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Weekly Safety Tip

Life Is All About Choices![®]

April 4, 2016

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.

SCI Safety Slogan



James Lehrke-SCI

- **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.
- **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 4

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

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Training: Talk about why it matters

In some cases, incidents are a result of poor or improper training, such as failure to customize the training to the industry or failure to involve hands-on demonstration or proof of competency. Says Schuster, "A good system is a combination of technology, systems, and people who are trained and understand how to use it."

Despite OSHA's requirement that a LOTO-authorized employee need only be trained once (except in cases of job reassignment or new equipment), Rockwell Automation advises clients to train at least annually. The training should be dynamic. That is, it should not be a rehash of the past year's training but should include new content and fresh perspective. Review near misses and equipment pain points (like the machine that jams three times in one-half hour). Go beyond discussing how to perform lockout/tagout, and address why it matters to your business.

Also be aware of the requirement to train contractors—a frequently overlooked mandate. While contract employees may not need to know every detail about your system, they do need to be trained and authorized just like your own employees. This can be accomplished in a relatively quick, on-the-floor session focused on the actual equipment employees will be encountering.



Schuster advises safety professionals to “Consider holistically the way people interact with machinery. If you do it in a piecemeal manner you’re going to miss the most critical, systematic aspects of a comprehensive compliance/safety approach, including the people, the culture, management support, and other elements of what we describe as a company’s ‘safety maturity.’”

Best-in-class companies go beyond considering lockout/tagout as solely a compliance issue. Done right, it can actually drive productivity.

Rockwell and ESC offer additional perspectives on lockout/tagout issues at www.escservices.com/learning-center.

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Quick Tips for Healthy Living

Healthy Living, Healthy Vision

Maintaining healthy vision is more involved than wearing protective eyewear at work. The healthier you are, the better chance you have of avoiding risks to your eyes. Following the tips below can lower the risk of eye disease and vision loss.

- Avoid smoking. Smoking increases the risk of age-related macular degeneration (AMD), cataracts, and glaucoma.
- Eat healthy. A diet rich in dark green vegetables may reduce the risk of AMD. A healthy lifestyle also reduces the risk of diabetes, which can lead to diabetic eye disease or glaucoma.
- Control your blood pressure. High blood pressure increases your risk for glaucoma.
- Protect your eyes from the sun. Wear a hat or sunglasses to protect your eyes from the same UV rays that damage skin.

Many people suffer from eyestrain while using a computer at work or home. Symptoms include sore or irritated eyes and difficulty focusing. Causes of eyestrain include fatigue, dry eyes, bad lighting, or how you sit in front of a computer. Follow the workstation guidelines below to limit the stress on your eyes.

- Move your screen 20 to 26 inches away from your eyes and slightly below eye level.
- Use a document holder to avoid constantly changing your focus.
- Lower glare and reflections by changing the lighting or adding a glare filter to your computer screen.
- Use a chair you can adjust.
- Choose a screen or monitor you can tilt and adjust.

See your eye doctor regularly to maintain healthy vision!



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Jessica, Kristin and Nick

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