

YCPARMIA Safety Journal

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Safe Attitudes

You can't live without one!

A safe attitude is important in every safety situation. Consider driving: You know how important your vehicle's brakes are, and you have them checked regularly. But in heavy traffic or bad weather you don't rely totally on your brakes. You make it a point to drive more slowly and be even more watchful than usual.

The same kind of safe attitude protects you on the job, too. Even when you're wearing the right personal protective equipment (PPE) and following all the right procedures, you still need to be cautious and alert to prevent workplace accidents.

Here are seven basic principles of an effective safety attitude:

1. You are responsible for your own health, safety, and well-being.
2. You share responsibility for your co-workers' safety.
3. Accidents will happen unless you do your part to prevent them.
4. The safest way to do any job is the only right way to do it.
5. It is common sense to follow work rules and practices designed by experts to promote your health and safety.
6. Before starting any job, check for hidden hazards that require special protective measures.
7. When PPE is called for, wear it. When special procedures are required, follow them.

In short, to have a safe attitude, first you have to believe that your actions count—that they can prevent accidents and create a safe workplace. Then you have to know the difference between safe and unsafe actions and be determined always to choose the safe way.



With all the emphasis on safety programs, safety training, and safety rules, it's easy to forget that when you come right down to it, safety is really a matter of personal responsibility. When you begin every workday with a safe attitude and then add your knowledge, skill, experience, and common sense, you have a winning formula for a safe and productive shift.

Almost every accident in every workplace is the result of a worker making a mistake. Not because they wanted to have an accident; they just let their guard down. And they paid the price by having an accident, an injury, or worse.

PPE ATTITUDE CHECK

- Firefighters always wear their helmets and fire-resistant gear.
- Welders wear their helmets and gloves.
- Deep sea divers never go under without their scuba gear.

Why? They understand how necessary the proper personal protective equipment (PPE) is for their safety. They know it's a matter of life or death.

Unfortunately, the same safe attitude doesn't automatically occur when it comes to everyday types of PPE. People don't always think it's necessary. For example, people sometimes forget to wear their **head protection** because they don't have something fall on their head every time they enter a hard hat area.

People are often just as careless about **eye protection**. They may have the attitude that they're careful workers so they don't need to bother with safety glasses or goggles. Nothing's going to happen to them, they tell themselves. And indeed nothing might go wrong 99 out of 100 times. But that 100th time could really be a killer! All it takes is one splash of a caustic chemical or one chip of metal to cause blindness.

Other examples of unsafe attitudes about PPE involve the requirements to wear **safety shoes, gloves, hearing protection, or respirators** for certain jobs. And so the PPE sits in a locker or on a shelf, while the workers who should be wearing it are out there putting themselves at risk.

That's not such a great attitude, is it?

Personal Safety

In the Home, On the Street, At Work

Personal safety is a concern for all of us. A lot can be achieved by just using good common sense. Be aware of your surroundings at all times, and do not place yourself in situations which might jeopardize your safety. Here are some additional safety tips.

IN YOUR HOME

- Answer your door with it closed and locked. Learn to speak through the closed door. It's not impolite; it is safer.
- Install good locks and use them.
- Do not depend on chain locks. They present little deterrent to an aggressive person.
- Your door should be equipped with a door viewer.
- Don't hide keys outside. Leave it with a trusted neighbour.
- Secure all windows. Draw window shades or drapes after dark and don't leave accessible windows open while you sleep.
- Never open the door to strangers. Verify identification of visitors, sales and service people. Check with the company to see if they sent a representative.
- Should a stranger request to use your phone, do not allow the person to enter your home. Offer to make the call for them. Even if it's a woman, don't unlock your door.
- Don't reveal personal information to anyone on the phone or at your door.

ON THE STREET

- Plan your route and avoid short cuts through parks, vacant lots or unlit areas.
- Know where police stations or after hour stores are located.
- Avoid being alone if you can. Get a friend to accompany you. If they can't, let them know the route you're taking. Call when you arrive.

- Don't carry large sums of money or unnecessary valuables. Use cash alternatives such as debit cards.
- Don't carry a purse; use a small waist pack instead.
- Don't leave purses unattended in shopping carts or on store counters.
- If someone grabs your purse, do not resist.

USING BANK MACHINES

- Whenever possible use bank machines in visible and active areas during active periods.
- If you must use a bank machine during inactive periods, consider using a drive-through.
- Avoid after hours access to bank machines where you are not visible or cannot see into the bank machine area prior to entering it.
- Avoid using bank machines in areas that you are unfamiliar at night.
- If you absolutely must access a bank machine after hours in an unfamiliar area, consider using the buddy system or drive around the area before you access your cash or get out of your car.
- Avoid using a bank machine if the door lock seems defective.
- Be prepared to start your banking as soon as you arrive at the machine.
- Be aware of your surroundings and always make sure that no one has the opportunity to see you entering your pin number or look over your shoulder.
- Don't leave anything behind.

WORKPLACE

- Avoid isolated or deserted stairways.
- Call security or the police if you see someone in the building you don't recognize.
- If working after hours, keep all doors and windows locked.
- Try and arrange to have a co-worker stay with you.
- When you finish working, go to your vehicles together. Ensure the other is safely in their vehicle and on their way before you leave. Leave together if possible.
- If the company has security, advise them you're working late and ask if they can check in on you periodically.
- Advise security when you're leaving and have them escort you to your vehicle.
- If alone, contact your family/friend and advise them that you'll be working late and will call before you leave and advise them of your route home.

USING ELEVATORS

- While waiting for an elevator, stand off to the side; this gives you the opportunity to view inside and removes your obligation to enter if you are unsure of the occupants. If in doubt concerning people in an elevator, do not get on; wait for the next one. If someone gets on the elevator after you and you're not comfortable with them, get off. Stand near the control panel.

- If confronted, push all the floor buttons and the emergency button, DO NOT push the stop button; you may get trapped between floors.

BEFORE YOU ENTER YOUR CAR

- Keep your vehicle in good repair, including plenty of gas and maps.
- Check your vehicle's fluid levels and tire pressure regularly.
- Obtain a "call police" sign and emergency kit in the event of a break down.
- Carry an ice scraper and shovel in your car during the winter months.
- Buy a cellular telephone and keep the batteries charged (at least every 60 days). Consider a cigarette lighter adapter to save batteries.
- Have your keys in hand so you do not have to linger before entering your car.

WHILE IN YOUR CAR

- Always lock your car after entering and when leaving it.
- Keep the windows closed.
- Know your route and stay on it.
- Never pick up hitchhikers.
- Park keeping in mind what the environment will be like when you return. Will it be dark? If so, park near lights.
- If possible, reverse your vehicle in to the spot for a clearer view upon exiting.

IF YOU BECOME STRANDED

- Keep doors locked and windows rolled up. If you open your window, only open it to the point of breaking the seal, no further.
- If a stranger offers to help, do not get out of your car. Ask the person to call for assistance or advise them the police are on the way.
- Place a "call police" sign in the window.

- Remember 9-1-1 on a cellular telephone does not give police your location. Know where you are so that emergency services can locate you.
- Do not stop to offer help to a stranded motorist. Call for assistance for them.

THINK YOU ARE BEING FOLLOWED?

- Do not drive home. You do not want this person to know where you live.
- If you suspect that someone is following you, drive to the nearest police station, open service station or drive-in restaurant. Stay in your vehicle and use the horn to draw attention to yourself.
- Try to obtain the license plate number of the vehicle following you, as well as make, model, color and a description of the driver.

WHAT ABOUT ROAD RAGE? WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Pay attention to your driving. Do not drive while talking on your cell phone.
- Keep to the right when driving at the speed limit.
- Avoid tailgating, flashing headlights or cutting other people off.
- Switch the radio station, if you're being aggravated by what you hear.
- Use your signals and be courteous.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU ARE THE VICTIM OF ROAD RAGE?

- If someone is acting aggressively toward you, avoid eye contact while driving.
- If someone approaches your vehicle acting aggressively, drive away if you can.
- Do not leave the relative safety of your vehicle.

- Do not issue or respond to verbal taunts.
- Get a description of the vehicle and occupant(s) including license plate.

PARKING

- Always make a mental note of where you've parked.
- If you are in a parking structure know where the nearest exit is and where you intend to go before you exit your vehicle.
- Try to walk to your vehicle in pairs.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

- Know the schedules and sit near the driver. During the evening hours ask the driver to let you off near your destination as part of their request stop program.
- Use caution in conversations with strangers. Avoid giving your name, address or place of employment. Avoid clothing or items that identify you or your profession.
- Have someone meet you at your stop.

CALLING 9-1-1 ON A CELL PHONE?

- You will be connected to the California Highway Patrol. If you are on the highway, this is what you want. But, if you are in town and need local police, fire, or ambulance, you may wait a long time to get connected.
- For local assistance, program your cell phone to call

1-530-666-6612

This will connect you directly to the Yolo County emergency dispatch center in Woodland. This works for all of Yolo County, including West Sacramento.

- Davis residents should call

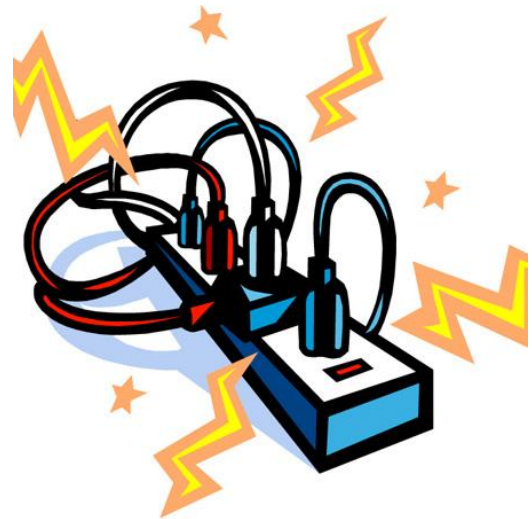
530-756-3400

It's a Real Shocker

Don't be careless with electricity

May is **National Electrical Safety Month**, which makes this the perfect time to review these electrical safety precautions:

- ⚡ **Inspect work areas daily** for such hazards as flickering lights, warm switches or receptacles, sticking switches, burning odors, loose connections, and damaged wires.
- ⚡ **Report problems** to a supervisor immediately.
- ⚡ **Leave repairs and adjustments to authorized personnel.**
- ⚡ **Select proper cords and connectors for each job** as well as portable cords that are suitable in terms of gauge size, flexibility, strength, and ability to withstand chemicals.
- ⚡ **Make sure electrical equipment is grounded.**
- ⚡ **Use ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCI)** in wet areas and outdoors.
- ⚡ **Disconnect energy sources before performing maintenance**, and lock out the disconnected power sources.
- ⚡ **Don't use a metal ladder** or wear a metal hard hat around electricity.
- ⚡ **Don't touch anything electric when your hands are wet**, when you're standing on a wet floor, or when you're in contact with a wet surface.
- ⚡ **Don't overload outlets** or circuits.
- ⚡ **Use an ABC or CO₂ fire extinguisher on electrical fires**; never use water.



Test Your Safety Sense

Are you safety smart?

To be safe on the job, you have to be smart. You have to use your common sense, follow the rules, and be careful. Take this test to check your safety smarts.

1. Encourage co-workers to work safely by:
 - a. Criticizing their mistakes
 - b. Complimenting them on safe behavior
2. When using personal protective equipment (PPE):
 - a. Inspect it before each use.
 - b. Use it only if you think you're at risk.
3. If you have a "gut feeling" that something's wrong:
 - a. Ignore it and be logical rather than emotional.
 - b. Recheck your safety precautions.
4. If you see a co-worker doing something unsafe:
 - a. Mind your own business.
 - b. Talk with the co-worker about it.
5. Which of these statements about workplace safety is true?
 - a. You have the power to prevent accidents.
 - b. There's little you can do to prevent accidents.
6. Using your common sense to protect your safety means:
 - a. Knowing the hazards
 - b. Following your own safety rules
7. If you see a safety hazard:
 - a. Avoid it and go on working.
 - b. Report it to your supervisor.

Answers: (1) b (2) a (3) b (4) b (5) a (6) a (7) b

LADDER SAFETY

A worker who was standing on the top step of a stepladder fell when the ladder shifted.

Safety Tip: Don't climb higher than the second step from the top on a stepladder or the fourth rung from the top on a straight or extension ladder.

A worker didn't secure an extension ladder at the top and fell 20 feet when the ladder slipped away from the wall.

Safety Tip: Secure extension ladders at the top and bottom so they don't shift while you're on board.

A worker missed a step while climbing a ladder with both hands full. Unable to grab the ladder, he fell and sprained his back.

Safety Tip: Face the ladder when you go up or down, holding on to the side rails with both hands. Carry tools and materials on a belt or shoulder strap, or hoist them up from the top.

You can't fight the law of averages: If you're careless on ladders, sooner or later, you're going to get hurt.