

THE

CONNECTION

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SAFETY TIPS FOR DRIVEWAYS AND GARAGES

Adding on a garage or refinishing a driveway are common home remodeling projects. Integrating a few safety measures into these projects can help prevent slips, trips, falls or other, perhaps more serious, accidents in this busy area of the home.

A safe driveway is much more than a slab of concrete. For example, there are several finishes that can be added to driveway surfaces to make them slip-proof. After a slab is poured, consider scattering aggregate such as gravel, quarts or granite on the surface. Avoid driveway finishes such as cobblestone or anything with deep joints. Small feet can get tangled up in an uneven surface quite easily. Such surfaces can also pose problems for elderly people who might be unsteady on their feet. Maintain a driveway's safety by keeping it clear of dirt, oil and stray objects.

Garage door openers are viewed almost as a necessity these days. Make sure the one you purchase provides good lighting at the push of a button. Bright lighting will allow you to see an intruder or the bike your son left in the middle of the garage.

Finally, seal the concrete or blacktop flooring of the garage and the driveway. This seal allows for easy cleanup of oil or grease which protects against slips and falls.

Safety And The Supervisor



WHEN LIGHTNING STRIKES

Most people don't worry very much about being struck by lightning, but the fact is that lightning causes more deaths and injuries than almost any other weather phenomena, including tornadoes and hurricanes. Certain types of jobs, such as outdoor construction and heavy equipment operation, create more risk than others. Another factor is worker's proximity to items that attract lightning. Anyone working outdoors, near metal objects and fences, on construction sites using heavy equipment, or near large bodies of water, is particularly vulnerable.

But it's not just outdoor workers who need to be concerned. People working indoors where they might be on the telephone or in contact with electrical equipment or near metal plumbing are also at risk. Be aware that lightning comes indoors through solid wires, and anything that conducts electricity can bring it directly to you. Here are some recommendations to protect yourself from lightning strikes:

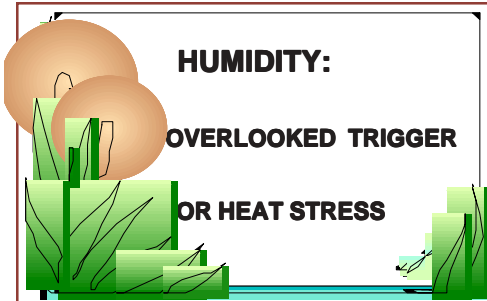
Take note of the weather. Listen to weather forecasts. Be wary of dark clouds building up at a distance. Contrary to popular opinion, it doesn't even have to be raining for there to be a danger from lightning. In fact, workers may be in the greatest danger when clouds are first threatening or moving away. The majority of people are struck by lightning either at the very beginning or at the end of a storm, not at its height. It's the first bolt of lightning that often gets to people, before they're even paying attention to an approaching storm. Furthermore, lightning can arise from the sides or top of a storm as well as its center, so the danger area is larger than just the area where it's raining.

Take shelter immediately. Shelter should be sought as soon as you hear the first clap of thunder or see a flash of lightning. Go indoors or inside a vehicle with a hard top. To be safe, you must be under a roof and inside four enclosed walls—a carport or a house with open windows is still vulnerable. However an enclosed vehicle, such as a car or an airplane, is safe because it acts like a cage with the lightning moving around the outside of it while the individual is safe inside. Remain indoors or in the vehicle for five minutes after the last peal of thunder is heard.

If caught outdoors, keep a low profile. Crouch down, but don't lie down on the ground. Lightning spreads through the ground, so the less of your body in contact with it, the better. Stay away from open water, such as lakes, rivers, and the ocean, and avoid trees, especially tall, isolated ones in open areas. Don't touch metal equipment, such as construction vehicles or tools, and don't touch metallic paths, such as wire fences, pipes, rails, antennas, or anything else that could conduct electricity.

If indoors, get off the phone and stay away from plumbing. Stay off traditional telephones because lightning can be conducted through the wires. Portable phones are the safe alternative. Plumbing can also be a problem because lightning can come through metal pipes and water so avoid toilets, sinks, baths, and showers during a storm. Indoor workers using equipment that is *not* connected to electrical outlets should be safe, but equipment that's connected to electrical sources should be avoided unless your building is protected by lightning rods. These rods should be professionally installed.

Safety Now



Most people understand that working in high temperatures can cause heat stress, but what most people don't understand is that high humidity can cause heat stress to occur at much lower temperatures.

The human body cools itself by perspiration. When high humidity levels make it more difficult for perspiration to evaporate from the skin, heat-related illnesses can occur.

The human body tries to stay as close to 98.6 degrees as possible and will attempt to lower its internal temperature through perspiration. When it can't do that effectively, any of the following symptoms may occur, signaling a potential heat disorder:

- hot skin**
- dry skin**
- weakness**
- confusion**
- hallucinations**
- lack of sweating**
- muscle cramping**
- loss of consciousness**
- convulsions**
- irritability**

Even mild symptoms should be taken seriously. Immediately move heat disorder victims to a cooler location, and take whatever means are available to lower the victim's body temperature. Call for medical assistance immediately, since mild symptoms can escalate into severe heat stress or heat stroke with little warning.

An Ounce Of Prevention.....

The best defense for heat illness is to prevent it from happening in the first place. If you are active in hot or humid weather, make sure you:

- Work at a reasonable pace.
- Take frequent rest breaks.
- Wear clothing which is loose-fitting and light colored.
- Perform the most strenuous activities while temperatures are the coolest.
- Acclimate yourself to a hot environment slowly.


**WORK SAFELY WITH A
PRE-JOB SAFETY CHECKLIST**


To keep hazards in check, you should conduct a quick safety audit before you begin any task.

Identify and Evaluate Potential Hazards

Every task involves potential hazards; hazards are inherent in everyday life. But with a little forethought, we can eliminate or minimize many hazards that could lead to injury or illness.

Hazards can be broken down into two main categories: unsafe conditions and unsafe acts. You need to keep an eye out for unsafe conditions and immediately report them to your supervisor or to maintenance. You also need to think about how you do your job *before* you do it; you want to be sure you're following all safe work practices and procedures that apply to the task. The checklist below should help you rule out some of the most common safety hazards, thereby reducing the potential for injury.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- Have I chosen the right PPE for the task?
- Am I using all required PPE, according to OSHA and company policy?
- Is the PPE in good condition? Are there holes, tears, cracks, or worn spots?
- Does the PPE fit properly? Does it need to be adjusted?
- Is the PPE clean?
- Do I need to call someone about questions concerning the proper PPE for the job, how to clean and maintain it, how to use or adjust it, or to replace it because it's defective or worn?

Work Area

- Is my immediate work area free of slipping and tripping hazards, such as spills, leaks, protruding nails, torn carpets or mats, and stray materials, equipment, or tools?
- Are there any hazards that I should remove, repair, or report?

Safety Instructions

- Have I consulted all necessary instructions before starting the task in question? Have I read all related chemical container labels, material safety data sheets, manuals, company policy guidelines, and safety signs?
- Should I contact someone for help in understanding the instructions?

Equipment

- Is the equipment in good working order?
- Are all cords and plugs in good condition?
- Are all attachments properly fitted and in good working order?
- Are guards and other safety devices in place?
- Is the equipment clean and clear of debris?
- Has this piece of equipment undergone routinely scheduled maintenance?
- Is there any problem with the equipment that I should report?
- Am I dressed to work safely with the equipment or machinery? Have I tied back long hair, removed jewelry, and donned the proper PPE?
- Have I followed lockout/tagout requirements for this machinery?

Ergonomics

- Are the tools and materials for this task arranged in a way that will help me avoid unnecessary stress and strain?
- Is the flow of work properly organized?
- Am I positioned correctly to avoid repetitive motion injuries?

Lifting

- Is this load too heavy? Does it exceed the recommended limits, or is it bulky and hard to hold?
- Can I make the lift safer by using a hoist or dolly, calling a co-worker for help, or by breaking the load into smaller and more manageable parts?
- Am I following the correct lifting procedure by bending at the knees, arching my back inward, and lifting with my legs?

Attitude

- Am I prepared to follow all department, company, and OSHA guidelines that apply to this task?
- Am I committed to working carefully, cautiously, and methodically while performing this task?
- Am I putting safety first so that I can return home safe and sound at the end of this workday?

Safety Now

Look for the safety quiz in the next Connection

We would like your input into the newsletter. If you have any comments or suggestions, please call our office at (616) 629-9708. You may also send any comments or suggestions to:
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