CONSTRUCTION LABOR SERVICES, INC

THE

CONNECTION

September 2003

Don't Ignore it

A loose Belt, oil has spilled on the floor, a wobbly railing.

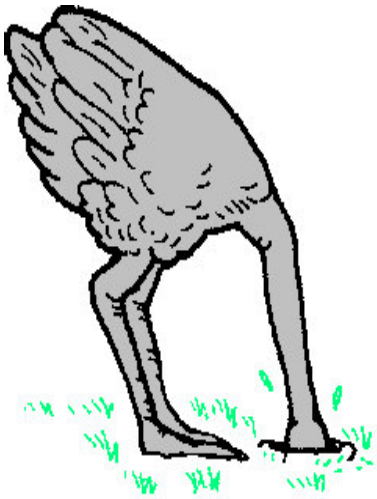
Every day, people come across occurrences such as these but fail to report them as a potential accident hazard.

Every day, workers are injured or killed by the unreported hazard.

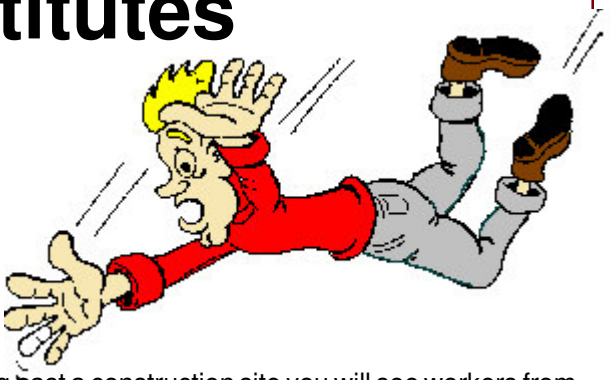
By reporting these hazards and letting other workers know about them, helps all workers become aware of the responsibility to report unsafe conditions.

Remember that accidents don't just happen. They're caused. And very often they begin with hazardous conditions.

So if you should spot a safety hazard, correct it or report it at once. It's easier in the long run to report a hazard than it is to report an accident.



What Constitutes Proper Fall Protection



Time and time again, driving or walking past a construction site you will see workers from various heights working without fall protection. Not only is such behavior inexcusable; it is illegal. Employers are responsible for having an effective safety program in place and ensuring that proper fall protection procedures are followed at all times.

What constitutes proper fall protection can be either passive or active. A passive system protects workers from fall related injuries without the workers doing anything special to protect themselves.

Passive protection includes measures such as catch platforms, safety nets, and guardrail systems.

Active fall protection refers to systems that must be instigated by individual users to be effective.

Passive systems tend to be more expensive, but easier to implement because workers don't need to do anything to engage them. Active systems tend to be more cost effective and considerably more flexible.

Active fall protection has three main components: an anchorage, a full body harness, and a means to connect the harness to the anchorage.

Anchorage. A single point anchor gives access to a small area near the anchorage, whereas an engineered cable or rail system provides full arrest along the length of the system. The cable used must have no more than three inch deflection either downward or outward. Should the worker fall a distance of six feet or more, anchorage must withstand an impact of 5,00 pounds.

Full Body Harness. For a properly fitting harness, the user's body weight should be taken into account. As of January 1998, a body belt can be used for restraint only. If the potential for a fall exists, no matter how minute, a full body harness must be used.

A full body harness can prevent a back break, which is always a danger with a body belt, which can have a hook-up point anywhere around the waistline. Because a body harness has its hook-up point between the shoulder blades, it distributes the impact throughout the body.

Connecting Means. This component limits the forces a person is subjected to during a fall. A shock absorbing lanyard that takes into account the user's body weight is the only recommended way to go. OSHA requires arresting forces to the body to be less than 1800 pounds.

Proper Fall Protection (cont.)

THE ART AND SCIENCE OF TYING OFF

Workers should understand the reason for the double action snap hooks on the lanyards. With a single action snap hook, if the lanyard rope were to cross over the hook keeper and pressure were applied, it's possible that the keeper might open up, causing the rope to come out and the user to fall. The double action snap hook eliminate the possibility of this disaster and is much safer to use.

Perimeter cables should never be used as a tie-off point for fall protection; nor should rooftop vent pipes, duct vent hoods, or anything that is exposed to the weather and not a part of the structural members of the building. Common sense will tell you that exposure to the weather and age will weaken such items. A 19 year old window washer became a tragic example of just how dangerous bad judgment can be in these situation when he tied off to a cast iron vent pipe that broke. He crashed onto the sidewalk 25 floors below.

Keep A Close Eye on Anything with a Blade

Workers can suffer an amputation when an appendage becomes crushed. They can also lose a finger or an arm if they come into contact with something that cuts.

Look closely at hand tools. You might spend hours crafting guards for stationary machines and forget about cutting tools workers hold in their hands. Any kind of cutting tool can be dangerous. Saws and knives are good examples.

Spend extra time training employees who use these tools about the importance of safety. Although power tools are certainly dangerous, non-powered hand tools can cause an amputation almost as easily.

We welcome your comments and suggestions about the Connection. To submit articles and/or topic ideas, please call: (269) 629-9708 or send to P.O. Box 460, Richland, Mi 49083. Also visit our website at: www.CLS-Skilledlabor.com

Super Back Savers

Shrink your potbelly. The more it protrudes in front of you, the more it can strain your back.

Get regular aerobic exercise. 20 - 30 minutes of nonstop exercise 3 or 4 times a week can increase the flow of oxygen to your back muscles.

Sit up. Your lower back should rest against the seat cushion and allow you to sit tall.

Take breaks from sitting. After an hour of sitting, spinal pressure increases significantly. Try to stand up every 30 minutes or so and walk around.

Get plenty of sleep. Fatigue underlies many cases of back strain and hinders good posture.

Treat your feet. Wear cushiony, supportive shoes. High heels are a major cause of back strain.

Bend a little. To ease muscle tension when sitting or standing for long periods, do some gentle stretching.

Super Back Savers

Blow off Your Virus

Colds:

If you use over the counter medication, consider a medicated nasal spray or oral decongestant, dextromothorphan for cough, and an analgesic pain reliever for headache and body aches.

Providers generally do not recommend multi-symptom cold remedies. They can cause side effects and may suppress your immunity.

Non-drug remedies that may ease a sore throat or cough: salt-water gargle (1/4 teaspoon salt in 8 ounces of warm water), hot tea with honey or chicken soup.

Dry air irritates the throat and nasal passages. Drink at least 2 quarts of water a day. Humidifiers and warm steamy showers help relieve congestion and moisten your airways.

Colds and flu are not relieved by antibiotics, which are for bacterial infections such as strep throat.

National Building Museum
Log onto WWW.NBM.ORG

The museum launched the virtual exhibition Building America. This comprehensive website which is accessible through the home page of the museum's main site explores American achievement in the building arts and celebrates such American themes as ingenuity, grandness, and mobility. Photographs, video clips, interactive programs, and other features pinpoint important events in a series of timelines that document the evolution of America's built environment. This framework is divided into four categories - House and Home, Commerce and Community, Land and Landscape, and Connecting the Continent - reflecting the National Building Museum's forthcoming permanent exhibition, also titled Building America, which will open incrementally beginning in 2004.

View the online exhibit, Building America, and illustrated essays on past and future exhibits.

Check out the various education programs, including school, outreach, scout, summer, family and even birthday party programs. Some of the most impressive features in this section are the educator resources, which include downloadable lesson plans in Adobe Acrobat files.

For those involved in online research, there's an area devoted to building and architecture website links.