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Weekly Safety Tip

Life Is All About Choices!®

SCI Safety Tips: 8 common causes of workplace accidents

Source: <http://www.blr.com>

Date: March 17, 2016



While OSHA's annual list of top 10 violations typically focuses on issues like hazard communication, lockout/tagout, and machine guarding, many other serious risks sideline employees and cost employers money. Keep reading for another perspective on industrial hazards.

Writing in *Reliable Plant* magazine, Tom Reddon of the National Forklift Exchange (www.nfe-lifts.com) has identified eight of the most common causes of workplace accidents. A couple of them may surprise you.

- **Lifting.** Lifting an object that is too heavy can lead to muscle sprain, strain, or tear. Make sure employees know that there's no harm in asking for help with objects that are difficult to lift alone.
- **Fatigue.** Failing to take a break, especially to recover from physical labor, can lead to inattention and accidents. Inadequate sleep is also associated with a variety of health concerns including obesity and heart ailments.
- **Dehydration.** Not drinking enough, especially in hot weather or hot environments, is a serious health risk. The antidote is simple—provide adequate drinking water and encourage employees to partake.
- **Poor lighting.** Insufficient lighting is responsible for many slip and fall incidents. OSHA requires adequate lighting in all workplaces. Don't overlook the need in offices, warehouses, and parking garages.

SCI Safety Slogan

BE ALERT!!

**EXPECT THE
UNEXPECTED**

James Lehrke-SCI

- **Hazardous materials.** Improper handling of hazardous materials or not wearing personal protective equipment as required is a common cause of illness. Hazard communication is commonly on the OSHA list of top violations.
- **Workplace violence.** Violence continues to plague workplaces across diverse industries. About 550 people die each year from workplace violence. Last year OSHA published guidelines for violence prevention in social service and healthcare settings. Recently, for example, an argument at a Baltimore Public Works Department facility resulted in a homicide.
- **Trips and falls.** Slips, trips, and falls continue to be a leading cause of injury. Culprits include slick floors and high-traffic corridors, improper footwear, rushing, and inclement weather. Employers with older workers need to be especially vigilant.
- **Stress.** Stress has a huge impact on the human body and mind, and also on job performance. Employers can help by offering an employee assistance program, giving employees a say in job design, and offering stress-reduction opportunities like walking, yoga, etc.

SCI OSHA News: You have the power to prevent lockout/tagout injuries Part 2

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Another common misconception is that safety and productivity are incompatible priorities. That's not the case, says Ludwig, who believes it is possible to have both without compromise. "Users of machinery no longer have to do a complete lockout under many circumstances—you can bring a machine to a safe state without completely shutting down."

ESC Services helps organizations do this by conducting analyses and providing procedures that help them use their equipment in a safe, productive way that reduces both scheduled and unscheduled downtime. "Industry best practices are evolving quickly, and companies are realizing that LOTO is not a production killer unless you let it be," notes Michalscheck.

By taking a close look at their overall LOTO safety program, companies can often reengineer processes to incorporate alternative protection measure procedures. These control the machine in a safe state *and* keep them in compliance. OSHA requires that alternative procedures do not introduce additional risk to employees.

"If you can design alternative procedures and an overall alternative program to ensure effective protection for specific tasks, then the sky is the limit to enhancing productivity," Michalscheck adds. While it may be possible to engineer out many servicing activities with well-designed safety procedures and high-performance hardware, Rockwell Automation always recommends following LOTO regulations when servicing equipment where no "company approved" safe alternatives exist.

5 program elements

According to Michalscheck, there are five elements that should be part of an efficient and modern LOTO program:

- **Corporate policy.** LOTO policy describes enforcement protocol, includes guidance for on-site contractors, and details who has responsibility for correcting identified deficiencies.
- **Machine-specific procedures.** Rockwell Automation and ESC Services recommend creating graphical, machine-specific procedures for every piece of equipment in the facility and installing procedures at the appropriate point of use.
- **Training.** Compliant and effective training targets authorized personnel, affected employees, and contractors, with specific modules customized to each group's needs.
- **Locks and devices.** Locks and devices should be specific for lockout/tagout and uniform in make and color. This discourages employees from using them for other purposes, such as locking their toolboxes, which can lead to an OSHA citation.
- **Annual audits.** Every procedure must be reviewed, and authorized employees must be audited annually to ensure program integrity. Maintain all findings from the audits as proof that your program is compliant in the event of an OSHA inspection.
- A well-designed and executed program based on these elements can increase production efficiency by delivering:



Aurora Health Care®

Quick Tips for Healthy Living

Stretching: Not Just for Athletes

You don't have to be a marathon runner or baseball player to reap the benefits of stretching. Whether or not you have a physically demanding job or participate in recreational physical activities, stretching is important!

Not only does stretching improve flexibility, but it also helps increase blood flow and reduces the risk of injury. People who stretch on a regular basis experience less pain, are able to move more freely, and find it easier to perform daily tasks.

Once you decide what muscle groups you are going to stretch, follow to guidelines below to ensure you are getting the most out of the exercise.

1. Maintain a proper biomechanical position for the body part you are stretching
2. Stretch only until you feel a gentle pull in your muscles, never to the point of burning or pain.
3. Never bounce while stretching.
4. Hold the stretch until the feeling of mild tension begins to ease (generally 15-30 seconds).
5. Breathe, do not hold your breath. Inhale as you stretch, then slowly exhale as you follow through with the stretch.
6. Relax.
7. Repeat stretches on both sides, generally 2-3 times or until you feel "stretched out".

It is normal to experience soreness 24-48 hours after starting a new activity, but that discomfort will subside with activity and gentle stretching. Stop activity and contact your medical provider if you have pain, tightness, or pressure in your chest or left neck, shoulder or arm, feel dizzy or sick, break out in a cold sweat, have muscle cramps, or feel pain in your joints.

Stretching can be a fun family activity and results can be noticed in as little as 2-4 weeks!

- **Reduced lockout time** during routine, scheduled, or unplanned maintenance by an average of 50 percent or more.
- **Reduced unlock time** after maintenance by an average of 50 percent or more.
- **Prevention of delayed starts.** Lack of communication between authorized employees and operators leads to idle equipment. Hours of downtime can result when equipment repairs are complete, but the message is not conveyed to operators.
- **Prediction of inefficiency trends.** Trend identification is improved with data collection tools that track minimum, maximum, and average lockouts per machine and per authorized employee. If a trend emerges, it's easy to see and address.
- **Accident reduction.** Accidents lead to downtime, regardless of whether an injury is involved. Supported by proper lockout/tagout policy, procedures, and training, operators and authorized employees are less likely to have an accident.

ESC Services also offers advanced tools, including a software application that includes open source MS Excel® files, a website portal for housing the files, and a tablet for scanning a QR code on the procedures for quick access.



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