Weekly Safety Meetings Select Edition
Safety Training for the Construction Industry

Hudson Bay Insulation Co.

Week of 3/3/2014

Confined Spaces

When it comes to confined spaces, you need to know what you're getting into. OSHA defines a confined space as a space that is large enough and configured in such a way that an employee can enter and perform assigned work; has limited or restricted means for entry or exit; and is not designed for continuous employee occupancy. Confined spaces include storage tanks, bins, boilers, ventilation ducts, sewers, tunnels, pipelines, manholes, vaults, and pits.

A confined space has several potentially fatal hazards including:

1. gases, vapors, and dust particles in the air that could ignite or explode.
2. lack of oxygen which can cause asphyxiation.
3. toxicity from poisonous vapors and gases that can cause illness and death.
4. physical hazards such as becoming trapped, falling, or drowning; as well as snakes, spiders, and rodents.

Potential hazards associated with the confined space require testing, monitoring, and control by an appropriately trained individual. You should never enter a confined space until it has been evaluated and proper control measures have been established. Before you enter a confined space:

- Recognize the potential hazards involved.
- Know all the necessary precautions you must take.
- Wear all the required personal protective equipment for that specific confined space.
- Review the pre-established rescue procedure in case of an emergency.
- Understand the communication system that will be used.
- Have a trained attendant standing by and in constant contact with you to call for help in case of emergency.
- Ask questions if you are unsure about any of the procedures involved.

Accidents usually occur because workers fail to recognize the potential hazards of a confined space. Proper planning and preparation can reduce your chances of injury.

SAFETY REMINDER

When in doubt, get out!

If you suspect something is wrong, leave the space immediately.

NOTES:

SPECIAL TOPICS /EMPLOYEE SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS/NOTES:

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Week of 3/10/2014

Powder-Actuated Tools

Powder-actuated tools are some of the safest tools in the construction industry. These tools are designed with safety in mind. However, you must remember that a powder-actuated tool uses explosive charges to drive studs, nails, and pins, just like bullets from a gun. Think of powder-actuated tools as loaded firearms.

OSHA's regulations allow only trained and certified employees to operate powder-actuated tools. There are several makes and models of these tools, and no two are exactly alike. Training and operator certification should be available from the supplier or manufacturer. If you haven't had the appropriate training **don't** use a powder-actuated tool.

Here are some safety tips:

- Always keep powder-actuated tools, fasteners, and charges in a safe place when they are not in use.
- Inspect the tool before use to ensure it is clean, all moving parts operate freely, and the barrel is not obstructed.
- Wear appropriate safety equipment including eye protection, hearing protection, and head protection.
- Check the manufacturer's recommendations for disposal instructions in case of a misfire.
- Powder-actuated tools should not be used on materials that are easily penetrated.
- Don't fire fasteners into cast iron, high carbon or tempered steel, armor plate, rock, glazed brick, tile, or glass.
- Using a charge that is too strong could shoot the fastener completely through the workpiece.
- Never try to release a loaded tool that has jammed in the firing position.
- Hold the tool perpendicular to the work surface.
- Never point a powder-actuated tool at others whether it is loaded or not.
- Loaded tools should not be left unattended.
- All powder-actuated tools must be tested daily and all defects must be corrected.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for maintenance, inspection, and cleaning.
- Never place your hand over the muzzle of a powder-actuated tool.

Powder-actuated tools save a great deal of time and work, but they can also be very dangerous. Even though you may be certified to use them, take a few minutes to review the operator's manual, then make sure you really understand it.

SAFETY REMINDER

Knowing how to operate powder-actuated tools safely is a matter of life or death.

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Hudson Bay Insulation Co. Week of 3/17/2014

Care of Hand Tools

If you want to do the job, you need tools. If you want to do the job *safely*, you need the right tool for the job and it needs to be well-maintained. Maintaining your tools is as much a part of the job as using them to get the work done.

Whether you are a carpenter installing custom cabinets, a mason setting stone, or a laborer digging a trench, your hand tools are very important to the success of your job. Just as you would with power tools, make sure you inspect hand tools for chips, cracks, and other damage. Remove defective tools from service at once. Some tools come in many varieties, like chisels, for instance. There are cold chisels, brick chisels, and wood chisels. Make sure you select the right one for the job you are doing.

A *safe* worker uses a hand tool only for the kind of work it was designed to do. He does not like to improvise because he knows that it's dangerous—dangerous for the hand tool and dangerous for him. He practices using each of his hand tools in the correct and safe way. A sharp tradesman uses sharp tools. He inspects his tools at regular intervals, replaces tools that are worn or defective, and sharpens and adjusts them for best results.

You too can be a safe worker. When it comes to hand tool safety, think about these tips:

- Keep tools clean and dry.
- Store hand tools in a designated chest, locker, or toolbox where they will be protected.
- Keep tools sharp! Sharp tools cut more easily and help you do the job more safely.
- Never hammer a nail, even a little bit, with any tool other than a hammer.
- Carry tools properly. Never place sharp objects in your pockets.
- Anticipate that the tool could slip; keep your hands and fingers out of the way.
- Don't use a cheater bar to increase torque on a wrench or leverage on a pry bar.

Getting the job done isn't enough; you have to get it done *safely*. Evaluate the hazards and take precautions. You can avoid injuries by choosing the right tool and using it safely.

SAFETY REMINDER

When a job produces chips or other flying particles, wear the right kind of eye protection.

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Hudson Bay Insulation Co. Week of 3/24/2014

Handling Sharp Tools and Objects

Tools and materials with sharp edges are a necessary part of construction work. How many buildings would get built without saws, drills, knives, and nails? Keep in mind that those valuable sharp edges are also dangerous. When any of these sharp items aren't handled properly, they can cause serious cuts, punctures, and sometimes even life-threatening injuries.

Learn how to use, carry, and maintain sharp tools safely!

1. Use the right tool for the job. In other words, use tools in the way they were designed to be used.
2. Wear PPE like gloves, gauntlets, and chaps to prevent cuts.
3. When using a sharp tool, always cut away from your body.
4. Don't carry sharp tools in your pockets. Keep them in a tool belt, a leather sheath, or a tool holder.
5. Never run while carrying sharp tools.
6. Keep cutting edges sharp. Dull blades require more force and are more likely to slip and cause an injury.
7. Disconnect the power source before changing blades and cutters on power tools.
8. Blade holders make changing large cutters easier and much safer—use them whenever possible.

There are many other sharp edges and points on a construction site. There may be nails and screws lying on the ground or protruding from scrap lumber. There are sharp edges on rebar, the ends of pipe and conduit, HVAC ductwork, and metal studs. Whenever possible, guard or at least mark exposed sharp edges, especially when they are near walkways or work areas.

Storing sharp tools safely is very important. The alternative can be quite painful. What if someone left a bit in a drill and just dropped it into the gang box? Later you reach in to grab a pry bar and ram an 1/8th inch drill bit up under your fingernail. That would put a hole in your plans! Remove cutters, bits, and blades from tools before putting them away. Store the tools properly and put the cutters in boxes or cases. Store screwdrivers, chisels, punches, and awls with the points down. Keep the box neat. Use a box that's big enough that you can look in and see what you're reaching for and what's next to it.

SAFETY REMINDER

A sharp object is no match for a sharp mind.

Think while you're using sharp tools and you'll avoid injuries.

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Hudson Bay Insulation Co. Week of 3/31/2014

Motor Vehicles and Your Safety

No one ever plans to be involved in a motor vehicle accident. But a crash still occurs every five seconds. And crashes don't just happen at high speeds, on long trips, in bad weather, or to bad drivers. Traffic accidents happen most often near home, at moderate speeds, and even to good drivers. Last year, approximately **40,000 people were killed** in traffic accidents. Luckily, however, there are many strategies you can use to avoid motor vehicle accidents. Keep the following safety tips in mind when operating a motor vehicle, whether you're on or off the job:

- ✓ Always make sure you and all your passengers wear seatbelts.
- ✓ Keep infants and toddlers secured in car seats and make sure the car seat is installed properly.
- ✓ Inspect your vehicle prior to using it each day.
- ✓ Maintain your vehicle in good working order.
- ✓ Check your tire pressure.
- ✓ Never leave a motor vehicle unattended while it is running.
- ✓ Always back up slowly and never back up more than is absolutely necessary.
- ✓ Use mirrors or have someone signal to help you back up.
- ✓ Don't drink and drive; designate a driver or call a cab.
- ✓ Drive defensively; when in doubt, yield to other vehicles.
- ✓ Obey all traffic laws.
- ✓ Observe school zones and their posted speed limits.
- ✓ Take all weather-related warning signs seriously.

We are a very mobile society, but our mobility shouldn't come at the cost of lives. Drivers have a responsibility to prevent motor vehicle accidents. Start by reducing the factors that can contribute to human error and accidents. Do not drive aggressively. Don't speed or follow too closely. Avoid distractions like cell phone conversations, eating, and reading a map. Never drive if you're fatigued or drowsy. When you're driving, you're "in the driver's seat," and it is vitally important that you deliver your cargo safe and sound.

SAFETY REMINDER

Night driving is particularly dangerous because your vision is limited. Reduce your speed and leave more room between you and the vehicles ahead of you.

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FATALITY NARRATIVE

Roofer Crushed Between Beam and Boom-Supported Elevating Work Platform*

Industry: Roofing contractors
Task: Installing metal siding panels on building
Occupation: Roofer
Type of Incident: Crushed between/Machine-related

Incident Date: September 18, 2012
Release Date: December 18, 2013
SHARP Report No.: 71-126-2013
Case No.: 12WA03701

On September 18, 2012, a 23-year-old roofer working from a boom-supported elevating work platform (also known as a boom or aerial lift) died when he was crushed between a horizontal building beam and the platform. The operator had worked in the construction industry for 29 years and was a trained lift operator. The victim had worked in the industry for several months. They both had worked at the site for more than three weeks. Working 14 feet above the ground from the elevated platform, the victim and an equipment operator were installing metal siding panels on a building. In front of the platform was a vertical column and an overhead horizontal beam. The operator began to move the lift sideways to the building to position it so that they could install another panel. As the lift began to move, the operator was watching to ensure that he did not hit the vertical column. The operator was just about to retract the boom, when the platform suddenly rotated 90 degrees counter clockwise. This action pinned and crushed the victim between the horizontal beam and the platform's control panel. The operator, unable to access the panel, called for assistance from workers on the ground who were able to operate the lift's ground controls. An investigation found that the victim likely inadvertently activated the platform's rotation switch, which can be done by slight pressure, thereby causing the platform to rotate.

Requirements

Employers must make sure that employees who operate elevating work platforms do the following both before and while driving the platform elevated:

- Maintain a clear view of the path of travel.
- Keep a safe distance from obstacles, debris, drop-offs, holes, depressions, ramps, and other hazards to safe travel.
- Keep a safe distance from overhead obstacles. See WAC 296-869-60030

Recommendations

- Perform a job/task hazard assessment to identify overhead obstructions and plan how to avoid them.
- Consider purchasing or retrofitting aerial lifts with an operator protective structure (OPS) to protect workers from being crushed against overhead obstructions. (Employers must have written permission from the manufacturer before modifying an elevating work platform. See WAC 296-869-30020)
- Equipment manufacturers should design aerial platform controls so that they are protected against inadvertent activation by workers on the work platform.

Statewide Statistics: This was number 46 of 64 work-related fatalities in Washington State during 2012, and was number 6 of 8 construction-related fatalities.
**This bulletin was developed to alert employers and employees of a tragic loss of life of a worker in Washington State and is based on preliminary data ONLY and does not represent final determinations regarding the nature of the incident or conclusions regarding the cause of the fatality.*

Developed by WA State Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (FACE) Program and the Division of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSH), WA State Dept. of Labor & Industries. The FACE Program is supported in part by a grant from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). For more information, contact the Safety and Health Assessment and Research for Prevention (SHARP) Program, 1-888-667-4277.

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SHARP-Research for Safe Work