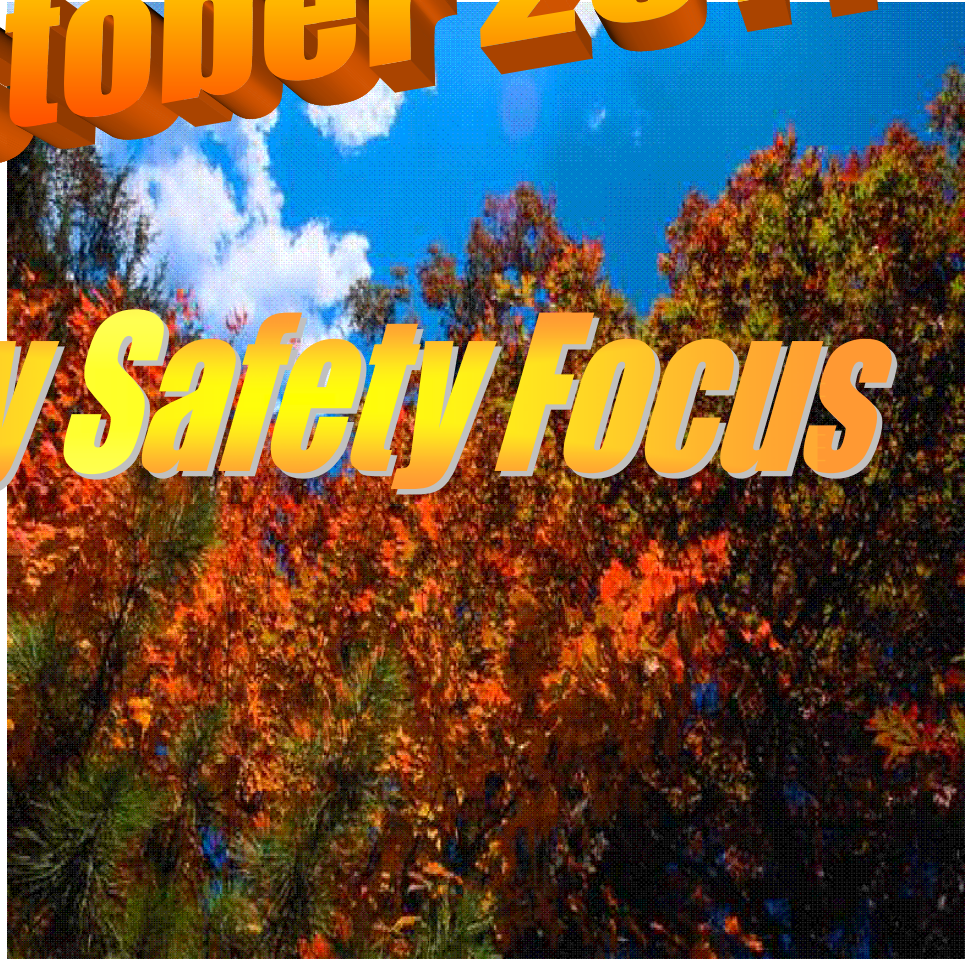


October 2011

Daily Safety Focus



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How many times have you come close to having an accident, shrugged it off as a near miss, and gone on your merry way without giving it another thought? I want all of you to give it thought.

Many times, the difference between a near miss and an accident is just a fraction of a second in timing or a fraction of an inch in distance. Next time, the difference may not be there.

Near misses are warnings of accidents in the making. If we accept the warnings and look for the causes, we may be able to prevent similar situations from developing.

Let's say you're going up a gangplank onto a bridge footer. Your foot slips, but you're young, agile, fast, and empty-handed. So you regain your balance with no harm done. The reactions of the next person to come along are a little slower than you were. Then comes the third worker—just as fast as the first two but unable to maneuver because he's carrying a heavy load. He slips and falls off the plank with the load on top of him. How seriously he's injured is a matter of luck—perhaps only scratches, but maybe a broken ankle or rib or neck! Now the loose cleat, sand, mud, or ice is discovered, and the condition is corrected. But it's like locking the garage after the motorcycle is stolen. Two people saw the thief but didn't recognize what was happening, so didn't report anything.

There are a few accidents that occur without some advance warning—and that is what a near miss is. If we heed that warning and check into the hazard, most accidents can be eliminated. So, I want all of you to keep your eyes open for those advance warnings. Don't shrug off the near misses as only close calls; find out why they happened and what corrective action is needed.

Don't take unnecessary chances or ignore warnings, and don't think, "it can't happen to me." It can happen to you if you don't take precautions to protect yourself.

Make SAFETY A Way of Life!" one day at a time!

Slips, Trips and Falls: October - 2

We have all heard examples about the seriousness of slips and falls in the workplace. They happen suddenly. They're totally unexpected, and the results can be a painful and possible permanent injury that could change your entire life.

Falls kill more people each year than any other kind of accident. Most of these accidents result from slips and falls at floor level rather than from high places. About 75% of these slips and trips occur on walking surfaces such as floors, stairs and sidewalks.

Basically, slips and falls can happen almost anywhere and can be caused by a number of things. Trying to catch your balance when you slip for example can pull muscles, tear ligaments and cause permanent damage to your back, even if you avoid falling down. Standing on a bumper to clean your windshield is an open invitation for a bad slip or fall. Be especially careful of your footing on ladders attached to trucks and catwalks, and always face a ladder when climbing or descending.

Most trips, slips and falls are the result of unsure footing, and not exercising caution or keeping alert. They can happen on any surface that is covered with mud, snow, water, oil, grease or any other slippery substance. Whether you spill a substance or see a spilled liquid take the time to clean it up. Uneven or defective surfaces, littered floors, telephone wires and electrical cords, open drawers or anything else that project from the walking surface may cause a fall.

Stairways present another tripping problem, whether they're poorly lighted and set inside a building, or steps outside. Materials, cartons, boxes or other items should never be stored on stairways.

Proper lighting, without glare, shadows or violent contrasts between floor areas and the conditions of workers shoes are also important. Falls can be prevented if you use common sense and remember: 1. Not to climb over boxes and material or use it for a makeshift platform. 2. Do not jump off of ladders, stairs or trucks. 3. To carry only what you can reasonably handle and keep you balance. 4. To stay alert and always expect the unexpected at all levels.

Be careful. Watch your step. Report all hazardous conditions to your Forman or supervisor immediately, unless you can take care of them. The important thing is not to let slips and falls bring you down.

Make SAFETY A Way of Life!" one day at a time!

You'll never see a football player in a game without a helmet, a baseball catcher playing without a mask or a firefighter putting out a house fire without his fire fighting equipment on. It would be as unlikely to find an ironworker or any other skilled-trade worker on a major construction site without a hard hat.

However depending on the job you are performing, there are many other kinds of personal protective equipment and guards that are just as important as the hard hat. The utility industry is a rugged business with some rugged people working in it. Too often we confuse ruggedness with faulty safety practices. We fail to use a guard or protective device when we know better.

Just like the professional football players take extra precautions; they not only wear every piece of protective equipment they also make sure that it is in good repair. Their jobs depend on their health and physical condition. Professional football players have plenty of chances to be injured and there are not about to add to those chances by not using the proper protective equipment. Why should you?

Think about the many different jobs you do each day and the number of times you have exposed yourself unnecessarily to hazards because you failed to wear the proper protective equipment that is provided for your protection. Your eyes for example may be exposed to hazards, such as flying objects, sunlight and glare, arcing metals. That's why there are many different types of eye protection provided for your protection.

Your hands can also be injured by burns, puncture wounds, abrasions, dog bites, etc. Different types of protection are needed, including rubber gloves, leather gloves, rubber sleeves. The torso and lower extremities may be exposed to some of these same type injuries whereas special PPE are required such as, fire resistant clothing, long pants, coveralls.

We must consider the hazard of the work we are performing and the parts of the bodies threatened by them. Then we must obtain and use the necessary protective equipment. Be a pro- protect yourself.

Make SAFETY A Way of Life!" one day at a time!

Any Dog May Bite

October - 4

Why? Because a dog's teeth are his only arms.

Where? Most bites occur are on or near the dog owners property.

Here are some of the reasons dogs bite:

- ❖ Your seemingly innocent actions.
- ❖ Many bites occur when a dog is playing with a person.
- ❖ A dog that is sick or injured may bite anyone who comes near.
- ❖ When you're teasing, harassing, or confusing a dog it may bite.
- ❖ A dog that is cornered or frightened may bite.
- ❖ A confined dog in a fenced yard or chained up very close to his home may bite to protect it's home territory
- ❖ A mother dog with pups may bite.
- ❖ A dog that is chasing something or someone may bite at it or them (bikes, joggers, cycles, etc.)
- ❖ A dog that is fighting with another dog may bite anyone who interferes in any way, including the owner.

In a recent study, more than 79% of those people bitten knew the dog before they were bitten. Along with that more than half the people bitten are under the age of 15, with most being between 4 and 9 years of age.

In Ohio, the owner or keeper of the dog shall be liable for any damages or injuries caused by the dog. In a court of law the owner or keeper would have to prove that the victim was trespassing, teasing, tormenting, or abusing the dog on the owners property, for the owner or keeper would not be held responsible. The mailman, water, gas and electrical meter man have a right to be on your property in their job, as well as various other people.

Beware of dog signs may indicate to a court of law that the owner was aware of the vicious disposition of the dog, and may as such demonstrate the owner's negligence in his failure to properly confine the dog.

Some prevention tips for dog owners:

- ❖ Never let your dog or puppy bite or mouth the skin of a person, even if playing.
- ❖ If your dog is ill or injured follow the handling advice of your veterinarian.
- ❖ Do not allow your dog to growl or snap at anyone. If you fail to properly correct the dog it may become vicious.
- ❖ If your dog has not been raised around children or other people do not permit them to chase, corner or pick up the dog, especially if the dog is more than 4 months old.
- ❖ Never ask anyone to keep or care for a dog that they are afraid of.
- ❖ Never allow your dog to run with or chase people.
- ❖ Above all, never leave your dog out, unconfined, without proper supervision.
- ❖ Do not pat or praise your dog when it shows fear or viciousness. Your patting may make the dog think that it's pleasing you.

Preventing a bite:

- ❖ Do not run away from an advancing dog, back away one step at a time.
- ❖ Do not touch a sleeping or eating dog.
- ❖ Never tease a dog or reach into a vehicle or fenced yard to pat a dog.
- ❖ Try to stay calm, as your fear can lead to the dogs confusion or cause him to bite.
- ❖ Notice how your staring affects the attacking dog. If staring keeps him back, you might also try saying, "GO HOME", in a sharp commanding tone, or "SIT"

Make SAFETY A Way of Life!" one day at a time!

Why Take a Chance? October 7

Have you ever made a decision to break a safety rule? How long did it take for you to reach that decision? What did you gain by taking a chance? It only takes a moment to decide to break a safety rule, yet that one moment could change your life forever. This offers you an opportunity to think about your personal safety behavior, both on and off the job. We'll talk specifically about taking safety risks, your personal commitment to safety, and what you can do to keep that commitment strong.

Do you always work safely? Are you 100% committed to the safety of yourself, your coworkers, friends, and family? Are there times when your commitment to safety is not as strong as it should be? Have you been taking risks and getting away with it? Don't expect your luck to hold. No one ever plans an accident. An accident, by definition, is an unplanned event. No one wakes up in the morning and drives to work thinking, "I will have an accident today so I'd better buckle up." No one ever climbs to the very top of a ladder and knows for sure that they won't fall. That's why it's so important to have a personal commitment to safety; a commitment to do the right things to prevent an accident--or minimize the damage done in case an accident does occur.

What is gained by taking a chance? Think about a time when you've risked your personal safety. Have you ever bypassed lockout-tagout procedures? Have you ever driven a car after you had too much to drink? Have you failed to use fall-protection equipment because it was just too much trouble? What did you gain in that situation? A minute of time, an ounce of convenience? Now honestly ask yourself if those gains were worth it. Is a little bit of time or convenience really worth chancing electrocution, a car accident, or a bad fall? Don't sacrifice your healthy future by taking a chance. Every time you're tempted to take a chance with your safety ask yourself if it's really worth the risk. Your family and friends will thank you for making the right decision.

Keeping a strong commitment to safety is not easy. What interferes with your commitment to safety? Is peer pressure a problem? Do your peers think it's silly to take time for safety? You can set a safe example for your peers. Consider taking a stand for safety. By committing to safety 100% of the time, you can help reverse the peer pressure that sometimes causes unsafe behavior. Keep up this exemplary behavior. Someday you may find that the old peer pressure has given way to something new--the respect of your peers earned by setting a safe example.

It's normal for your commitment to safety to fluctuate. Sometimes it's strong, at other times it's weak. Unfortunately, it tends to be strong just after a close call, or perhaps for a few days after you hear of an accident. Then the commitment wanes, only to be strengthened again by another tragedy. Simply recognizing this pattern can help you avoid it. Think about your work habits. Have there been times when you're more likely to take a risk? How about those times when you've been extra careful? Did the strength of your safety commitment depend on an outside event--like another person being involved in an accident?

You can keep your commitment to safety strong by remembering the commitment is for you. If you allow things that happen to other people determine the strength of your commitment, it is likely to fluctuate a lot. You can always learn from things that happen to other people, but to keep your commitment strong all the time, stay focused on your personal safety and those things that you do, that affects it.

Having a personal commitment to safety and keeping it strong are more important than any safety program, procedure, or rule. In fact, programs, procedures, and rules depend on a strong personal commitment to safety. Ask yourself where you are with your own safety attitude and behavior. Are you 100% committed to safety, 100% of the time? You are? Great! Need some improvement? Promise yourself to work on it--and keep that promise. You'll be glad you did.

Make SAFETY A Way of Life!" one day at a time!

Start and Finish Safely

October 8

There's a start and a finish to just about everything, including your daily job activities.

Traditionally, home-style philosophers have placed great value on good beginnings with such phrases as "getting off on the right foot" and "getting up on the right side of the bed." Good endings come in for about as much attention through such sayings as "all's well that ends well" and "last but not least."

Getting off on the right foot in your job each day is important not only to your personal success but to your safety, as well. The same goes for the end of the day. A good ending is a key part of the overall safety picture.

When you come to work in the morning, there should be more to starting your job than just routinely turning on a machine or beginning a particular operation. First, take a safety survey. What shape is the area in? Are there any slippery spots on the floor? Are there any tripping hazards around?

How about checking those vehicles for potential hazards. It takes just a minute to survey your work area, and it's time well invested. A minor adjustment at the start may prevent a major problem later on.

Conditions change quickly, and from the time you left the scene the day before, there may have been alterations to the area as you remembered. When it's quitting time, you still play an important part in the safety cycle. The condition in which you leave your area or equipment will have a bearing on the safety of people who follow you on the next shift and on your own safety when you report the next day.

Just don't quit abruptly at the end of the day. This is as poor a practice as starting your job before a brief survey of the situation. First of all, make sure your job is really finished—all trash, tools and other items off the floor or vehicles and in their proper places.

Always pick up all trash, scrap, and other waste, and deposit it in the proper receptacles. Take time to eliminate any slipping hazards by wiping up grease or water. If there's any unusual condition that could be hazardous, make sure you communicate it.

Quitting time is time to take the safety of other into consideration, especially the safety of those who will be in the area before you return. The area in which you work and the equipment you use are very important factors in your welfare. Take care of them and pass them on to the next person in a condition that will contribute to the safety and well being of both of you.

Of course, there's a lot more to job safety than beginnings and endings. There's that important period in between, too. Nevertheless, a bad start or finish can ruin a whole day.

Try to maintain a cool, steady pace. Prepare yourself mentally when you arrive at work in the morning, and be cautious toward the end of the day when fatigue may take over.

Remember that safety doesn't punch a time clock. It has to be on the job for every shift—24 hours each day.

Make SAFETY A Way of Life!" one day at a time

Take Safety Personally

October - 9

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 a personal matter. Let me explain a little.

When I see someone operating a hammer with their safety glasses hanging around their neck, I may very well holler at them in less than musical tones to get them up where they belong. And when Jack attempts to bypass the safety device on his power tools, I'll address him in no uncertain or gentle terms. Should either of them take my comments personally?

The answer is both "no" and "yes." It's "no" in the sense that I'm not attacking either of them as a person, only criticizing a particular behavior. But it's "yes" because the reason is concern for their personal safety.

And when each of you makes safety his or her own personal goal, this will be a safer workplace for all of us. It takes the same kind of responsibility you accept and exercise when you're driving. You know you have brakes, and you have them regularly checked, but in heavy traffic or bad weather you don't rely totally on the brakes—you make it a point to drive more slowly and be even more watchful than usual. In the same way, even when your machine guards and safety glasses are in place, you can't assume that means you don't have to exercise care and caution. A Successful Formula When you take safety personally and add a generous portion of positive thinking, you have a good formula for safety success. By positive thinking, I mean a combination of attitude and objectives. It means first of all believing that your actions count and can prevent accidents and preserve safety. Then it means knowing the difference between safe and unsafe actions and being determined always to choose the former.

Here are some expressions of positive thinking with regard to safety:

- I am responsible for my own health, safety, and well-being.
- I am also my brothers' and sisters' keeper in the matter of safety on the job.
- Accidents can and will happen unless I do my part to prevent them.
- There is always a best—safest—way to do any job, and that way is the only right way to do it.
- It is only common sense to follow the work rules and practices designed to promote the health and safety of myself and my co-workers.
- Before starting any job, I will check carefully to be sure there are no hidden hazards that require special protective measures.
- When protective equipment is called for, I will wear it; when special procedures are required, I will follow them.

If there's one thing I hope you'll take out on the floor with you from this session, it's this: In our ongoing battle against accident and injury, two of our most powerful weapons are positive thinking and taking safety personally.

“Make SAFETY A Way of Life!” one day at a time!

Defensive Driving

October - 10

Defensive driving does not require a high degree of special training. The characteristics of a defensive driver are the same characteristics that apply to many aspects of our lives. Let's look at the four most important requirements for defensive driving.

Knowledge

Defensive drivers take time to educate themselves about safe driving techniques. They know how to recognize hazards and avoid collisions. They know the traffic laws in their area. This knowledge helps them know how to act correctly and quickly in traffic situations. They also know how to properly maintain their vehicles in a safe operating condition.

Alertness

Defensive drivers are alert, both to traffic conditions and how their mental and physical conditions may affect their driving. They pay attention to the traffic situation to the front, sides and rear, glancing in rear – and sideview mirrors many times a minute. They give all their attention to the task of driving.

Foresight

Defensive drivers know that their worst enemy is the unexpected. They never assume the other driver will do the right thing. They anticipate hazards by scanning the road to size up the traffic situation as far ahead as possible. In this way they are able to prepare for hazards rather than simply react to them. They practice long-range foresight by keeping their vehicle well maintained, by checking them before driving, and by always wearing a safety belt.

Judgement

Good drivers use common sense and knowledge to make decisions wisely and quickly. They maintain control of their behavior, resisting the temptation to make risky maneuvers to get somewhere faster.

Can you think of other aspects that make a good defensive driver?

Make SAFETY A Way of Life!" one day at a time!

Job Briefings

October 11

Job briefings are not only an important aspect of our daily work habits, they are also mandated through OSHA. In 29CFR1910.269 (c) it states, we the employer shall ensure that the employee in charge conducts, a job briefing with the employees involved before they start each job. You noticed it said each job and not just at the beginning of each day.

The only time just one daily job briefing is needed, is when all the jobs are similar in nature. This would pertain to production workers on an assembly line. In our line of work there are no two jobs that are similar.

Our company policy states that whenever it becomes necessary to replace the person in charge and/or a worker during an on going job, a new briefing must be conducted. It also goes on to state that, if the status of a job changes, work is temporarily stopped, or unexpected conditions arise a new job briefing is required. It is also important that everyone on that job is involved in this briefing.

The following Five Steps are to be utilized in each briefing, no matter if you're working alone or in a group.

1. All Hazard Associated with the job. This includes all hazards physical, mechanical & natural.
2. Work procedures involved, proper tools needed, clearances, hold offs, what each individual will be doing and where they will be doing it from, etc.
3. Any special precautions or unique situations particular to that job, any mechanical limitations etc.
4. Energy source controls, proper tagging, grounding, clearances etc. Clear and concise communications with dispatch.
5. Proper PPE, safety glasses, hard hats, face shields, rubber gloves, etc. Is any special PPE's required for this particular job?

Make SAFETY A Way of Life!" one day at a time!

Is there anyone here who hasn't read at least one horror story about an angry motorist taking "revenge"—even to the extent of a fatal shooting—against someone who cut in front of him, or sounded a horn too loud or too often?

More to the point, is there any one of us (including myself) who hasn't been severely annoyed by someone who tailgated us or who wouldn't move over to let us on the highway? And haven't we sometimes dreamed of, or even indulged in, some minor retaliation—not homicide, of course, but a loud beep or an offensive gesture? We've excused ourselves by saying that it's a way of letting off a little steam, calming us down so that we can get back to concentrating on a safe drive. Unfortunately, nowadays an angry response from us may be like waving the cape in front of the bull—asking for real trouble. So in a sense, your own anger has put you in danger.

Reasons

Why is this? Behavior experts have come up with a number of possible explanations for this rapidly increasing type of attitude and action. They've even coined a name for it: "road rage." The most common theory is that the stresses of everyday life—both on and off the job—have for many people become so intense that it leads to a coping mechanism they may not even be consciously aware of.

It supposedly goes something like this: "My boss treats me unfairly; I'm doing more work for little if any more money—and could even lose my job at any time; I'm not getting the attention and support I need from my boyfriend/girlfriend, husband/wife, or friends; prices and taxes are getting way out of hand. But by gosh, when I'm in my car, I'm in charge. Nobody's going to push me around here. So if you know what's good for you, you'll stay out of my way!" Of course, this is not verbalized; it's an attitude.

Responses

What should you do when you encounter this kind of attitude on the road—either in another driver or, for that matter, in yourself? First of all, exert whatever effort it takes to refocus your mind. Ask yourself whether your true goal is to win some kind of competition with the other drivers on the road, to get where you're going a little faster, or to reach your destination in one piece by being a cool head rather than a hothead.

Let's assume you've given yourself the commonsense answer to that question. Now what? Now concentrate on not allowing the situation to escalate. Don't let either your own anger or the other driver's put your safety at risk. Patiently remind yourself that the more courteous driver—you— is the better driver—you. So yield the right-of-way even to someone who obviously isn't proceeding in the right way. Then congratulate yourself on having been wise enough to avoid a confrontation in what could very likely have been a lose-lose situation.

Rewards

Sometimes this is easier said than done, of course. But it will be worth the effort, not only by increasing your odds of a safe trip but for peace of mind. You'll know you've used mature, sound judgment; you can feel superior to that clod who cut you off; and you'll actually have avoided an increase in your own level of stress. "Road rage" is like a contagious disease. Protect yourself from it with daily doses of common sense and safety consciousness and by steering clear of any obviously infected drivers you see on the road with you.

Make SAFETY A Way of Life!" one day at a time!

Shortcuts October 15

Webster dictionary states that a shortcut is a method of doing something more directly and quickly than and often not so thoroughly as by ordinary means.

Shortcuts have their place in society and in the outside world. Shortcuts are great when you want to get from one place to another quicker. However taking shortcuts in our work is inexcusable and intolerable and will eventually lead to either serious complications or devastating effects. We must not let ourselves get caught in that trap.

While you may get away with taking a shortcut, no matter how ill advised that shortcut is, the gamble you are taking is not worth the end result. Think about whom really ends up paying the price? Think about how your family will endure if the shortcut you take takes a part of you with it?

Shortcuts usually occur when we become complacent or we're in a hurry to complete a particular task. We think that the steps involved are not necessary or the consequence of overlooking that part of our work ethics or training is justified in one way or another.

Let us not forget for even an instance, why we have these procedures and why we must never take a shortcut. All of our work procedures are time proven and injury induced. There is ample reason to follow them as written. Shortcuts take parts of these procedures and reduce them in such a way, as to open us up to the same type injuries that originally mandated the procedure itself.

Take a few minutes to discuss some of the shortcuts you have seen or experienced. Then look at some of the possible outcomes that could have happen.

“Make SAFETY A Way of Life!” one day at a time!

Have you ever wondered who writes the rules? The safety rules, that is? Has it ever occurred to you that maybe those people who wrote the rules just don't have a clue as to what's really going on out in the field, or out in the plant or in the world for that matter?

Well let's take a look at these people who wrote the rules: It was the guy we've all heard about who cut two of his fingers off after he wired up the guard on a circular saw. He was helped by the machinist who didn't have the time to go back to the lunchroom for her safety glasses and lost an eye when the bit broke in the drill press. They both got advice from the fellow who had his head split open by a falling hammer because he just plain didn't like to wear hard hats.

I think you get my point here. If not, then let me put it another way: Each and every safety rule came about because someone was hurt, maimed or killed. Their misfortune contributed to our knowledge of how accidents happen and how to avoid them. Rules came into being in order to help you avoid a similar accident or injury.

Our company is very interested in your safety. It has provided you with the tools, equipment and working conditions that will help you do your best. But in return, the company expects certain thing from you. It expects your cooperation in abiding by the rules, in assisting your fellow workers with a willing attitude, by helping your foreman by following their instructions and by your valuable comments and suggestions. It also looks for your cooperation by maintaining your physical fitness to perform your job, by not showing up sick or under the influence of drugs or alcohol, and by getting the proper rest at night.

Cooperation or working together with our company creates a win-win situation created that benefits everyone involved. The most obvious benefit is a safer and more productive work place. A somewhat less obvious, and some would mistakenly say a selfish or greedy benefit, would be more money for the company. Let's take a look at this "money" benefit.

There is no doubt that if a safer and more productive work place is created, then the company stands to make more money. There is less down time due to accidents, insurance rates decrease, operating cost are lower and profits are up. But what happens when profits go up? The company becomes more competitive. It can now sell its products, be it through construction or manufacturing, for less. Being more competitive means more work for you, more tangible benefits like profit sharing, or raises, paid vacations, holidays. Simply put, healthy employees insure a healthy company and a healthy company means happy employees.

So you see, safety rules benefit everyone. By working together with your company and fellow employees to ensure a safe working environment, you are, in many ways, ensuring your own physical and financial well being. It is not just a tired old phrase to say SAFETY FIRST. In fact it's the only phrase that makes sense when it comes to getting the job done, on time, under budget and, most importantly, a happier, healthier you when it's complete.

Make SAFETY A Way of Life!" one day at a time!

CELL PHONE USE QUADRUPLES CAR CRASH RISK

OCTOBER - 17

Drivers distracted by cell phone conversations quadruple their risk of a serious accident, according to new research out of Australia.

The University of Sydney study also found that hands-free mobile phones are no safer than handheld mobile phones while driving.

Researchers analyzed data on 456 drivers who owned or used mobile phones and had been in a traffic crash resulting in injuries requiring hospitalization.

As part of the study, they interviewed the drivers and used phone company records to assess their mobile phone use immediately before the crash and during trips occurring at roughly the same time of day 24 hours, three days, and seven days before the crash. This meant, in effect, that researchers could compare crash risks in the same driver at the same time of day, with the only difference being whether or not they were using their cell phone.

Reporting Tuesday in the online edition of the British Medical Journal, they found that cell phone use occurring in the 10 minutes prior to a crash was linked to a quadrupled risk of having an accident. The researchers also found similar results for the interval of up to five minutes before a crash.

Make SAFETY A Way of Life!" one day at a time!

Talk About Safety!

October – 18

Whether you call it safety coaching or a pre-shift meeting - talk to your co-workers about safety. Talk about why safety is a cooperative effort, and how your lives could depend on everyone working safely. Talk about how to avoid injuries, and how to keep people aware of their safety habits. Sharing safety information is important to everyone's well being.

But, how do you discuss safety when the person has an "I know-it-all" attitude? How do you deal with the person who ignores your suggestions, or says your comments are stupid? It's not easy. But if you can "talk up" safety with your fellow workers, you might prevent a serious incident one day. Try these tips:

- Emphasize the positive. When you see a safe action, congratulate the other person.
- Keep your comments cheerful and productive. Most people will reject a negative remark, even if it has a valid point.
- Avoid aggressive confrontations in front of other co-workers. A quiet one-on-one conversation will usually have better success.

Frequently you will hear someone say "but this is the way we have always done it" as a reason for not changing the way they work. The person may really be thinking "I'm uncomfortable with the new ideas; I prefer to keep my same old routine."

But our old work habits are not always the safest way. For instance, we now realize that certain chemicals are a hazard to our safety, so we use the proper respiratory equipment, safety goggles and gloves to protect ourselves. A few years ago, workers did not know the long term effect of many products. They seldom, if ever, wore PPE (Personnel Protective Equipment). Now that we have better information, we know we should protect ourselves. Our new work habits are safer.

But sometimes, despite all your good intentions, your co-worker will persist in unsafe actions. What should you do then?

- Talk over the problem with your co-worker's work buddy. Maybe that person can find a better way to change the person's unsafe habits.
- Make a point of communicating your concerns to your supervisor. Just ignoring unsafe behavior won't make it go away.

How should you react if someone tells you that you are working unsafely?

- Don't get angry, even if the person shouts at you. Concern for your safety caused your co-worker to yell.
- Don't brush off the other person's advice. Your co-worker has your best interests at heart. It takes a lot of courage to tell fellow workers they are doing something unsafe.

There are other ways that you can talk about safety to your fellow workers. For instance:

- When starting a task which will impact on the work of other people, talk to them first. Tell them what you are assigned to do. Let them know if it includes a lockout and tagout of operating machinery, and about how long the job will take. Ask if the timing is okay for their work.
- Communicate the hazards to others by putting up warning signs and installing barricades.

The most important point of safety coaching is to speak up when you notice a co-worker doing something dangerous. Don't let the person remove a guard on operating machinery. Don't let your co-worker enter a confined space without the proper procedures and equipment. Don't just shake your head and turn away when someone breaks your company's safety rules. Speak up now!

You can make a difference to the overall safety of your work place. Give positive feedback to your co-workers, watch out for their safety as well as your own, and don't be afraid to speak up if you see a safety infraction.

Make SAFETY A Way of Life!" one day at a time!

If you've ever smashed your thumb with a hammer or gouged your palm with a screwdriver, you'll know hand tools can be hazardous.

Some injuries can be very serious. Loss of vision caused by a particle striking your eye is one common hazard associated with hand tools. Using the wrong hand tools can even cause electrical shock or explosions.

- Choose the right tool for the job. Using a screwdriver as a crowbar or a wrench as a hammer is asking for an injury.
- Use good quality tools. When purchasing tools for your own use, don't purchase on the basis of low price alone. Cheap tools can break easily, causing injury.
- Choose tools designed to prevent injuries caused by repetitive stress and impact. These ergonomically designed tools are made so they can be used without excessive twisting or bending of the wrists or excessive pressure on your hands.
- Keep the tool in good condition. Store it properly in a tool chest to avoid exposure to extreme temperatures, moisture and corrosive chemicals. Blades should be sheathed or guarded to keep them from getting broken and to prevent injuries. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for maintenance procedures such as oiling it regularly.
- Obtain training for using tools. Don't use tools for which you have not been trained.
- Carry tools correctly in a tool box or tool belt to prevent injuries. Make sure the blade or point is protected and the tool is secured so it cannot fall. Never carry a sharp tool in your pocket. Do not carry tools by hand when you climb a ladder. Use a tool belt, or hoist them up after you.
- Dress for safety when using hand tools. Wear eye protection whenever you use a tool which could throw particles, such as a hammer or chisels. Wear safety shoes to protect you from falling tools and other objects. Gloves may be required for protection from rough surfaces you are working on.
- Whenever possible, use a clamp or vise to secure the object you are working on.
- Keep cutting tools sharp. Dull knives cause more injuries than sharp ones because of the force required to do the cutting.
- When sawing, use slow, deliberate strokes to maintain control of the saw and the object being sawed.
- Check regularly for signs of wear and damage to tools. Make sure handles are secure on hammers and files.
- When striking with a hammer, avoid off-center blows. Strike the head of the hammer squarely on the surface.
- Never hold an object in one hand while using a screwdriver on it in the other hand.
- Never use a "cheater" to extend a wrench handle, because it can break or slip off.

Choose the right tool and use it the right way. Otherwise, hand tools can be hazardous.

Make SAFETY A Way of Life!" one day at a time!

What do a VCR and a chain saw have in common? Not much, except for the fact many people will try to figure out their operation without glancing at the owner's manual.

While you can live without correctly operating your VCR, the same might not be true if you try to play lumberjack without a twig's worth of chain saw safety knowledge.

You needn't even have a saw running to gash your skin with its razor-sharp chain. Fire it up and the stakes rise to potentially painful levels.

Whether you are a weekend firewood gatherer or use a chain saw in the course of your job, observing the following tips by chain saw safety expert Carl Smith could save your life:

- Chain saws must be operated with two hands. If one hand is removed to start a saw in mid-air, or for any other reason, the operator is not in control of the tool. "You've also got to have your thumb wrapped around the handlebar at all times, to keep control of the saw in case of kickback," he says.
- Don't use a chain saw while standing on a ladder. Smith says a doctor placed a 20-foot extension ladder in the box of his pickup truck, climbed it and fired up his chain saw in mid-air (a definite no-no). He fell and the rapidly-spinning chain caused serious muscle and nerve damage to one arm, literally cutting short his career as a surgeon.
- It's not wise to go out on a woodcutting trek alone, but if you do, at least tell someone where you will be and when you'll be home. Carry a field dressing in your shirt pocket — not under your safety head gear. Also ensure that a suitable first aid kit is readily available.
- If you take the family, keep them well clear of your cutting area. Smith says a man who was showing off with a chain saw ended up felling a tree onto his wife and baby, killing both. Because a falling tree can knock other trees over like dominos, Smith says no observer is safe unless he or she is standing at least 2.5 tree lengths away.
- Many needless injuries have occurred when a child or dog startles a chain saw operator and the rattled person pivots upon the other person, lethal chain saw in hand.
- Before making the first cut, plan out a primary and alternate escape route in the event a tree starts falling in your direction. You should never run straight backward from a falling tree, because it can "outrun" you. Flee at a 45-degree angle, keeping your eye on the tree at all times. Never turn your back on it.
- Never cut a standing tree all the way through. Always leave at least one inch of "holding wood" intact and then move at least 12 feet away, preferably behind a boulder or tree, until it has fallen.
- Wear the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), regardless of where you are using your chain saw. Necessary items include eye protection, ear protection, pants with leg protective pads sewn in, gloves and safety shoes. A chain saw needn't be running to cause injury. Using a scabbard on the blade will prevent a nasty cut.
- Never operate a chain saw while under the influence of alcohol or medications that affect coordination, balance and reaction time. Also take frequent breaks, because fatigue can cause injury in the blink of an eye.

Make SAFETY A Way of Life!" one day at a time!

If you had to go to a store and buy every tool you need for your home building projects, you could go broke in a hurry. But many of us are able to fill our toolboxes and home workshops with hand-me-downs from parents and cheap finds from yard sales.

While second-hand tools might be easy on the budget, they can be hard on safety. Damaged, worn, poorly repaired and outdated tools can lead to serious injuries.

Examine all hand and powered tools before using them. Don't attempt makeshift repairs. If the tool is defective, discard it so you or another person won't be tempted to use it.

These are some of the problems to look for:

- Flattened or chipped heads on striking tools.
- Loose or cracked handles.
- Broken wiring on power tools.
- Insulation which has been damaged.
- Missing guards.

Some defects can be overcome. Dull cutting tools, if in good condition otherwise, can be sharpened.

Even if tools appear to be in good shape, they may not be safe to use if they lack up-to-date safety features such as a switch that stops the operation when pressure is released.

A power tool should come with an operator's manual to show you how to use and maintain it safely. And don't forget to obtain the safety eyewear and gloves you need to use the tool without injury.

So if you've inherited an ax with the handle taped on, or a power drill with the wires showing through the hole in the cord, don't attempt to use them. Your safety is worth much more than the money you would save by using defective tools.

Think twice before giving away or selling your old tools. You may get a few dollars for them at a flea market, but you're just passing on the problem. The next person who tries to use the defective tools may not realize they are unsafe. Would you really want an injury or death of a friend, relative or stranger on your conscience?

Here's a thought: If you do not want to discard family hand-me-down tools because they have a sentimental value, turn them into workshop decorations instead.

Make SAFETY A Way of Life!" one day at a time!

Eye Injuries Occur In An Instant

October - 24

An eye injury can happen in an instant, but the results can last for the rest of your life.

Think what it would be like to be blinded in a workplace accident, just because you decided not to put on your eye protection. You would regret the decision for the rest of your life.

A seemingly minor burn or a cut can be disastrous when it involves your eyes. A piece of metal flying off a grinder might be barely noticed if it strikes another part of your body. But if it strikes your eye it could cause permanent vision impairment. A chemical splash on your skin might cause a painful burn but it may eventually heal. If that splash went into your eyes, you might never see again.

These injuries can be prevented, by working safely and wearing the required Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for the eyes.

The eyes are subjected to many kinds of dangers at work. Here are just some of them:

- Small particles in the air
- Projectiles, from processes such as grinding and cutting
- Blows and impact
- Cuts
- Vapors
- Hot or molten material
- Splashes of chemical substances such as corrosives
- Certain light rays such as those from welding
- Equipment, or even excessive sunlight.

Enlist your supervisor to help choose the right kind of eye protection for your work. You might require safety eyeglasses with side shields, or protective goggles. You could need filtered lenses to keep out harmful rays. You might require a face shield to cover all of your face, or a hood to cover your entire head. You may have to wear a combination of these types of eye protection. It all depends on what sort of work you will be doing and the kinds of hazards you will face.

It is also important to get the right fit. Your supervisor can help you out here as well. Correct fit will ensure the safety eyewear protects the way it should and it will encourage you to wear your eye protection when you should.

Today's safety eyewear is available in many styles and frame colors and looks as good as regular eyewear. But that's where the similarity ends. Safety glasses and street glasses are not interchangeable. Safety eyewear is made of special material designed to resist impact.

Don't forget about the importance of using safety eyewear off the job as well. Eye protection is required for many jobs at home, such as woodworking and using caustic cleaning products. Many kinds of sports also require eye protection.

Never lose sight of the importance of eye protection. Obtain the correct safety eyewear, and remember to wear it.

Make SAFETY A Way of Life!" one day at a time!

Looking back can be either safe or dangerous, depending on the particular circumstances. If you take too long a look back while driving, you could run into something ahead of you.

But looking back while backing out of a parking place is using safe driving procedure.

There is one way in which looking back can have a very helpful impact on promoting safety on the job. Can anyone tell what that way is?

Taking a look back at a close call or a near-miss accident can really qualify as thinking ahead, because what you're doing is trying to figure out what went wrong yesterday so that you can keep it—or something worse—from happening tomorrow.

Many job injuries occur because repeated near misses beforehand were not heeded. Sparks fly whenever a certain power tool is turned on, but there hasn't been a fire ... so far. Boxes fall from the top of a storage rack whenever it's bumped into—but no one has been hurt ... yet. These examples are typical of the kind of near-miss that keeps being repeated until one of two things happens: someone corrects the hazardous situation, or someone is hurt—perhaps seriously.

In a number of fields, success regularly involves looking back at earlier events. One example is the game films a coach studies on Monday morning, or the film director's screening of the previous day's rushes. Reviewing the data on how well a product has been selling is essential before making a decision to step up or tone down the promotion efforts. I'm sure you can think of other examples.

This certainly isn't intended as a recommendation for "living in the past," like people who are always mourning "the good old days." But I will insist that it's appropriate, and smart, to talk to your supervisor about a past incident you think points to a need for change in order to assure the safety of people and property.

An occasional review of job procedures is also a worthwhile investment of your time and attention. It's helpful to find out whether you are continuing to do your job or run your machine in the safest way. If you've gotten a little lazy or a little lax, on the other hand, it's good to know that too, so that you can get back on the right track.

Make SAFETY A Way of Life!" one day at a time!

Sprains and Strains

October – 28

Athletes in training know their abilities and their limitations, because going beyond what are physically possible leads to strained and sprained muscles and ligaments. Those injuries could put the athlete out of competition. Your job may include lifting and carrying heavy material. You should be aware of how much you can do in order to avoid any injury that could put you on the bench for a while.

Sprains and strains can occur anywhere--in the workplace, during recreational and sporting events, and at home. A sprain occurs whenever a muscle is stretched beyond its limit. Muscles do a great deal of work. However, they must be conditioned if they are to perform in a given way. Professional athletes condition their muscles through rigorous training. We also must condition our muscles. A worker who is accustomed to manually handling a large number of pieces of material in a given workday can do so with ease. Those of us who have different duties would find it difficult to do that same amount of work without paying for it with aching muscles. If we should continue to do the work, however, we would soon be conditioned and be able to perform the job without pain.

However, even the conditioned athlete or worker cannot exceed the limitations of the muscles. When a muscle is stretched too much, the ligaments pull and sometimes even tear. Stretched ligaments and tendons are termed strains. A sprain is when tearing has occurred.

The industrial setting provides many opportunities for the occurrence of sprains and strains; the most common is material handling. We all handle material in one way or another. Even the office worker is involved with material handling when picking up a package, box or chair to move it.

Other movements can also cause sprains and strains--overreaching or overextending a part of the body; reaching over something to pick up a load; or trying to reach a top shelf without using a proper stool or ladder.

What can we do to minimize these injuries? *Well, this* meeting is a beginning. If we understand what causes sprains and strains, we are better equipped to prevent them. A few basic rules to remember are:

1. Understand your limitations. Don't charge into a job cold. Warm up to it. Take a lesson from athletes--try to keep yourself in good condition and at your proper weight.
2. Don't overextend yourself--use a stepstool or a ladder when necessary.
3. Lift with your legs, not with your back. Keep the load close. Don't twist your body while carrying a load.
4. Be sure there are no slipping or tripping hazards in your work area or around your home. The sudden jerk caused by a slip or trip can cause a sprain or strain.
5. Don't shy away from hard work because you fear a strain. Condition your body to do what is necessary.
6. Look into ways to eliminate lifting and carrying or to keep it to a minimum. Is there a better way? Work smarter, not harder; it's easier and safer.

Make SAFETY A Way of Life!" one day at a time!

Astronauts do it! Aircraft pilots do it! Truck drivers who value their lives do it!

Call it a countdown or check-off or safety checklist or whatever -- the principle is basic to all of them. It is the principle of checking out various working parts of complex mechanical devices, such as automobiles and trucks, before the operator trusts his or her life to the machine.

A good time to make a safety check on trucks or cars is while the engine is warming up. Any order of checking will do, just so it makes sense to the operator. Just as important, the check must be done regularly, without fail, and it must be thorough. Here is a suggested basic countdown:

Circle the vehicle and check each wheel for wear, damage, or misalignment. Check tire pressure and tread thickness; uneven wear of tread can mean misalignment. Flat or soft tires can cause kneading and flexing of sidewalls and treads, which builds up heat that weakens tires.

Check for tires that look underinflated or flat because of overloading. This can cause heat buildup in a tire, shorten its life, and even cause tire failure or blowout.

Step up on the front bumper and bounce up and down to test front-end shock absorbers. Shocks are weak if the vehicle's bouncing does not stop when you stop. Malfunctioning shocks cause sluggish or erratic braking.

Check to see that all devices are working properly -- such as lights for driving, turning, backing up, and braking. Also check windshield wipers and signal horns.

Put the vehicle in gear and go forward or backward a few feet, testing the brakes. Safe braking takes hold without noticeable delay and without the sound of metal on metal.

Check all glass and mirrors for clear visibility. Especially look for dirt, grime, cracks, or breaks.

Check any cargo for proper stacking and tie-down. Lashing needs to be strong enough and secured in such a way as to hold the load and keep it from shifting.

This is a partial checklist. Different drivers include other checks, depending upon the kind of vehicle, weight, and bulk of loads to be hauled, as well as on driving conditions and weather. The important thing is to practice the countdown before every trip. It acts as a double check on vehicle maintenance and gives the operator a clear idea of future needs for maintenance and repair.

The countdown is no substitute for maintaining a vehicle in top shape—this includes its mechanical parts. But checking before the trip can give the operator an edge on making it a safe one.

"Make SAFETY A Way of Life!" -- one day at a time

On Your Own Time

October - 30

Safety is important not just to you and your family but to your employer as well. It's part of my job to help you to develop a safe attitude, so that safety will become an ingrained part of your job, day in and day out.

But off-the-job safety is important, too. What you do on your own time is your own business, but since we're all part of a team, it's only natural that we're concerned about each other's welfare both on and off the job.

At work, you're part of a safety network that extends into many areas. There are rules and regulations to follow and supervisors who work at keeping the safety program going.

Off the job, though, you're on your own. You can leave safety glasses off when you're remodeling the kitchen, and you can balance a ladder on a box when you're painting the peaks on your house.

You probably wouldn't hear a word out of anyone, but it would take a pretty immature person to deliberately leave safety at work. Still, there are times when we all get a little careless.

The highways are prime areas of concern for safety away from work, since vehicle-related accidents are the prime cause of fatalities, on the job and off—in the home or public place. I won't attempt to go into all the aspects of traffic safety here.

They're emphasized almost everywhere, and we've had training sessions devoted to vehicle safety. But I certainly caution you to cool it on the road. Be patient getting out of the parking lot, and always watch the other driver.

To some degree, most of us are do-it-yourselfers around the home, and this is where a lot of people are injured. Be careful when using a ladder, for example, being sure it's in good condition and you climb safely.

When using tools, pick the right tool for the job. If a tool is in poor condition, don't use it. Most of you have power tools, and you should be sure that they're properly grounded with a three-pronged plug or double insulation. And stay off wet surfaces when using electric power tools.

The weather is something we can't do much about. Yet it affects our safety, so we have to take precautions against it. Don't overexert yourself when shoveling snow, for example—a shovelful can weigh more than you may think. And don't work too long in the hot sun. This can catch up with you fast, particularly if you've worked hard all week at your regular job.

Off-the-job safety should really be second nature if you practice it in earnest at work. So keep an eye out for hazards whether you're on the golf course, in your boat, or driving your snowmobile.

National statistics show that accidents away from work account for 70 percent of all deaths and 55 percent of all injuries to workers. So the toll in suffering and the loss in manpower runs high away from the job.

You are all valuable employees, and each of you fits into our overall operation and the overall manpower picture in the country. Your contribution to the economy would be difficult to replace if you were injured either on or off the job. Add to this the fact that you're priceless to your family, and it's easy to see why a 24-hour safety effort is necessary.

Make SAFETY A Way of Life!" one day at a time!

Staying Safe with Portable Ladders October - 31

Portable ladders are a simple and effective means for safe climbing except for one major problem. Workers sometimes find portable ladders so easy to use that they neglect normal precautions and safety rules. The result, too often, is an accident.

Almost all ladder accidents can be avoided by following the three basic rules of ladder safety:

1. No ladder is safe unless it is the right type and right size for the job
2. No ladder is safe if it is missing rungs, if its rungs or rails are defective, if it is poorly built, or if it is in a weakened condition
3. No ladder is safe unless the person using it takes commonsense precautions.

Using the right type of ladder makes the job safer. For example, don't use a stepladder to do the job of a straight ladder by leaning it against a support.

Heavy construction jobs call for a heavy ladder not a light household type. Metal ladders must not be used in the vicinity of exposed electrical circuits or power lines, where they may come in contact.

The right length is important, too—neither too long or too short. Stepladders are safest if they're 10 feet or less in length, and they should never be longer than 20 feet. In construction work, extension ladders can be used to reach up to 44 feet, but, for greater heights, scaffolds should be used. Splicing two ladders together is never safe.

A ladder should always be examined before it is used to be sure there are no defects that make it unsafe to use. (The reason a ladder should never be painted is that the paint could conceal significant defects.)

A ladder is unsafe to use if side rails are cracked or split or if there are sharp edges or splinters on cleats, rungs, or side rails. Check also for missing, broken, or weakened cleats, rungs, or treads by placing the ladder flat on the ground and walking on it. If a defective ladder cannot be repaired, it should be disposed of promptly and permanently.

Once the ladder has been checked and found safe, set it at an angle of about 75° with the floor or ground. The distance from the wall to the foot of the ladder should be about equal to 1/4 of the ladder's total length.

After setting the ladder in place, check it for firm and level footing. To prevent slipping, non-slip points or safety shoes are recommended. But, if this is not practical, the ladder should be secured firmly by lashing it with rope or some other suitable line.

The ordinary straight ladder is not built to support more than one person at a time. In going up or down, always face the ladder and grasp the side rails with both hands.

Never carry tools or materials in your hands when going up or down the ladder. Instead, put them in a sack that hangs from a strap over your shoulder or use a bucket and rope to raise and lower them.

Don't lean a ladder against an object that might move, and never lean it against a window sash. If you must work near or on a window, fasten a board securely across the top of the ladder to give a bearing on each side of the window.

Always stay below the top three rungs. You should hold on with one hand while working.

Be sure you keep moving the ladder as needed to reach new areas to be worked. Never overreach, push, or pull the ladder while working on it. Never straddle the space between the ladder and another object or try to work in a high wind. Any of these actions could upset you and the ladder.

If you're working in front of a door that opens toward the ladder, the door must be blocked open, locked, or guarded. In any other situation in which a person or vehicle may bump into the ladder, get a helper to stand guard. If you can't, then be sure to rope off the space around the ladder.

Some points to remember:

- Always inspect a ladder before using it.
- Outdoors, don't work on a ladder if it's very windy.
- When going up or down, face the ladder. Don't hurry. Take one step at a time, and hold on with at least one hand.
- Don't overreach or try to reposition the ladder while you're on it. Instead, get down and move the ladder to a better working position.
- Don't stand and work on any of the top three rungs of a ladder.
- Secure the ladder against slipping before you try to use it.
- Don't ever use a metal ladder near live wires or parts.
- When a wooden ladder, is not in use, store it under cover, horizontally, with supports to prevent sagging. Don't let it lie on the ground where heat or dampness may weaken it.

Make SAFETY A Way of Life!" one day at a time!