



YCPARMIA Safety Journal

October, 2009

Be Fire Smart

Take steps to prevent workplace fires

What does it take to start a workplace fire? Surprisingly, very little. First, you need some oxygen, and there's no shortage of that in the air. Then you need some kind of fuel, and there's a lot of that in the form of paper, cardboard, wood, cloth, flammable and combustible liquids, and other materials that burn easily. Finally, you need an ignition source like a spark, a flame, heat, or electricity. Oh, yes, there's one other thing, carelessness. Somebody has to be careless enough to let all these fire-starters get together.

Here's an example:

A leaking chemical container releases flammable vapors that are heavier than air, and so they sink to floor level and travel across the work area to where a worker is using a metal tool that creates a spark. The spark ignites the vapors, which burn rapidly. If there are enough vapors or if the fire makes it back to the container of flammable liquid, there could be an explosion.

All the elements of a fire existed here, oxygen, fuel, and ignition source plus the added ingredient, carelessness. The worker should have been using non-sparking tools in an area where flammable liquids were present. And someone should have inspected the container, found the leak, and reported it.

Here's another example:

There's a pile of cardboard and paper trash out on the loading dock. A worker sneaking a smoke fails to completely extinguish the cigarette before tossing the butt into the pile of trash. It takes a while, but eventually the trash bursts into flames. If the fire goes unnoticed for long, it could easily spread.

Again, all the elements for starting a fire were there. Someone's carelessness resulted in a pile of combustible trash lying around, and someone else's carelessness set the trash on fire.

Look around your work area. Is there fuel to start a fire? Are there ignition sources? Are you being careful and making sure that the fuel and the ignition sources don't get together to start a fire?

news & notes

YOU CAN PREVENT FIRES

October 4 through 10 is **Fire Prevention Week** so this is a great time to think about what you can do to prevent workplace fires.

Housekeeping

- Put waste in proper containers.
- Keep combustible materials like cardboard, paper, and wood away from heat and heat-producing equipment.
- Keep work areas free of dust and lint.

Flammable liquids

- Follow storage precautions on labels and material safety data sheets (MSDS).
- Clean up spills immediately.
- Report leaks right away.
- Use nonflammable substitutes whenever possible for cleaning and other tasks.
- Use approved airtight metal containers that are kept closed when not in use.
- Ground containers during transfers.
- Use only in well-ventilated areas, away from heat and other ignition sources.
- Treat empty containers as you would full ones, unless purged.

Electricity

- Don't overload outlets, circuits, or motors.
- Replace cords and wires that have worn or broken insulation.
- Get good ground connections.
- Keep machines and motors clean of dust and grease.

Fuel and ignition sources

- Smoke only in designated areas.
- Extinguish cigarettes and matches completely and dispose of them safely.
- Contain welding operations.
- Keep compressed gas cylinders secured and stored away from ignition sources.
- Use MSDSs and labels to keep incompatible chemicals apart.

Fire Extinguisher Quiz

How much do you know about extinguishers?

Quiz #1. Each letter in the column on the left below corresponds to a class of fire an extinguisher is designed to fight. Grab a pencil and draw a line between those letters and the class of fire they represent in the column on the right.

- | | |
|-----|---|
| A | Electrical equipment and wiring |
| B | Combustible metals |
| C | Multiple use and combination fires |
| D | Paper, cardboard, wood, trash, rags, or cloth |
| ABC | Grease, gases, or flammable liquids |

Quiz #2. The PASS technique describes the proper method for using a fire extinguisher. What do the letters P-A-S-S stand for?

- (P) _____ the pin.
 (A) _____ at the base of the fire.
 (S) _____ the handle.
 (S) _____ back and forth.

Answers

Quiz #1: **A**—paper, cardboard, wood, trash, rags, or cloth; **B**—grease, gases, or flammable liquids, such as gasoline, oil, solvents, and paint; **C**—electrical equipment and wiring; **D**—combustible metals such as aluminum, sodium, magnesium, or zinc; and **ABC**—Class A, B, or C fires and for combination fires.

Quiz #2: **P**ull; **A**im; **S**queeze; **S**weep



Maintain a Safe Workplace

Check this good housekeeping checklist

Do you:

- | | YES | NO |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| • Pay attention to housekeeping tasks on a daily basis? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Keep floors and aisles clear? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Put items away when not in use? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Throw away trash and scrap promptly in the right containers? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Store tools and equipment correctly in their proper place? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Keep chemicals in approved containers and keep containers closed and properly stored when not in use? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Keep flammable and combustible materials away from ignition sources like heat, flame, or electricity? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Inspect chemical containers for leaks? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Keep food and beverages out of the work area? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Pick up trip hazards and clean slip hazards from the floor? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Report safety hazards you can't remove or fix safely yourself? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Use strong cleaning products with care after reading the label? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Leave time for cleanup at the end of your shift? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

If you checked all the “yes” boxes, you’re doing a great job with housekeeping.

news & notes

BE SAFE ON THE ROAD

Regular vehicle inspections contribute greatly to your safety on the road. Here’s what to look for:

Outside and in

- ⓧ Tires
- ⓧ Lights
- ⓧ Vehicle exterior, e.g., tailpipe and bumper
- ⓧ Oil or coolant leaks under the vehicle
- ⓧ Any thing behind or under the vehicle
- ⓧ Instrument panel
- ⓧ Brakes, test them before you take off

Under the hood

- ⓧ Oil level
- ⓧ Power steering fluid level
- ⓧ Windshield washer level
- ⓧ Coolant level
- ⓧ Hoses
- ⓧ Fan belt

In the trunk

- ⓧ Spare tire, jack, and tire-changing tools
- ⓧ Flashlight
- ⓧ First-aid kit
- ⓧ Flares
- ⓧ Repair tools
- ⓧ One quart of oil
- ⓧ Jumper cables

Guard Against Accidents

Machine guard dos and don'ts

Safety regulations require machine parts to be guarded so that your hands, fingers, arms, legs, and feet can't get caught and cut, mangled, or amputated by the machine. Follow these dos and don'ts for working with machine guards.

DO:

- ✓ Ensure guards are in place and operating properly before starting a machine.
- ✓ Avoid wearing clothes or jewelry that could get caught in moving parts.
- ✓ Plan tasks to avoid getting too close to danger points.
- ✓ Use devices such as push sticks rather than hands to feed stock into machines.
- ✓ Report guard malfunctions and stops using the machine until they are repaired.
- ✓ Tag out any machine with missing or malfunctioning guards.

DON'T:

- ✗ Don't use a machine with a missing, disabled, or malfunctioning guard.
- ✗ Don't remove, disable, or reach over, under, or around machine guards.
- ✗ Don't remove guards to adjust, unjam, repair, or service a machine unless you are authorized and the machine is locked out so that it can't start up unexpectedly.

Following these simple rules will help keep you safe when you're working with any kind of machinery that has dangerous moving parts.

PPE and Your Safety

We do a lot to make sure you're protected

First, we identify workplace hazards by examining work areas, jobs, processes, and tools and equipment, looking for potential dangers such as:

- Chemical exposures
- Air contaminants
- Flying objects
- Excessive noise
- Rolling or pinching objects
- Falling objects
- Sharp objects
- Heat and high temperatures

Second, we select effective PPE that:

- Protects against identified hazards
- Meets the standards of the American National Standards Institute (ANSI)
- Provides more than minimum required protection
- Offers varied sizes to fit all workers
- Fits correctly and comfortably

Third, we train you so that you know:

- When to use PPE
- What PPE to use for specific hazards
- How to put on and adjust your PPE properly
- How to wear PPE properly
- How to remove PPE correctly
- How to clean and store it
- How to dispose of contaminated or damaged PPE
- Limitations in PPE protection and useful life

Now it's your turn. Your part is to always wear required PPE.

news & notes

SAFETY CHECKS

The last day of October is the last day of **daylight saving time**. Safety professionals use the start and end of daylight saving time as reminders for performing safety tasks. The University of Oklahoma Police Department suggests using the occasion of setting your clocks forward or back as a cue to:

- ☑ **Check and replace the batteries in your smoke and carbon monoxide (CO) alarms.** Also replace smoke alarms older than 10 years. Replace CO alarms older than 5 years.
- ☑ **Check your disaster supply kit, e.g., water, food, flashlights, batteries, and blankets.** Use the time change to check its contents, including testing/replacing flashlight and radio batteries.
- ☑ **Check storage areas for hazardous materials.** Discard any that are outdated, no longer used, or in poor condition.
- ☑ **Go through your medicine cabinet.** Discard outdated medications. Crush them and discard them in a way that children can't find them.

DRUG-FREE WORK WEEK

The week of **October 19 to 25** is **Drug-Free Work Week**. This is a good time to remember how hazardous it is to drive or work under the influence of drugs or alcohol. The purpose of this event is to highlight the dangers of substance abuse and encourage working people with drug or alcohol problems to seek help.

Seeing Is Believing

How good are you on eye safety?

When it comes to eye safety, you can't be too careful. After all, you've only got two eyes, and without them your life would be very difficult. So let's make sure you're doing all you can right now to protect your precious eyesight.

Circle the number that best describes your eye safety performance with this rating system: 4 = Always, 3 = Usually, 2 = Sometimes, 1 = Rarely, and 0 = Never.

Do you:

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| • Identify eye hazards before starting a job? | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| • Select appropriate eye protection for the hazards? | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| • Obey safety signs requiring eye protection? | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| • Wear assigned eye protection when necessary? | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| • Inspect safety eyewear before each use? | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| • Replace worn, damaged, or defective eye protection? | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| • Store eye protection so that it won't be damaged? | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| • Check with your supervisor if you're unsure about an eye Hazard? | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |

How do you rate?

Did you circle all the 4's? If not, your eyes aren't as safe on the job as they could be. Take action this month, which happens to be **National Eye Injury Prevention Month**, and improve your eye safety performance.

Skating on Thin Ice?

Don't let your safety depend on a roll of the dice

There's an old expression—"skating on thin ice"—which means taking a risk or doing something dangerous. If you skate on thin ice on a lake, you could fall through and drown. Risk-taking on the job can have similar consequences. Could you be skating on thin ice at work? In the past couple of months have you:

- | | YES | NO |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| • Ignored a safety rule? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Failed to use required PPE? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Taken a shortcut? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Engaged in horseplay? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Missed a safety meeting? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Come to work under the influence or with a hangover? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Disobeyed a safety sign? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Thought "I really shouldn't do this, but just this once...?" | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Skipped a step to save time? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Failed to ask when you were unsure about a safety issue? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Ignored a safety hazard, instead of fixing or reporting it? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

So what's the answer?

Have you been taking risks that could result in an accident and injury? If you have, you'll want to rethink your approach to workplace safety. And you'll likely need to take a hard look at your safety practices at home, too. There could well be an accident in your future on or off the job. Why risk it? Stand firm on safety.



news & notes

ARE YOU COMMITTED TO SAFETY?

Everyone needs to be committed to workplace safety. Here's why:

- ⇒ Someone in the United States is injured on the job every 20 seconds. If you're not careful, today one of those people could be you.
- ⇒ Although most injuries are relatively minor and workers make a full recovery, some injuries are permanent and heartbreaking: blindness, amputated fingers, toes, hands, or feet, loss of hearing, etc.
- ⇒ In addition to being a killer or acrippler, a serious injury snatches money out of your wallet. Disability pay is less than full salary. And a serious injury could mean a permanent reduction in earning power because you might never be able to perform the same job again.

KEEPING FIT?

For good health, everyone needs some exercise. Ideally, fitness experts say, you'll work a blend of physical activities into your week that promote:

- Cardio-respiratory endurance
(walking, swimming, jogging, cycling, roller-blading)
- Muscular strength
(exercise machines or weights)
- Muscular endurance
(crunches, push-ups, pull-ups)
- Flexibility
(stretching, yoga)

If you don't have time for all that, do as much as you can, several times a week or even every day. Check with your doctor before starting any exercise program. Take a few minutes to warm up before strenuous exercise and to cool down after.