type of hand tool to another, but these general guidelines apply to most:

- Choose the right tool for each job -- don't improvise. Be sure to use the tool for the purpose for which it was intended.
- Examine the tool before use to make sure it is in good repair. Check for defects such as chips, cracks, dents, worn jaws on wrenches and pliers, mushroomed heads on striking tools and damaged or loose handles.
- If you find a tool to be defective, remove it from service so it can be repaired or discarded.
- Maintain your tools according to manufacturer's directions. Keep them clean, dry and lubricated if required.
- Avoid temperature extremes which may damage tools.
- Keep cutting tools sharp. Surprisingly, dull blades are the cause of many injuries.
- Aim the cut away from yourself and from other workers when using cutting tools.
- Have specific places to store hand tools, and put them back as soon as you have used them.
- Never carry tools in your pockets because they can cause injury – especially sharp tools. Carry them in a work apron, tool belt or tool box. When climbing a ladder, don't carry your tools in your hands. Instead, carry them in a tool belt or hoist them up.
- When passing a tool to another worker, hand it over. Never throw it because you could injure another person and damage the tool.
- Before swinging a tool (such as an ax or sledge) look around to make sure no one is in the way.
- Don't use excess force. Never use cheaters or pipe extensions on tools such as wrenches.
- Never depend on an insulated tool such as a screwdriver to protect you from electrical shock. You must take all other precautions.
- Similarly, never depend on supposedly non-sparking tools to prevent ignition around flammable substances and in hazardous atmospheres. You must be sure to take all other precautions.
- Some tasks for which you use hand tools can contribute to hand and wrist injuries – and even back injuries. These are caused by repeated impact, strain and vibration. There are a number of things you can do to prevent these injuries. Work with your back in a comfortable straight position. Keep your shoulders, elbows and wrists in a comfortable alignment. Do not twist your hands or wrists. Specially designed tools with extra padding can help to prevent some of these injuries.
- There is another tool which you should use whenever you are using hand tools. That is your eye protection. Make sure you wear the appropriate safety glasses with side shields, or safety goggles.

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Hand tools may look relatively harmless, but they do contribute to many workplace injuries. Use them with care.

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Safe On Your Time

August 26

Most of us have heard about the mechanic who is so busy fixing everyone else's car that his own is a wreck in search of a junkyard. Many workers adopt a similar attitude toward safety once they've punched out for the day. An employee who diligently uses eye and hearing protection equipment at work may wear nothing but shorts and sandals while mowing the lawn at home. Another who would never risk working under the influence of alcohol will take a big chance driving home after a night out at the bar. "The difficulty at home is we must rely on our self-control to engage in safe behaviors," says Horacio Roman of the Center for Behavioral Safety Research at the University of Nevada in Reno.

Roman says once at home and no longer bound by the safety rules and supervision of the workplace, there are plenty of incentives for rushing a task so people can have more time for relaxation or fun. Driving past the point of exhaustion to reach a vacation destination or not taking a few extra seconds to buckle up are examples of risky off-the-job behaviors that can have fatal consequences. Of the 97,300 unintentional injury deaths occurring in the United States during 2010, about 45 per cent (43,501) involved motor vehicles. Alcohol played a part in more than a third of the fatal crashes. Next came falls (16,274), poisonings (10,255), drowning (4,406) and choking incidents (3,515).

"Probably half of those (motor vehicle) deaths could be prevented if people stopped drinking and driving, or if everyone wore seat belts every time they drove or rode in a vehicle," says Dr. David Sleet, associate director of science at the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Division of Unintentional Injury Prevention.

Sleet noted those who don't buckle up are often ejected from vehicles during crashes. "When safe behaviors are mandated in one setting and not in another, you can't expect a lot of carryover," says Sleet. "But if safe behaviors are voluntary, it's most likely those behaviors will be carried over."

According to Roman, various factors can affect our off-the job safety from one day to the next. If someone is nagging at you to clean the leaves out of the roof gutter, but you are tired and would rather flop on the couch, safety can lose out to impatience to get the job done as quickly as possible. "It comes down to stopping and thinking about all the possible consequences. Am I prepared? Do I have the right equipment and tools? Do I need help?" he says.

Leo Eisner of Eisner Safety Consultants in Santa Barbara, CA, says people are bound by rules and regulations at work, but often "they don't think about the regulations in the same way at home." For example, Eisner says, "they don't read directions or warnings." As a result, people risk injury or illness by not operating equipment properly or not following directions for safe use of a chemical.

About 75 per cent of all unintentional deaths and more than half of all injuries occur off the job. Next time you're standing on the top rung of a rickety stepladder, remember that an estimated 150,000 ladder injury occur in the US each year. And next time you're taking a

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spin on your bike without a helmet, remember those 100,000 head injuries and 150 deaths could be eliminated each year in the US if people wore bicycle helmets.

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Falls Cause Serious Injuries

August 27

Falls are a leading cause of workplace injuries. In fact, falls are second only to motor vehicle accidents as the leading cause of accidental deaths in North America. Surprisingly, most of these falls are from the same level -- the kind of fall you would have if you lost your footing or balance.

While falls are among the most common accidents, they are also among the most preventable. In many cases, you have control over whether or not you are going to fall. If you move carefully and remain alert to hazards, you can stay on your feet.

There are two main causes of a fall. One is the loss of friction between your feet and the floor. This occurs when your shoes or the floor are slippery. The result is that you lose your footing and slip. The other cause of falling is when your feet are halted and the rest of you keeps going. This is what happens when you trip. In either a slip or a trip, your body's center of gravity is displaced, and there is nowhere to go but down.

Here are some ways to prevent falls:

If it isn't moving, it shouldn't be in a traffic area. Walkways and stairways must be kept free of clutter.

Keep hoses, cables, and cords out of walkways.

Watch for, and repair or report, broken stairs, railings, and loose carpeting.

Use good lighting in walkways and stairways. Turn on the light before entering a room.

Use the handrail on stairs.

Don't run on stairways or through work areas.

Do not carry loads that obstruct your vision.

Don't lean back in chairs.

Watch for floor openings, such as uncovered drains or crawl spaces. Make sure they are covered and guarded.

If you must walk on a surface that is slippery or uneven, walk slowly and take short steps.

Wear non-slip shoes when you might encounter slippery surfaces.

Clean up or report spills right away.

Close drawers to prevent someone from tripping over them.

Watch for newly waxed floors and high gloss surfaces.

Obey signs such as "Caution - Wet Floor".

Be careful when you come indoors in wet or snowy weather. Your boots or shoes are likely to be slippery, and there may be wet spots on the floors.

If you do start to fall, these tips could save you from injury:

- Relax, bend your arms and legs, try to gently fall to the floor.
- Catch your fall with your hands to absorb some of the impact.

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- Try to roll to prevent bone injuries.
- Do not move if you think you might have hurt yourself. Wait for help.

If we're lucky, a fall will hurt nothing more than our pride. But falls do cause many serious injuries and even deaths every year. Take precautions to avoid them.

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Take This Quiz to See if You Drive Distracted

August 28

The driver's seat of a car is rife with temptations. You can carry on a telephone conversation, electronically map the route to your destination, nosh on a burger, or sing along with the Supremes. Many think they can handle such distractions without causing a crash. But the Network of Employers for Traffic Safety estimates that distracted drivers cause one-fourth to one-half of the approximately 6 million crashes each year. Do you let distractions drive you? Take this quiz to find out.

1. You're merging into highway traffic and the cell phone on your passenger seat rings. Do you:

- Let it ring
- Reach across the passenger seat and turn the phone off
- Answer the phone

Answer: A Let it ring. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 600-1,000 motorists died from cell phone-related crashes in 2010. Another NHTSA survey found that 44 percent of drivers have cell phones in their cars, and 70 percent of all wireless calls are made from cars. "Everyone feels that driving is a fairly easy task," says Rick Pain of the Transportation Research Board, a unit of the National Academies. "So much of it is automated that we don't pay attention. We feel that we have the spare capacity to do other things."

Keith Kirchhoefer of Wildwood, Missouri, was hit from behind by a motorist who was on his cell phone. "He admitted to being distracted and subsequently caused a three-car pileup," he says.

If your phone rings while you're driving, let your voice-mail answer the call. If your phone has a "missed call" feature, you can access the caller's number later. If you must answer, pull over to the side of the road first.

While a cell-phone headset enables a driver to carry on a conversation without removing hands from the steering wheel, it also significantly increases the chances of causing a crash because you can't hear traffic as well as you should. "You always put the headset on the ear you hear best from, leaving the weakest ear to listen to traffic sounds," says James Solomon, defensive driving expert for the National Safety Council.

2. True or False? As long as you look up every 2 or 3 seconds, you can put a compact disc in the player, put on lipstick, or eat a burger while you're driving.

Answer: False. While you may think you can do it all, your brain has limitations. "Any time your mind is taken off the driving task, you and those around you are at risk," Solomon says.

The design of roadway curves and intersections and placement of traffic lights allow only 1 3/4 seconds to recognize such safety hazards as a driver ahead of you slamming on his brakes or a child's ball rolling out into the road, Solomon says. It takes an additional three-fourths of a second to react. "That's plenty of time if you're not eating a hamburger, smoking a cigarette, or reading a book," he says.

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3. You're not even to the stop sign at the end of the street and already your children are fighting in the back seat. Which is the worst response?

Pull off the road before you deliver discipline

Explain to the children the importance of being quiet while you drive

Reach behind you with one hand to grab the offender

Answer: C. "If you have to do a serious interaction with your kids, it requires all your attention," says Pain. "Don't drive one-handed. If you have to deal with your kids while driving, pull off the road."

A driver's responsibility is no different from that of an airplane pilot, Solomon says. "You carry the same responsibility for your craft, your cargo, and your people on board," he says. "Distractions must be kept to a minimum or put aside."

Before you begin your trip, tell preschool and older children that you expect them to keep the peace, at least until you get to your destination. Bring along toys or books for each child to keep them occupied. "We bring along age-appropriate books and games for each of our three children," Kirchhoefer says. "And we'll stop the car when things get out of hand in the back seat."

4. True or False? The technology installed in your new car must be safe to use while driving. After all, you can find a street address, be warned of a car in your blind spot, or automatically dial 9-1-1.

Answer: False. "Any one of those devices by itself is a problem but not a huge crisis," says Pain. "But when you have several working in the car at the same time, you have multiple sources of distraction, and that is a real concern."

While car manufacturers are working to maintain safety even as they offer such distracting devices, there are no guidelines for system design and no way of measuring how distracting they can be, Pain says.

Some of the devices require drivers to look at them 40 separate times to complete a task. That is far too distracting, says Tom Dingus, director of the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute. "If you have to look at something more than three or four times to complete a task, pull over and stop," he says.

How did you score?

Now take what you've learned on the road. To cut down on distractions, get organized before your journey begins. Plot the best route to your destination before starting the car. Have maps ready so you don't have to reach across the passenger seat to get them out of the glove compartment. Put a compact disc into the player. Insert your next "book on tape" into the tape deck. Clear your mind, and be ready to focus on your most important job during the trip: driving. ***Remember, no distraction, no matter how urgent, is worth your life.***

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Keep the Sting Out of Summer

August 29

Ah summer, a time for picnics, barbecues, and bees. You can enjoy the outdoors without getting stung. Follow these tips from the University of Delaware:

- When cooking outdoors, cover food and beverages so wasps and bees are not attracted to them.
- Don't drink directly from open soda cans outdoors, since wasps and bees can crawl inside. Use a straw or pour soda into cups instead.
- When eating outdoors at parks and restaurants, don't sit close to trash containers.
- Never play near beehives, even if they appear to be empty.
- Avoid wearing bright colors -- especially white, blue, and yellow.
- Don't wear perfume, scented hairsprays, and scented deodorants. Don't burn scented candles outdoors.
- Don't wave your arms and hands to swat bees and wasps away; this may only make them more defensive. Instead, get up slowly and walk away, taking your food and drink with you, until they've flown away.
- Bees and wasps are more aggressive in late summer and early fall, when their natural food supply starts to dwindle.

If you're allergic to insect stings, carry a sting emergency kit with you at all times.

If you experience shortness of breath, nausea, dizziness, or other abnormal symptoms after a sting and do not have a sting kit, seek emergency medical treatment immediately.

Anyone who is stung around the face and throat should receive medical treatment -- even if he or she is not allergic to bee stings.

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Participate in safety

August 30

Sometimes accidents happen because we overlook a hazardous condition. Dangerous conditions become second nature; we accept them as the norm. So we must remind ourselves to be safety conscience. This doesn't always come naturally.

If not you or me, who than commits an unsafe act? Any person can contribute to an accident's cause by, 1) failing to do what one should do or 2) doing something wrong.

What is an unsafe act? Rather than a glaring error, it can be as simple as a changing work site. To avoid the many job detours, remember the following:

- Never use equipment without proper training.
- Don't operate equipment at an unsafe speed or in any other improper way.
- Never remove safety devices from equipment.
- Never use faulty or defective tools.

You can do your part to create a safe workplace by following these hints:

- Always stay alert and focused.
- Report any unsafe conditions.
- Promptly inform your supervisor of any injury.
- Use the proper PPE as recommended.
- Dress appropriately, this includes wearing appropriate shoes, boots, gloves etc.
- Keep all tools in proper working condition, replace or repair any damaged tools.
- Don't leave trash or material in walkways or for someone else to clean up.
- Avoid all forms of horseplay.
- Avoid working under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Even some cold and allergy medications make many people sleepy.

Sometimes we see our co-workers ignoring safety rules. What is our job then? In not wanting to be tattletales, we often overlook potentially dangerous practices. For example, A co-worker doesn't wear the prescribed PPE, should you shrug it off as not your problem? If you are responsible, you will tactfully tell your co-worker of your concern for his/her safety.

Our responsibility to our co-workers can be evident even in the small act like cleaning up an oil spot. We might not hear cheers or applause or get a safety award, but we will know that we are doing our part to do the job safely. Then we can look into the mirror without feeling a twinge of guilt.

Remember that your personal involvement in safety considers the other person as well as yourself. If we all do our part as individuals, we will benefit as a group.

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Cuts and lacerations

August 31

Two of the most common types of injuries suffered on the job today are cuts and lacerations. It doesn't take much imagination to visualize most of the sources of such injuries. Each job has its own hazards that produce these injuries. This is even true of secretaries, who can be cut by paper edges and punctured by staplers, scissors and thumbtacks.

However there are more serious injuries. Of these, perhaps the most likely to become infected is the deep puncture wound; this is even more likely than the torn edges of a laceration where antiseptic can reach and generally cleanse the wound.

Let's look at the sources of these wounds. In our industry the dangers of protruding nails, screws, staples, splinters and steel banding are present. Before climbing on poles look for the pole over for excessive splintering. When unpacking products look for sharp edges on metal parts. The edges of steel banding can make nasty cuts if not handled correctly.

Hand tools such as screwdrivers, awls, saws and skinning knives are another source of puncture wounds.

Many lacerations and puncture wounds can be eliminated or greatly reduced by wearing the proper gloves for the task at hand. Good common sense should prevail whenever you're faced with a situation where a cut, laceration or puncture wound could result. Look over the situation and when in doubt ask your supervisor as to the proper method to effectively deal with any hazards where sharp edges are present. Just as important is the proper disposal of any sharp material as to not subject a fellow co-worker to an injury.

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