



Be A Good Co-Worker: Help New Employees Learn Safe Practices

One quarter of all YCPARMIA members' injured workers have been on the job for less than two years. It seems like a high percentage; why is it so high? In a nutshell, new employees lack the knowledge and experience that is gathered by workers who have spent more time on the job. You can help new co-workers become familiar with safety practices so that they can keep from getting injured during their early days on the job.

- ☞ **Don't assume that new co-workers know about safety.** New employees might be smart, but this workplace environment is new to them, and they might not know how to translate their safety knowledge from their previous job into their new environment. Share your knowledge and experience.
- ☞ **Remember that new folks might be reluctant to ask questions.** This can be especially true of young workers on their first job. Help new employees feel comfortable about asking questions. If you don't know the answer, refer them to someone who does.
- ☞ **Don't overlook unsafe behavior.** If you see a new co-worker doing something unsafe, speak up and show this person the safe way. If you ignore unsafe behavior there could be an accident.



Fall Proof Tips: How to Prevent Slips & Falls

Slips, trips, and falls are one of the most common injuries in YCPARMIA's workspaces. Employees have misjudged sidewalk curbs, been unaware of wet flooring, or caught their shoes on carpet, and any number of injuries can occur as a result. The jerking motion when your feet slip and your body reacts to regain balance can cause a muscle strain or a sprain like a twisted ankle. Worse, a fall can tear ligaments, break bones, or damage the spine. Protect yourself by being more aware of the surface you are walking on, and by taking the time to correct slip and trip hazards when you spot them. For instance:

- ✓ **Clean up spills.** Water, oil, or other liquids may only require a paper towel, but oil and other chemicals may require special absorbent wipes. If you can't do the job safely, place a barrier around the area to prevent slips and report the spill immediately.
- ✓ **Pick objects off the floor.** Even a small object like a piece of plastic on a concrete floor can cause a slip.
- ✓ **Sweep up debris** and waste materials. Some small particles can act just like liquid spills on the floor and cause a slip and fall.
- ✓ **Clean up under desks and workbenches.** Cords, bands from boxes, and keyboard wires can all become entangled in a person's legs.
- ✓ **Put away electrical cords**, cables, and air hoses when not in use. While using them, be careful where you place them; make sure they're not located across walkways or where somebody could trip over them.
- ✓ **Keep drawers and cabinets closed** so that someone doesn't come by and tumble over an open drawer.
- ✓ **Carry objects carefully.** Make sure you can see where you're going.
- ✓ **Put tools away.** Someone could trip and fall over something you left lying around—perhaps even you!



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SUN SAFETY

June is Cancer from the Sun Month. If you spend a lot of time out in the sun—wear sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or greater and cover up during the sunniest part of the day (10 am to 4 pm). According to the Skin Cancer Foundation, there are three main forms of skin cancer that can be caused by prolonged sun exposure: basal cell carcinoma (the least serious), squamous cell carcinoma, and melanoma (the most serious, and sometimes fatal).

People at greatest risk of getting cancer from the sun are those who:

- ◆ Always burn when they've been out in the sun
- ◆ Have red or blond hair, green or blue eyes, freckles, and fair skin
- ◆ Have a family history of melanoma

Symptoms of developing skin cancer include:

- ◆ Change in the size or color of a mole
- ◆ A sore that doesn't heal
- ◆ Any skin growth that increases in size
- ◆ A skin spot that itches, hurts, or keeps scabbing

Check your body from head to toe every 3 months. If you notice any of the symptoms listed above, see your doctor right away.

The Skin Cancer Foundation says that most skin cancer can be cured if it is diagnosed and treated early.

HEAT ILLNESS PREVENTION

Cal-OSHA advises that if you are coming back to work from an extended break or you are just beginning a job working in the heat, it is important to be aware that you are more vulnerable to heat stress until your body has time to adjust. Notify your supervisor that you are not used to the heat. It will take about 5 to 7 days for your body to adjust.

- Drinking plenty of water frequently is vital to workers exposed to the heat. An individual may produce as much as 2 gallons of sweat per day. In order to replenish that fluid the worker should drink 3 to 4 cups of water every hour starting at the beginning of your shift.
- Take your breaks in a cool shaded area and allow time for recovery from the heat during the day. These are effective ways to avoid heat illness.



- Avoid or limit the use of alcohol and caffeine during periods of extreme heat. Both dehydrate the body.
- If you or a co-worker start to feel symptoms such as headache, nausea, dizziness, weakness or unusual fatigue, let your supervisor know and rest in a cool shaded area. If symptoms persist or worsen seek immediate medical attention.
- Whenever possible, wear clothing that provides protection from the sun but allows airflow to the body. Protect your head and shade your eyes if working outdoors.