

## Working around heavy equipment

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### SUPERVISOR TALK

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#### Moving equipment

The best way to avoid danger from self-propelled units, such as cranes, dozers and trucks, is to keep our eyes open and to stay out of the way. The operator does his or her best to keep from running over anyone. But with all of the commotion on a construction site, he or she might not see you. And don't rely on hearing a horn or an alarm. A construction site, as you know, is not only busy, it's noisy.

Be careful when a vehicle is backing up. Never take a chance and try to run behind a vehicle that's backing up. If you slip and fall, you may be injured or killed.

#### Riding on or in vehicles

Only ride in approved seats. Do not stand or ride on running boards, drawbars, truck beds, trailers, or equipment buckets. Riding on the top of a load is especially dangerous. You may fall off if the load shifts or be crushed when going under low clearances. When riding in transport vehicles, keep your arms and legs inside where they belong and use the seatbelt.

#### Walking beside vehicles

Don't walk alongside moving equipment. You can be injured or killed if the vehicle slides or turns, or if the load shifts, or if you slip. Don't walk under loads on cranes or hoists. Be careful not to touch the frame of a crane when there are power lines in the area. If the crane touches one of them, you'll be electrocuted. Also, electricity can jump several feet depending on voltage and weather conditions. Stay clear of crane counterweights that could strike you when swinging a load.

#### Other equipment

Moving equipment of any kind is dangerous. If, for example, you're working on portable staging, scaffolding or work platforms, stay off while it's being moved unless it is designated for you to be on it.

#### Seatbelts

Always wear your seatbelt. Seatbelts prevent injuries and protect the operator by keeping him or her inside the cab. Also, seatbelts help protect the operator should the piece of equipment be struck by another vehicle, especially large trucks on roadways.

#### Accessing and exiting the cab

Many employee injuries occur when operators improperly access or exit the cab as a result of slipping or jumping down onto uneven ground. These injuries typically involve a shoulder, knee or ankle injury. Always face the piece of equipment and maintain a 3-point contact. (Two hands and one foot, or two feet and one hand). Never jump down.

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# Working around heavy equipment

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Additional topics covered:

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## Housekeeping – a simple way to make your job easier

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### SUPERVISOR TALK

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Have you ever thought of ways to make your job easier? Perhaps you've wondered if someone could come up with better tools and equipment. But, there is another way, too. One that not only makes your work easier, but safer – practicing good housekeeping.

#### **Poor housekeeping can cause accidents**

A nail in a thrown out two-by-four penetrates a shoe and punctures a foot. A pile of trash catches fire. A cluttered walkway causes an employee to trip and fall. Poor housekeeping is the cause of all these accidents.

#### **Consequences can range from a slight cut to a loss of life**

Some poor housekeeping accidents don't cause much damage. Maybe a small cut, a scuffed elbow, or a bruised leg. Others can have disastrous results involving the loss of life and property.

#### **Once-a-day or once-a-week cleanup is not enough**

Housekeeping is a continuous process and everyone must participate throughout the workday. The following are some ways to eliminate the most common housekeeping problems that can cause accidents in the workplace.

**Nails:** Stepping on a nail can cause a serious injury. Pull all nails from scrap lumber. Then throw the scrap in trash containers or pile it neatly where it won't be in the way.

**Metal straps and bands:** How many times have you gotten tangled up in straps or bands? After removing them, pick them up immediately and put them in a trash container. It's easy to trip on banding if it is left lying around. Be sure to throw away other scrap material immediately, too.

Have you ever stepped on a pipe, bolt, dowel, conduit, or small piece of reinforcing steel? You probably twisted your ankle or at a minimum lost your balance. Keep round scrap material out of the way. Put it in the trash. Or, if it's going to be used, store it in a safe location.

**Extension cords:** Extension cords are another tripping hazard. If you must run an extension cord across a walkway, hang it from the ceiling where it won't cause anyone to trip. But be sure to hang it high enough so a person walking under it doesn't get tangled.

**Food rubbish:** Lunch bags and other food rubbish not only can cause trips and falls, but also fires. Discard them in trashcans after you have finished eating. Don't leave trash around to clutter up the workplace or to attract animals and insects. It's especially dangerous to leave bottles littered on the ground. Not only are they a tripping hazard, but they can break and cut someone.

**Special containers:** Some items should be stored in separate trash containers. These include oily or solvent-soaked rags and empty cans that contain flammable liquids, such as paint, thinner and glue. Remember to keep these trash containers covered.

**Storage areas:** There are numerous storage areas throughout the workplace. Be sure to keep these areas organized. This not only is safer, but also enables you to find what you want more quickly and to get it more easily.

**Slipping hazards:** During the course of work, it is almost impossible not to have grease or oil on the floors of a new building or in a work area. And naturally, someone can slip and get hurt. Clean up slipping hazards immediately. This also is true for water and/or ice during cold weather.

#### **Safe housekeeping pays off**

It's easier to work in a clean area than in a cluttered junk pile. And, as we have shown, a clean workplace means a safe workplace. Good housekeeping is everyone's responsibility.



Housekeeping – a simple way to make your job easier

SUPERVISOR TALK RECORD

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Additional topics covered:

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## Working around cranes

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### SUPERVISOR TALK

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#### Experience can be the worst teacher

Experience teaches us a lot about working around cranes. But often the lessons are costly.

For example: A laborer carrying a bag of cement walked between a crawler crane and a building column. The crane swung around and fatally crushed him between the counterweight and the column.

On another job, a workman was leaning on the crane frame, talking with one of his buddies. The load came in contact with a live power line and he was electrocuted.

Today, we'll discuss things we should and should not do when working around this equipment.

#### Stay out from under

It's a smart move on our part to stay out from under suspended hooks and loads. There's always a chance that during a lift, the load could shift and fall. It may be a slim chance because of the good rigging techniques we use. But once is all it takes to cause a serious injury or a fatality. Also, stay clear of swinging loads. The big "I" beam can squash you like a bug if you get in the way.

#### You're not safe when not seen

Remember, the crane operator may not see you. He or she is concentrating on moving the crane into position or swinging the load. Think of the swing area of the crane as "no-man's land." Stay out of this swing radius area. The crane will have no sympathy if you get in the way. And it won't come out second best. I'll guarantee that.

#### Other dangers

Have you ever heard of a PLP? It stands for Public Leaning Post. A lot of people think they can use the crane as a PLP. However, they're asking for a shocking experience if the load or boom touches a live wire. So don't lean on the crane. Stay clear. It's too bad the workman we talked about earlier didn't take this advice. He'd still be around today.

Of course, with all the overhead work going on, we always should wear our hard hats. Concrete slopped out of an overhead bucket can crack an unprotected skull.

#### Use extra care around cranes

The crane is a fantastic piece of equipment. It saves us an enormous amount of work. But like anything else that's big and powerful, it can be dangerous. That's why I've taken the time to stress that you need to be extra careful when working around cranes.

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# Working around cranes

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## Overhead loads on job sites

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### SUPERVISOR TALK RECORD

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#### If it's in the air, it's dangerous

In the workplace we get so accustomed to loads being lifted around us that we often ignore them if we are not part of the crew involved in the lift. Every load suspended overhead should be considered dangerous. This includes loads being hoisted by cranes, backhoes, and chain-falls. Loads can fall due to misuse of the equipment, improper set-up, overloading, improper rigging, or loose loads.

#### Let's review

Let's review some of the rules that can help keep us from getting injured by falling loads:

1. Only qualified individuals should be involved in the lift: operator, lift director, rigger, and signalpersons.
2. Where practical, barricade or rope off the area under the path of the load. If the path cannot be barricaded or roped off, direct all workers in the area to stay clear or schedule the lift when workers are not in the vicinity.
3. Ensure all workers on the site are wearing hardhats and eye protection.
4. Tag lines should always be used where needed. Tag lines should be long enough that someone can hold the tag line without being struck by the load, but not so long that they create a greater hazard by snagging on other objects. Some instances where they are required include:
  - When rotation of the load is hazardous
  - When hoisting a load near scaffolds
  - Steel erection
5. Only qualified signalpersons should give signals to the crane or backhoe operator. If you are assigned the job of directing the crane or backhoe, follow these basic rules:
  - Always use standard hand signals or voice commands to direct the crane operator.
  - Stand in the clear and place yourself where the operator can plainly see you and you can see the operator.
  - If you can't see the load and another person is signaling to you, be sure everyone is in the clear before you give the signal to the operator. Remember that it takes time to relay signals. Consider using radio communication between the crane operator and the signalperson.
  - Never permit a load to be lowered, raised, or swung over a worker's head. If the operator can see the load, it's the operator's responsibility – without exception – to see that this rule is followed.
  - Keep the load a safe distance from power lines.

#### Discussion

Discuss current operations at the jobsite which involve overhead loads. Are there any unique hazards involved in the lifts? Are special safety procedures required?

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# Overhead loads on job sites

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Additional topics covered: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Crane boom failure

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### SUPERVISOR TALK

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Crane booms are designed to support substantial weight. However, when a crane is misused, not set up properly, or is in poor condition, the boom can fail. As a result of boom failure, substantial damage to the equipment, as well as serious injury, including fatalities, can occur. Persons working with cranes should be familiar with common causes of boom failure so they can identify conditions or operations that could lead to boom failure.

#### Common causes of boom failure

The following are common causes of boom failure:

- Overloading – do not exceed the rated capacity found in the manufacturer’s load chart
- Improper calculation of load weight. Remember to include the weight of all rigging and auxiliary load handling devices
- Backward stability – understand the conditions that can cause a crane to turn over backwards.
- Sudden release of load on a near-vertical boom
- Boom stops are not properly adjusted
- Two blocking
- Attempting side pulls
- Load hitting the boom
- Walking or turning too fast, causing the load to swing and twist the boom
- Failure to use tagline or other control on a load
- Crane is not level, causing side load on the boom
- Not using outriggers per manufacturer’s instructions or outriggers are improperly blocked
- Counterweight is not installed per manufacturer’s specifications
- Using boom with twisted members or braces. Makeshift repairs
- Improper, or lack of, maintenance
- Poor brakes or worn clutch
- Failure to inspect the boom
- Careless operation

#### You don’t want to make the headlines

Crane boom failures can have devastating results. Persons working with cranes need to help ensure safe work practices are followed to prevent boom failure.

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# Crane boom failure

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## Crane booms and power lines

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### SUPERVISOR TALK

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Most of you who have spent time in heavy construction know of or have heard of someone who has been killed or severely shocked or burned when a crane boom hit an energized power line. When a job is being planned, power lines should be located and the voltages determined. Provisions should be made to eliminate the danger by having the current shut off or to minimize the danger by setting up safe procedures. Make sure you understand and comply with OSHA regulations for construction, 1926.1407 -1926.1411, when working around power lines.

#### A typical case

A change of work area made it necessary to position a crane near a power line. With the boom in the air, the crane was rolled forward and then stopped. Supposedly, it was far enough away from the line to allow the boom to be lowered without hitting the wires. But the boom didn't clear.

#### Who was at fault?

Who was guilty of poor judgment? It was the whole crew, which includes the operator and the crew who guided the movement and gave the signals.

What should the workers have done? Obviously, they should have stopped the crane farther back. They also should have kept a close watch as the boom was being lowered, and signaled the operator to stop when it became evident that the boom was going to hit the power line. Had they done so, the crane could have backed off and completed the lowering without a mishap.

But, what about the operator? He should have allowed enough distance to provide clearance, regardless of the ground men's lack of judgment.

All crewmembers share the responsibility for preventing accidents in situations such as the one described. All must be alert at all times; first to protect himself or herself, and second, to protect the other person.

#### Worth repeating

Use good judgment when you're working close to a power line. Ensure that all employees have been trained on the OSHA standards pertaining to this scope of work before the work begins. Locate loading, unloading and storage sites away from overhead power lines to decrease the chance of accidental boom contact. Electrocution isn't a pleasant prospect. But when a crane boom gets too close to a power line, that's exactly what can happen.

#### Additional information

1926.1407 Power line safety (up to 350 kV) – assembly and disassembly.

1926.1408 Power line safety (up to 350 kV) – equipment operations.

1926.1409 Power line safety (over 350 kV).

1926.1410 Power line safety (all voltages) – equipment operations closer than the Table A zone.

1926.1411 Power line safety – while traveling.

Travelers Technical Bulletin: 050503 Operating cranes near power lines

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# Crane booms and power lines

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## Lifting safely

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### SUPERVISOR TALK

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Did you know you may be at risk for serious injury if you do not lift correctly? Improper lifting may cause back injuries that can take months or even years to heal. Sometimes the injuries are disabling or permanent. This can be prevented if you learn to lift correctly.

#### Preparing to lift

If the load looks too heavy, do not lift it by yourself. Ask for assistance and use mechanical aids when possible. Be sure to wear safety shoes in case you drop something. If the object has rough or sharp edges, wear properly fitting work gloves that are in good condition. This will help you to get a better grip as well as protect your hands.

#### Making the lift

Crouch down with the load between your legs and get a good grip on the object. As you stand up, lift with your legs, keeping your back vertical and the load as close to your body as possible. If you have to place the load to your left or to your right, do not twist your body — move your feet instead. To lower a load, simply reverse the knees bent/back vertical procedure.

#### Review

- Do not lift more than you can handle. Ask for help with heavy loads and use mechanical aids when possible.
- Wear safety shoes.
- If the object is rough or sharp, wear gloves.
- Lift with your legs and not your back.
- Keep the load close to your body.
- Do not twist your body when placing a load to one side or the other. Move your feet instead.
- When it comes to lifting, do not break your back. Instead, lift right and give your back a break.

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## Lifting safely

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## Near misses – pay attention to warning signals

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### SUPERVISOR TALK

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Near misses are incidents that could have caused an accident, but didn't. How many times have you shrugged off a near miss and not given it a second thought? Next time, think twice. Reporting a near miss could prevent a serious accident from occurring.

One study shows that for every 330 incidents of the same type, 300 produce no injuries, 29 produce minor injuries and one produces a major injury. (Of course, these statistics vary with the job being done.) The problem is we never know which time the major injury will occur. Near misses are warnings. If we heed these warnings and look for causes, we may be able to prevent injury or damage.

#### Here's an example

- You're going up some stairs and your foot slips on a loose tread. You are able to regain your balance and prevent a fall. No harm done.
- Another worker comes along. She slips on the same loose tread and has to grab the handrail to prevent herself from falling. Again, no harm done.
- A third worker walks up the stairs carrying a box. He slips on the same loose tread and falls, breaking his ankle.
- Could this accident have been prevented? Yes. If the two near miss warnings had been reported rather than ignored, the tread could have been fixed and the accident not occurred.

#### Handling a near miss

Be sure to report all near misses to your supervisor. Near misses should be handled in the same manner as an accident. The incident should be investigated and equipment taken out of service or the scene secured, if necessary. Then, corrective action should be taken to prevent a reoccurrence. Often the cause is apparent and corrective action can be taken care of immediately, such as nailing the loose tread that was mentioned in the example above.

With some near misses, a more formal investigation may be required. For example, in the incident described above, you find that the initial nails used to secure the treads were too short and feel nailing them back in may not be sufficient. In this case, a more formal investigation is needed to ensure the tread is fixed correctly and that all stairs of similar design on site are examined and the tread securement improved to prevent a fall.

#### Keep the right attitude

Never take the attitude that a near miss is a fluke and will not happen again. If it happens once, it is likely to happen again. And next time could result in a serious accident. Report all near misses and ensure corrective action is taken.

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# Near misses – pay attention to warning signals

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## Don't take hand tool safety for granted

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### SUPERVISOR TALK

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#### **Too many people take hand tool safety for granted, both at home and at work**

Household jobs usually are light, so sometimes you can get away with using a tool improperly or substituting one for another. Our work, however, makes it imperative to use the correct tool for the right job. Choosing an incorrect tool, using it the wrong way or using one in poor condition can result in injury or shoddy work.

#### **Choose the right tool for the job**

Would you use an ax to drive nails? No, you would probably use a claw hammer. It's the less obvious misuse of tools that sometimes gives us the most trouble, like using a screwdriver or a file as a pry bar. Problems also can come from trying to get by with a tool that's not the right size for the job. A common mistake is using a wrench that's the wrong size for the nut, or one with a handle that's too short. This can result in scraped knuckles or a broken wrench.

How many times have you seen a person slip a cheater pipe over a wrench handle for more leverage on a tight nut? In many cases, the cheater pipe slips off the handle and the worker loses his or her balance and falls. And often it's off a ladder.

Don't take chances. Get the right tool, even if it takes you a few minutes longer. You'll probably save yourself lots of time in the long run.

#### **Only use tools in good condition**

A hammer's head that comes off is less dangerous than one that has a head that just wiggles a little. In the first case, we know the hammer is dangerous and fix it. In the second case, we never know when the head will twist enough to glance off the work, or just fly off.

Tools in proper condition have handles and heads that are solid and fit securely, and cutting edges that are sharp. It's usually the dull tool that hurts you. Tools should be kept clean of dirt and grease. If a tool doesn't meet these qualifications, don't use it. Otherwise, you're asking for trouble.

#### **Use tools properly**

Few of us are experts when it comes to using every type of tool. If you don't know how to use a tool, don't be afraid to ask someone who does. Here are a few tips for using tools properly:

1. Pull a wrench, don't push.
2. Use the full handle of the hammer. If not, you could lose control.
3. Always cut away from yourself.
4. Be sure to wear eye protection if there is a chance of chips or flying particles.
5. Don't use a file without a handle.
6. Don't use a chisel or screwdriver as a pry bar.

#### **Carry and store tools safely**

If you carry tools in your hands, keep sharp or cutting edges covered and hold them away from you.

Use a toolbox or belt when carrying many tools. Don't carry them in your pockets. Keep the toolbox in order so you can easily find the tool you need without getting cut or injured.

If someone wants to borrow one of your tools, hand it to them - don't toss it.

Hand tool safety depends on the right tool for the job – in proper condition – used correctly – and carried and stored safely.



# Don't take hand tool safety for granted

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## SUPERVISOR TALK RECORD

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How the topic applies to this job:

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Additional topics covered: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Shortcuts to your destination on construction sites

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### SUPERVISOR TALK

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#### Taking shortcuts is a common practice

Everyone takes a shortcut at one time or another. Kids jump the fence instead of using the gate. Pedestrians cross streets between intersections. In many cases, a shortcut involves danger.

#### Break the habit

If you have a habit of taking dangerous shortcuts, break that habit now. Shortcuts can result in injury or even death.

A worker tried to cross an opening by swinging on reinforcing rods. He slipped and fell 20 feet onto a concrete floor. If he had taken a few moments to walk around the opening, he would be alive today.

#### Avoid dangerous situations

If you are told to move to a particular work area, you are expected to take the safe route — not the shorter, more hazardous one. Avoiding dangerous shortcuts is up to you. And it's your responsibility to warn anyone else you see taking shortcuts.

#### What if there's no safe way to get there

Let your supervisor know. They will see that the necessary means of access is provided.

#### Shortcuts are even more dangerous at heights

Even though the job may only take a few minutes, don't climb on falsework or an improvised platform. Use a ladder or scaffold. And don't go from one elevation to another by climbing a column or sliding down a rope. Ladders, steps, and walkways are built for safe passage, as well as convenience. Use them.

#### Remember

The safe way isn't always the shortest way, but it is the surest way.

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## Shortcuts to your destination on construction sites

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### SUPERVISOR TALK RECORD

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## Personal protective equipment - hard hats

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### SUPERVISOR TALK

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#### Always wear a hard hat

Some workers do not worry about accidents, especially if they have never been injured before. But no one knows when a piece of concrete, a small rock, or a tool is going to fall and land on their head. As a matter of fact, there are very few situations when a hard hat should not be worn on a construction job site.

#### Hard hats serve several purposes

Hard hats not only reduce the chances of serious injury resulting from falling objects, but they also protect workers in case they accidentally bump their heads on things – for instance, on machinery, ductwork, ceiling tie wires and forms. Non-conductive hard hats protect against electrical shock and burns. Metal hard hats should never be worn around electrical work.

#### Hard hat use and care

1. Always wear your hard hat forward, never backwards.
2. Ensure it fits properly. Adjust the suspension systems to maintain clearance between your head and the shell of the hat.
3. Don't put anything under the hat except your head. This includes cigarettes, notebooks, etc.
4. Store it in a safe place when it is not being used. Clean the hard hat regularly with a mild soap.
5. Don't modify your hard hat by drilling holes in it for ventilation, painting it, etc.
6. Hard hats should be replaced when damaged, or routinely every 3 to 5 years to ensure proper protection.

#### Some common complaints and the real truth

We sometimes hear the following complaints about hard hats. But is there any truth to them?

- "It's too heavy." Hard hats weigh only a few ounces more than a cloth cap; however, the extra protection you get is worth that extra weight.
- "It's too hot." Measurements taken in hot weather show that the temperature under a hard hat is often cooler than it is outside.
- "It gives me a headache." Getting hit on the head from an object that has fallen two floors will give you a worse headache. There is, however, no medical reason why a properly adjusted hard hat should cause a headache. Don't alter the suspension system or the hard hat because you won't get the designed protection.
- "It won't stay on." In a high wind, it won't. But a chin strap will solve this problem. Otherwise, you will find that a hard hat stays put no matter how much stooping or bending you have to do – if it's fitted properly.
- "It's noisy." That's your imagination. In fact, tests show that properly worn hard hats will shield your ears from noise to some extent.

#### Useless unless you wear it

The hard hat is a useful piece of safety equipment. But like any other protective device, it must be properly adjusted and worn and kept in good condition to give you maximum protection. Don't be a hard head – get in the hard hat habit.

**Note: A Supervisor Talk Record Form can be found on the last page.**



# Personal protective equipment – hard hats

## SUPERVISOR TALK RECORD

How the topic applies to this job:

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Additional topics covered: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Asbestos awareness

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### SUPERVISOR TALK

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The issue of asbestos and its related problems is not new. The ancient Greeks were the first documented users.

In fact, the word asbestos has Greek origins meaning “inextinguishable.” Because of its useful properties, asbestos was commonly woven into cloth. Sadly, many of the slaves weaving this cloth developed lung problems. History also tells us that the Romans used napkins made of asbestos and cleaned them by throwing them into a fire.

Asbestos exists naturally in the environment in small bundles of fibers. When it is broken down into individual fibers, it is light enough to remain suspended in the air. Once in the air, these barbed fibers can be inhaled into the lungs where they become permanently trapped. Over many years, these trapped fibers can cause serious health problems like asbestosis, mesothelioma and lung cancer.

Asbestosis is an irreversible disease, which can take more than 25 to 40 years to develop. Similar to emphysema, it causes scarring of the lung tissue and restricts breathing. It also reduces the ability of the lungs to absorb oxygen. The development of asbestosis usually requires a relatively high, long-term exposure.

Mesothelioma is a rare form of cancer that targets the lining of the chest and abdominal cavity. Exposure to asbestos is the cause of 98 percent of mesothelioma cases. After an exposure to asbestos, it may take up to 30 years for mesothelioma to develop. Unlike asbestosis, mesothelioma may develop after only a short exposure.

Lung cancer from asbestos exposure cannot be distinguished from lung cancer caused by other reasons. Asbestos workers who smoke are 15 times more likely to develop lung cancer than a non-smoking asbestos worker.

If asbestos can be broken down, abraded or crushed by hand pressure, it is called “friable.” Asbestos is most hazardous when it is friable because it releases fibers into the air. Sprayed on or troweled on insulation containing asbestos can be highly friable. Intact asbestos floor tile is not.

Asbestos that is in a solid form (e.g., ceiling or floor tiles) will not release asbestos fibers unless the object is somehow disturbed or damaged. For example, the breaking of ceiling tiles containing asbestos or the drilling of holes into drywall mud containing asbestos would release the fibers. However, the same objects, if left undisturbed, would be relatively safe.

Asbestos has many fine qualities. It’s strong; pliant; doesn’t burn, conduct heat or electricity; and is chemical resistant. Before asbestos was discovered to be harmful, it was used in more than 3,000 products. A few examples of these products are:

- Ceiling tiles
- Drywall muds
- Fire curtains
- Floor tiles and mastics
- Pipe and structural steel insulation
- Roofing felts
- Transite shingles and pipes

Today, few products are still produced using asbestos. Therefore, exposure most often occurs when removing asbestos or during the renovation of older buildings. Lower level exposure also may occur during maintenance operations on certain brake and clutch assemblies or during the abrasive cleaning of floors with asbestos floor tile.

Take proper precautions when dealing with asbestos- containing materials. If you are not sure if a material contains asbestos, get it tested. You cannot “eyeball” a material to tell if it contains asbestos.

## Asbestos awareness

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### Discussion Topics:

- Identify common places where workers may encounter asbestos.
- Identify methods used to prevent exposure to asbestos.

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RISK CONTROL

REDUCE RISK. PREVENT LOSS. SAVE LIVES.

# Asbestos awareness

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## SUPERVISOR TALK RECORD

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How the topic applies to this job:

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Additional topics covered: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Accident investigations – worker responsibilities

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### SUPERVISOR TALK

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#### Don't wait until an accident happens

Often we become aware of hazardous conditions only after someone is hurt or seriously injured. If you see an unsafe act or condition, don't ignore it. You could be gambling on you or someone else getting hurt.

Be sure to tell people if you see them working in an unsafe manner. Wouldn't you expect others to have the same consideration for you? If you see an unsafe condition, correct it. If you can't correct it, talk to your supervisor right away.

#### Accident investigation

Accidents are unfortunate events that we strive to prevent. However, some good can come out of every accident if a thorough accident investigation is conducted. Investigations can produce information that can be used to prevent a similar mishap from occurring in the future. Some workers refuse to cooperate with investigations because they mistakenly believe that its purpose is to put blame on someone. However, without full cooperation from everyone, inaccurate conclusions may be reached as to the cause of the incident and proper measures may not be taken to prevent a reoccurrence.

#### If you see an accident

Contact emergency personnel immediately and assist at the accident scene as needed. After the scene is secured or you have been relieved of your responsibilities, make a mental note of everything that occurred and the conditions that existed before the accident. Ask yourself the following questions:

1. Where was I (and others) when the accident happened?
2. What was I doing?
3. What equipment was involved?
4. Where was the injured person and what work was being done?
5. What was the sequence of events?

Retain these things in your memory or write them down. Remember that others were in a different position and may not have seen things as you did. Everyone's input is needed.

#### Cooperate in the investigation

When the investigator asks questions about the accident, give the facts as you recall them. If you omit or change information to protect someone, the causes of the accident cannot be accurately determined to help prevent the same thing from happening again. Next time you may be the victim.

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# Accident investigations – workers responsibilities

## SUPERVISOR TALK RECORD

How the topic applies to this job:

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Additional topics covered: \_\_\_\_\_

**Attendees:**

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## Hearing protection

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### SUPERVISOR TALK

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Take a moment and consider going through life with a constant ringing in your ears. Imagine trying to communicate with your friends, family and co-workers if you became partially or even completely deaf. Think of the changes you would need to make to adjust to not being able to hear or communicate with the rest of the world. Wearing the proper forms of personal protective equipment (PPE) can help prevent hearing loss due to noise exposure.

There are two main categories of hearing protection: earplugs and earmuffs. Both come in a variety of types and sizes and have their own advantages and disadvantages.

Earplugs are either disposable or reusable. Disposable earplugs are cylindrical roll-down plugs. They are rolled into a small cylinder before being inserted into the ear. They then expand within the ear canal. Roll-down earplugs can be difficult for some people to manipulate and using dirty hands to roll them to the proper size can cause ear problems. Plain cotton is not an acceptable protective device.

Another style of earplugs connects to a band or a cord. These are usually easier to keep track of and can hang from the employee's neck when not in use. Many corded earplugs have the same roll-down earplug at the end of the cord and have the same principles as mentioned previously. Banded earplugs were designed for easy insertion and removal, but not to be worn for extended periods of time.

Earmuffs resemble stereo headphones. They have a molded plastic cup that seals around the ear with either a foam or fluid cushion. Ears must be fully encapsulated within the cup in order for the device to be effective. This type of hearing protection is susceptible to environmental contamination and high temperatures can make them uncomfortable to wear. However, they are effective when used with earplugs in extremely high noise areas.

#### Discussion topics:

- Identify work areas where hearing protection is necessary.
- Identify PPE available for the work area. Does it sufficiently meet the needs of the workers?
- Discuss engineering and work practice strategies that could be used to eliminate the need to wear PPE in that area.
- Discuss how being hearing impaired can affect a person's life.

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# Hearing protection

## SUPERVISOR TALK RECORD

How the topic applies to this job:

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Additional topics covered: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Post-injury response

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### SUPERVISOR TALK RECORD

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Our goal is to work safely and to eliminate all accidents. If an accident does happen, we want to make sure that you receive immediate medical treatment and recover as quickly as possible. Getting injured on the job can sometimes mean a lot more than a trip to the emergency room and some minor, or perhaps even major, aches and pains. Too often, untreated or poorly treated injuries can lead to:

- Medical complications, which can result in time away from work
- Money problems and uncertainty about your ability to pay the bills.
- Worries about your ability to do any job in the future.
- Confusion about benefits you might have coming to you.

Without a step-by-step program of care, even the best efforts and good intentions can often fall short. As the injured worker, it is important that you work within the system to ensure you receive the best care.

#### How does the post-injury process work?

If you are injured on the job, always report the injury to your supervisor, no matter how minor. By reporting injuries before you leave work, many potential complications can be successfully avoided. These could include:

- Delays in treatment, or even poor treatment.
- Long absences from your job.
- Potential paperwork delays holding up insurance benefits.

Your supervisor and/or the person responsible for safety and injury response will first record the injury. If you need treatment by a doctor, arrangements will be made for transportation to a quality medical provider to provide the best treatment possible. Discuss with the doctor any limitations or restrictions you may have as a result of the injury as they relate to your job. Communicate these restrictions and limitations to your supervisor so an assessment can be made as to whether you can continue to do your job, with or without modifications. In some cases a temporary job may be available within your restrictions/limitations.

If your recovery requires any time away from work, a safety representative or your supervisor will call to see if you need anything in the way of medical treatment, personal belongings, etc. Their job is simply to help you return to work in any way that's safely possible.

Assist in the accident investigation process. Your supervisor will ask for your help in finding out the cause of the accident so that it can be prevented from happening again. Report any hazards.

#### Safety reminders:

- Report all injuries.
- Report accident-related restrictions or limitations to your supervisor or human resources personnel.
- If off work, respond quickly to inquiries from your employer or insurer. Regular communication is important.
- Help analyze the accident.
- Remember to always report any unsafe conditions.

**Note: A Supervisor Talk Record form can be found on the last page.**

## Post-injury response

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### SUPERVISOR TALK RECORD

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How the topic applies to this job:

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