

## Safety Briefing for January 2009

### **Topic: SPACE & VISIBILITY - Professional Driver HABITS - 10 Point Commentary Checklist (Part 2 of 2)**

**Introduction:** *Fostering* good driving habits is at the heart of Space and Visibility – Professional Driver habits. The Five-Point System (part 1 in this 2 part series) and its 10 Point Commentary Checklist (part 2 in this 2 part series) are based on a very simple premise; you need two things to drive any vehicle safely; 1) space for the vehicle and 2) visibility for the driver. You need space for the vehicle you are driving and visibility to move your vehicle through ever-changing traffic conditions.

**What must an employee know:** This 10 Point Commentary Checklist is a compliment to the previous Five-Point System given in Part 1. Using the Five-Point System along with the 10 Point Commentary Checklist will increase your skill level in professional driving habits.

### 10 POINT COMMENTARY CHECKLIST

1. **When starting to move at intersection** – Look left, right, left. Check rear view mirrors.
2. **When stopped in traffic** – Leave a car length of space between your vehicle and the vehicle ahead of you. This habit allows enough space to pull your vehicle around the vehicle ahead if it should stall and gives you an instant cushion if it should make a turn.
3. **Count one-two-three after vehicle ahead has started to move** – This habit should be used when stopped at an intersection behind another vehicle. You have an instant safe following distance that allows the vehicle in front of you to clear the intersection in case another vehicle decides to run its red light.
4. **Four to six seconds following time for speeds under 30 mph, 6-8 seconds for speeds 30 mph and greater** - This habit keeps you from getting a fixation on the car ahead and to allow for a space cushion if any thing should happen.
5. **15 seconds eye-lead time or as far as you can see** - This is the best way to keep your eyes ahead and is the depth at which your eyes should be focused most of the time. This habit keeps you aware of situations well ahead of your wheels.
6. **Scan steering wheels, look for signs of life, brake lights, reverse lights, exhaust, and heads behind steering wheels** – Check to see whether or not cars at the curb or in parking lots are occupied. If they are occupied the driver is probably about to pull out from the curb or exit from the parking space.
7. **Stale green light - A traffic light that you did not see turn green or a light that you are aware of could change at any time.** You must establish a point of decision, the imaginary line that you set up between your vehicle and the crosswalk when you approach an intersection with a stale green light. You must be sure of the point you will stop if the light turns yellow/red.
8. **Eye contact** – When you must depend on anyone along your driving path to stay put until you've passed the danger point, it is important you get their attention. The horn and lights are your communication tools when you do not have eye contact with them. Properly use the horn to express a friendly message. Only when you have eye contact can you expect the other person to act in a reasonably predictable manner to avoid a dangerous situation.
9. **Pulling from curb** - Always look over your shoulder when pulling from curb or from the side of the road; don't rely strictly on your mirrors.
10. **Use of mirrors** – As a rule of thumb you should always glance at your mirrors at least once every 5-8 seconds. It is just as important to know what is going on behind you as it is in front of you.



## Safety Briefing for February 2009

### **Topic: LOCKOUT AND TAGOUT PROGRAMS**

**Introduction:** Each year, tens of thousands of workers across the United States suffer amputations, electrocutions, severe burns and scars or disfigurements, and even death when they failed to properly lockout equipment or machinery.

**Background:** Lockout injuries and deaths can happen to new employees as well as experienced, long-time employees. No one is immune from injury and the lack of experience or improper training can cause instantaneous pain. Most employees have a strong desire to be productive and may decide to take short cuts. Safety should never be sacrificed and most importantly, ask for help. Insurance companies are taking a hard line approach and canceling policies when companies fail to produce or enforce lockout programs.

**What must an employee know:** It is critical that each machine has written procedures to properly place all power sources in a “Zero Energy” state. Procedures must include each power or energy source, identify the location of disconnects, switches, or valves, and procedures must explain how to correctly lockout out each power source. Taking the extra minute to properly shut down and lockout the power sources is the only way to insure you will not get injured. Employers are responsible to enforce the use of lockout procedures.

#### What Should You Cover?

- ❑ The most important and most overlooked information is the company safety policy. Ensure your employees are aware of your policy and consequences for non-compliance.
- ❑ Make sure your employees understand the hazards associated with the job (job safety analysis) they will be assigned.
- ❑ **For employees operating machinery and equipment, Lockout training that includes all energy hazards, must be the top priority.**
- ❑ **Each machine must have specific procedures to identify the power or energy sources that must be locked out so the machine is in a “Zero Energy” state.**
- ❑ Train employees to lockout thermal, gravity, electrical, hydraulic, pneumatic, chemical, or mechanical power or energy sources.
- ❑ Stress the importance of good housekeeping to eliminate potential hazards.
- ❑ Explain safety rules and emergency procedures. Point out the location of first-aid facilities.
- ❑ Explain how and when to use personal protective equipment and how to care for it.
- ❑ Inform employees to report unsafe conditions to you, as well as any accidents, even if there are no injuries or property damage.
- ❑ No safety-training program is complete without follow-up. Monitor employees during critical procedures. A new set of eyes may point out additional hazards that might have been overlooked.

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## Safety Briefing for March 2009

### **Topic: Eye Protection**

**Introduction:** I BET YOU DIDN'T KNOW if something happens to your eyes, there is no quick fix. Medical science can replace a lot of things on and in your body, but when your eyes are gone, they are gone forever. Wearing eye protection is one simple way to keep your eyes safe.

**Background:** Your eyes are delicate and very easy to damage. A hard blow is not necessary to cause injury. In fact, all it takes is a tiny sliver or speck of metal, a particle of dust, or trace of chemical to do a great deal of damage to your eyes.

**What must an employee know:** If you are exposed to dust, metal shavings, grinding wheels, flying wood debris, or other workplace hazards – you need to take the proper precautions and protect your eyes. If you do not, it is possible to lose the precious gift of sight, meaning you may never see your girlfriend, wife, husband, or children again.

**OSHA requirement:** It is a good thing to remember that OSHA rules establish minimum standards for both employer and employees. It deals with eye and face protection standards. It states that:

*“The employer shall ensure that each affected employee uses eye or face protection when exposed to eye or face hazards from flying particles, liquids, chemicals, acids or caustic liquids, chemical gasses or vapors, or potentially injurious light radiation”.*

When using eye protection, to take care of them so they can properly protect you. Here are a few tips:

- Make sure your glasses or other face protection fit. If they do not fit properly, you might be tempted not to wear them. If your safety glasses slip, seem crooked, or are too tight, take a few minutes and have them adjusted properly.
- Keep glasses and other forms of face protection clean. Dirty lenses lessen your visibility. Wash them regularly with mild soap and water or eyeglass cleaner, then polish with a soft dry cloth or a tissue. Anti-dust and anti-fog spray works well on both glass and plastic lenses.
- Keep your glasses in a case when you are not using them. Pits, scratches, or other damage can result if you stick your glasses in a pocket or toss them in a toolbox. Damage to lenses can lessen impact resistance, resulting in less than full protection.

Some other important eye safety tips are:

- ❑ If you wear contact lenses, remember: a contact lens was not designed for eye protection.
- ❑ Never try to remove foreign matter from your or other employee's eyes. Playing doctor will probably make the condition worse. Get to the company medical provider right away.
- ❑ Have your eyes examined periodically. Accidents are sometimes the result of poor vision.

Finally, if there is ever any doubt in your mind about eye protection needed on any job or in any location, consult your supervisor. Don't guess and possibly spend the rest of your life with the ultimate consequence of blindness.

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## Safety Meeting Presentation - April 2009



### FORKLIFT SAFETY

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**→ Make this meeting as effective as possible - conduct it where forklifts are used. This way, you can use live demonstrations to reinforce your message.**

About 100 workers are killed each year as a result of forklift accidents. About 1/4 of these fatalities are caused by overturning. Other common causes are workers being struck by materials, workers being struck by the forklift, and workers falling from the forklift.

Operating a forklift is not as simple as it looks. But with a little experience, it's not an impossible skill to master. Unfortunately, those who operate forklifts day in and day out have a tendency to take short cuts and to ignore basic safety rules. They develop the old "It can't happen to me" attitude.

#### **Identify Forklift Hazards**

Avoid becoming a statistic. Take the time to review forklift hazards and how to avoid them.

Tip-over and losing a load are the most common causes of forklift-related injuries. Some factors you need to consider include:

**The capacity of the forklift - can it handle the size and weight of your load?**

**Any odd characteristics of the load - is it top heavy, cylindrical or awkward?**

**The condition of the forklift - are the forks damaged or is there some other problem that could cause an accident?**

**Where you are and where you are going with the load - are there any obstacles, bumps, ramps, people, cross aisles or narrow passageways to consider?**

Other things going on that may be problematic - can co-workers see you on the forklift; can they hear you?

#### **Forklift Safety Rules**

1. Operate the forklift only if you've been trained
2. Maintain a safe following distance from other forklifts - about three vehicle lengths.
3. Follow our speed limit and other regulations
4. Drive with your load low - six or eight inches off the ground - and tilted slightly back
5. Exercise extra caution when driving over duckboards and bridge plates and make sure your load is within their capacity as well
6. Raise and lower your load only when you are stopped
7. Stop and sound the horn at intersections
8. Avoid sharp turns.
9. Keep you arms and legs inside the vehicle
10. Be sure to wear a hard hat and other protective equipment when necessary
11. Be sure your load is stable and secure
12. When leaving the forklift, lower the forks, neutralize the controls, shut it off and set the brakes

#### **Conclusion**

Failing to act responsibly when you're behind the wheel not only puts the load at risk, but puts you and co-workers in danger. Please keep this in mind each time you prepare to turn the key.



## Safety Briefing for May 2009

### **Topic: OPERATOR SAFETY – USING TABLE, EDGERS, GANG, RIP, OR TRIM SAWS**

**Introduction:** I BET YOU DIDN'T KNOW that the wood industry has been a part of America's history and success since the early pioneer days. Wood product industries have survived due to hardworking individuals who sacrificed and toiled to create a quality product.

**Background:** Saw operators perform a job that is often repetitive and monotonous. This can lead to lax safety habits. Don't let this happen to you. As operators of this equipment, you play an important role in the lumber industry.

**What must an employee know:** The first item of importance is proper and complete lockout/tagout procedures of each specific machine and its power sources. Also, provide your employees with training that stresses safety and you can eliminate accidents and contribute to an accident free environment.

Follow some basic safety rules to prevent severe injuries:

- ❑ Wear proper Personnel Protective Equipment (PPE) including kickback aprons, and hearing, eye, and foot protection.
- ❑ Check the alignment of your equipment before you begin work. Perform all adjustment and lubrications prior to starting the job.
- ❑ On equipment with kickback fingers, be sure the fingers are properly adjusted and serviceable.
- ❑ Ensure saw blades are sharp. Sharp blades will increase production and eliminate wear and tear on the machinery.
- ❑ Saw operators should always use a wood stick to remove scrap wood waste. Never put your hand near the saw blade while it is running or coasting to a stop.
- ❑ Keep distractions to a minimum around the machines and equipment. Do not let other employees draw your attention off your work. It could cost you a hand, finger, or arm.
- ❑ If the equipment is equipped with foot control pedals, make sure there is a protective cover (treadle guard) over the pedal to prevent accidental start-up or movement of equipment.
- ❑ If the equipment requires maintenance or repairs, be certain to follow the proper lockout/tagout procedures.
- ❑ Ensure all guards are put in place after maintenance is completed and prior to starting the machine.
- ❑ Never allow your employees to wear loose clothing around machine operations. It could get caught up in the moving parts.
- ❑ Housekeeping. Always keep areas around edger, Gang, rip, and trim saws free from debris.

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## Safety Meeting for June 2009

### **Topic : FIRST AID**

**Introduction:** I BET YOU DIDN'T KNOW that first-aid supplies must be provided and OSHA offers list for required supplies based upon the type of business and the number of workers you employ.

**What must an employee know:** Even a small scratch, cut, puncture wound or burn can become infected. And unless properly cared for, cleansed or protected, it can cause blood poisoning or introduction of dangerous organisms into the bloodstream. Additionally, if you give first aid to others, always protect yourself from exposure to bloodborne pathogens by wearing gloves, masks, and eye protection. Do not be foolish. Get first aid when you need it, even if you just have a small cut or splinter. While it is best to leave major first-aid treatment to those who have professional training, all workers should know basic first aid.

#### WHAT EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES NEED TO KNOW:

- ❑ Whatever you use as a dressing to stop the bleeding, it must remain in place until treated by a professional. If more dressing is required to absorb the blood, place it on top of the original dressing.
- ❑ In case of a broken bone, you should be able to apply a splint to immobilize the limb.
- ❑ If a victim is in contact with electricity, make sure the current is off before attempting to help the victim, or use a nonconductor, such as a dry wooden pole to remove the victim from the contact. If necessary, have an experienced person perform CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation).
- ❑ If the eye is splashed with an irritant, immediately flush the eye with clean water for at least 15 minutes.
- ❑ Never try to remove any objects from an eye with a sharp instrument. Grasping the upper lashes and pull the upper lid out and down. Often the object will attach to the inside of the upper lid and be swept away by tears. If the injury is serious, put a clean cloth or gauze pad over the eye.
- ❑ An average adult can lose one pint of blood in 15 to 20 minutes without serious danger. To stop heavy bleeding, first elevate the limb (if no fracture is suspected) and apply direct pressure to the affected area.
- ❑ Treating for Shock: ensure the victim can breath comfortably and place covers under and over victim. If they are unconscious place them on their side and monitor the airway.
- ❑ A deep puncture wound is perhaps the most likely to become infected; this is even more likely than the torn edges of a laceration. Apply antiseptics to cleanse the wound to prevent infection.
- ❑ Heat Exhaustion - may result from physical exertion in hot environments. Symptoms may include profuse sweating, weakness, paleness of the skin, rapid pulse, dizziness, nausea, headache, vomiting, and unconsciousness. The skin is cool and clammy with sweat. Body temperature may be normal or subnormal. First Aid - Rest in the shade or cool place. Drink plenty of fluids water.

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## Safety Meeting for July 2009

### **Topic : PNEUMATIC (Air) TOOL HAZARDS**

**Introduction:** I BET YOU DIDN'T KNOW that U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission and National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health data indicate that about 37,000 people go to emergency rooms every year with injuries from air tools and nail guns. Problems arise when a small scratch, cut, or puncture wound becomes infected. And unless properly cared for, cleansed or protected, it can cause lock jaw, blood poisoning or introduction of dangerous organisms into the bloodstream.

**What must an employee know:** Whether using a nail gun, grinder or other air tool, safety procedures must be followed to prevent injuries. When used properly, air tools can make a difficult job easy. But, when they are misused, severe injuries will occur. Take the time to train all employees on their safe use.

- ❑ Use extreme caution when using an air tool around other workers.
- ❑ All operators must review the owner's manual and understand the directions for the specific tool.
- ❑ Use specified pressures from the manufacturer for the tool.
- ❑ Always wear safety glasses when operating any air tool.
- ❑ For nail guns
  - Do not touch the trigger unless firing the tool against a work piece.
  - Never point the tool at anyone. Treat the tool like a firearm and assume it's loaded.
- ❑ Disconnect the air hose before clearing a jam or making adjustments on any air tool.
- ❑ Keep your free hand safely out of the way of the tool. Do not use it to hold a part near the impact point.
- ❑ Secure the hose when working on scaffolding or ladders to prevent the weight of the hose from dragging the tool off.
- ❑ Never try to remove any objects from an eye with a sharp instrument.
- ❑ A deep puncture wound is perhaps the most likely to become infected; this is even more likely than the torn edges of a laceration.
- ❑ Use first aid procedures or seek medical help to prevent infection.

When used properly, air tools can make a difficult easy. When misused, severe injuries will occur. Take the time to train

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## Safety Meeting for August 2009

### Topic : PROPER LIFTING TECHNIQUES

**Introduction: I BET YOU DIDN'T KNOW** the majority of work-related injuries in our industry involves the back. This is often a result due to improper lifting. Improper lifting can cause an immediate back problem, or can contribute to accumulated trauma and an eventual injury.

**Background:** The spine is made up of many small bones called vertebrae. In between each vertebra is a disc that acts like a cushion between the bones. Improper lifting can place undue pressure on the discs, causing them to be displaced and re-shaped and puts pressure on the nerves in the spinal column. This results in pain that can be quite severe and may require, at the least, rest; at the worst, surgery.

**What must an employee know:** When a person is standing straight, the back supports approximately 80% of the body's weight. In the case of a 200-pound person, the back is supporting approximately 160 pounds. When we bend at the waist, the weight that the back must support increases by six times (160 pounds X 6 = 960 pounds).

If we lift while bent over, the weight we lift is magnified by 6 times. A 45-pound weight, therefore, would cause the back to lift the equivalent of 270 pounds (6 X 45 = 270). This 200 pound person, bending at the waist, lifting 45 pounds, is actually putting the stress of 1230 pounds on his back. (960 pounds + 270 pounds = 1230).

The technique of proper lifting:

- Warm up before lifting; stretch with side and back bends.
- Let your abdomen, legs and buttocks do the work.
- Look for slip, trip, and fall hazards that your load must follow.
- Get close to the load and place your hands under the load.
- Bend your knees with feet slightly spread apart for balance.
- Keep head, shoulders and hips in a straight line. Do not twist. To change direction of a load, turn your entire body, including your feet.
- Lift the materials with your legs while holding materials tight. Make sure you keep good balance.
- When the load is too heavy, GET HELP.
- Push, rather than pull a load.
- Use lifting equipment for heavier loads (fork lift, hand truck, lift gate, pallet jack).



People who lead an inactive lifestyle are more prone to back injury. Walking, stretching and light weight lifting exercises will help to strengthen the back and abdominal muscles, which will better prepare the back for the lifting that must be done. Consult your physician before beginning an active exercise program.

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## Safety Meeting for September 2009

### **Topic: NEAR MISS – THE ONE THAT ALMOST HAPPENED**

**Introduction:** I BET YOU DIDN'T KNOW that a "near miss" as defined by Webster is: "A result that is nearly, but not quite, successful." What does this mean to our industry? It simply means that a serious accident *almost* occurred. Someone trips over a pallet, but doesn't fall. Two forklifts *almost* collide at a corner. A tool is dropped, but toes are missed...this time.

**Background:** Statistics tell us that for every 300 near misses there is one serious injury. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 4.2 million recordable injuries occurred last year. If we multiply each injury by 300, the result is 1.2 billion *near misses* a year. This equals about 9.5 near misses per worker. So what does this tell us about accidents? Look at the figures. If you reduce the number of near misses, probability tells us you will then reduce the number of injuries that happen.

### **What must an employee know: The Same Things That Cause Accidents Cause Near Misses:**

- ✚ Unsafe acts, such as improper lifting; walking under an overhead load; cutting, grinding, or chipping without safety glasses; not using proper Personal Protective Equipment, etc.
- ✚ Unsafe conditions, such as poorly maintained equipment, oil or grease on floors, welding leads that have been laid in walkways, trash and boxes that have been left in hallways, etc.
- ✚ Hurrying and taking risks to get a project done faster, or to wrap up a job at quitting time.
- ✚ Distractions or not concentrating on the task that is being performed.

### **Report Near Misses Before They Become Accidents:**

- ✚ Once a near miss occurs, report it immediately to the nearest foreman or supervisor. The potential for such incidents exists all over the workplace, so *all* employees—not just supervisors-- must help identify them.
- ✚ If the near miss is a result of an unsafe condition, don't continue to work under that condition until the problem has been corrected and your supervisor gives the okay to proceed.
- ✚ If the incident is a result of unsafe acts, be certain that everyone involved has been alerted to their actions before they continue with the job.

### **Near Misses Are A Warning:**

- ✚ Letting a near miss go unreported provides an opportunity for a serious accident to occur. Correcting these actions or conditions will enhance the safety within your facility and provide a better working environment for everyone involved. Don't let yourself or coworkers become statistics--report near misses to your supervisor.

***Prevent an Accident That's About To Happen!***

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## Safety Meeting for October 2009

### **Topic: Infectious Disease & First Aid Precautions**

**Introduction:** I BET YOU DIDN'T KNOW that many diseases, such as AIDS and Hepatitis, can be transmitted from saliva-to-blood, or from blood-to-blood contact. Individuals may have such a disease and not know it, because of the long incubation period. They may have contracted an infectious disease through blood transfusion or exposure to food that has been handled by an infected person

**Background:** At some time during your working career you may find it necessary to help a co-worker who has been seriously injured and is bleeding. First response is to assist but SLOW down and think. It is natural to be most concerned with helping the injured person at this time, but you should also think about protecting yourself from infection.

**What must an employee know:** Always follow "universal precautions" when there is a potential for contacting another's body fluids. This term means, "All injured persons should be considered *as if* they are infected with a bloodborne pathogen when administering first aid or medical attention."

- ❑ One of the best ways to protect yourself when giving first aid is by wearing rubber or latex gloves. This not only protects you, but protects the injured person from additional risk of infection as well. Even small finger cuts on your hands could provide entry for bacteria.
- ❑ All first aid kits should be stocked with rubber gloves that are packaged individually so they remain sanitary. Gloves should *never* be re-used.
- ❑ First aid kits should also be stocked with facemasks and glasses. If there is a chance of blood splattering, cover your mucous membranes-mouth, nose and eyes-with a mask and goggles.
- ❑ Mouth-to-mouth resuscitation offers another potential for exposure to infectious disease. You can protect yourself through the use of a disposable microshield or S-tube which should also be supplied in first aid kits. These plastic devices prevent saliva transfer and limit the potential for infection from a variety of infectious diseases.
- ❑ Blood-contaminated gloves, clothing, bandages and absorbent materials should be properly deposited in leak proof containers that are clearly marked with the red biohazard symbol.
- ❑ Wash hands and other exposed skin immediately and *thoroughly* with soap and warm water if exposed to blood or body fluids. To be safe, you should also be tested for pathogens.
- ❑ If bleeding occurs in the workplace, the area of the spill should be disinfected. A mild solution of water and household chlorine bleach (10-to-1) is an accepted method. Someone who touches a blood spill even hours later could be subject to infection if disinfectant isn't used.
- ❑ Your workplace may have a "Designated First Responder," who is well trained in providing first aid and avoiding exposure to infectious diseases. But you too could be on the spot when a co-worker is injured and needs immediate help.
- ❑ You may wish to receive bloodborne pathogens training yourself, from the American Red Cross or another reputable firm. With hard-to-combat infectious diseases on the rise, take no chances!

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## **Safety Briefing for November 2009**

### **Topic: Overhead Hazards**

In a previous safety meeting we discussed some trends associated with the logging industry. For your review, trends are described as a reoccurring type of incident or act. Previously, the trends of working too close and slip, trips and falls were reviewed. This column will deal with overhead hazards; remember to **look up!**

Over the past ten years, we have had serious life threatening injuries and deaths have occur and the majority have happened in the last three months of each year; more specifically, most happen during the holiday season. As we come to that time of the year again, we must not become complacent. At any time of the year, whether spring, summer, fall or winter, we can lose focus on our jobs in the woods. All year long, the most significant problem we have faced has been overhead hazards. Unfortunately our jobs are inherently dangerous; one wrong decision can prove catastrophic in a heartbeat. You must stay focused on the job at hand. Please take the time to have a safety briefing with your crew on **OVERHEAD HAZARDS**.

- Use approved, well maintained personal protective equipment (PPE) for head protection.
- Look and scan at least 50 ahead on your ground path.
- Look and scan for at least 100 feet ahead for all overhead hazards.
- Do not place your body under anything that can fall due to gravity or the loss of hydraulic pressure.
- Maintain at least two tree lengths from all felling areas. (300 feet or 100 yards)
- Be visible, were high visibility clothing.
- Maintain communication with everyone in the work area.
- Never walk into a work area with running or moving equipment until the equipment is stopped, engine cut-off and the hydraulic attachments grounded.

**In nearly every accident, it is the ground personnel who are most at risk from hazards from above. As a team, work together and stay focused. Take the time to look for overhead hazards, identify the hazard, tell everyone about it, and remove it or flag it to keep personnel away. Your proper decisions will result in a happy holiday season for all. LOOK UP AND STAY ALIVE!**

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## Safety Briefing for December 2009

### **Topic: Workplace Fire Safety**

**Introduction: I BET YOU DIDN'T KNOW** according to National Safety Council, losses due to workplace fires in one recent year totaled \$3.1 billion. Of the more than 5,000 persons who lost their lives, an estimated 360 were workplace deaths associated with fires.

**Background:** There is a long and tragic history of workplace fires in this country. One of the most notable was in Hamlet, North Carolina, where 25 workers died in a fire in a poultry processing plant. Locked fire exits and inadequate fire extinguishing systems were the determining factors.

**What must an employee know:** Employees should conduct workplace fire inspections for compliance with standards for fire safety. OSHA standards require employers to provide proper exits, fire fighting equipment, emergency plans, and employee training to prevent fire deaths and injuries in the workplace.

### **Some of the areas that should be addressed:**

#### **Fire Exits:**

- Each workplace building must have at least two means of escape for fire emergency. Fire doors must not be blocked or locked to prevent emergency use by employees.
- Exit routes from buildings must be clear and free of obstructions and properly marked with signs designating exits from the building.

#### **Portable Fire Extinguishers**

- Each workplace building must have the proper type of fire extinguisher(s) for the fire hazards present.
- Only approved fire extinguishers are permitted in workplaces, and they must be kept in good operating condition. Proper maintenance and inspection of this equipment is required of each employer.

#### **Emergency Evacuation Planning**

- A written emergency action plan must include evacuation routes used and procedures to be followed by employees. Procedures for accounting for all evacuated employees must be part of the plan. The written plan must be available for employee review.
- An employee alarm system must be available for emergency alerting for evacuation. The alarm system may be voice communication or sound signals such as bells, whistles or horns.

#### **Fire Prevention Plan**

- A written fire prevention plan that details the area(s) of concern to guard against fires.
- Procedures for storage and cleanup of flammable materials waste must be included in the plan.
- Procedures for controlling workplace ignition sources must be addressed in the plan.
- Include gathering points for roll call if an incident occurs.
- Post telephone numbers for easy reporting.

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