

APRIL 2004

## TOOLBOX TALKS: MAKE THEM EFFECTIVE

Toolbox talks are specifically geared to construction workers who need to know about safety problems and issues, but don't have a lot of time to sacrifice.

Toolbox talks make workers aware the possibility of the hazards they'll face on the job. That's why it's so important to discuss current events and what has transpired at other locations. If workers learn about the accidents and near-misses on other jobs, they will be more likely to apply the information to their own site.

**WHO NEEDS THEM?** Everybody of course, can benefit from toolbox safety talks. But the two types of workers who probably get the most from them are veterans, with many years experience, and the new worker.

The worker who has been on the job a long time tends to become lax regarding safety. On the other hand, the new worker won't know the job and hasn't had much safety training.

**WHEN IS THE BEST TIME?** Most people are more receptive in the morning. So the best time to have a toolbox talk is just before workers start in the morning or during morning coffee break. The thought of safety will then be fresh in the minds of you and your coworkers.

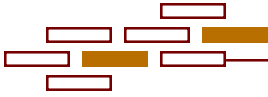
**HOW LONG SHOULD THEY BE?** Toolbox talks should not be long dissertations read straight from a book. The talks should run anywhere from 5 to 7 minutes.

**Try to take an active part in the toolbox talk discussions by giving input or insight into various aspects on your particular sight.**

## Work Safely With a Pre-Job Safety Checklist

Now that you have read the article in the July Newsletter, you should all be aware of what makes a good safety checklist. Let's see how well you remember. Be the first to send a correct quiz and win a prize.

1. Every task involves hazards  
True or False
2. You should run through your pre-job safety checklist...
  - a. before unfamiliar jobs
  - b. before routine jobs
  - c. before every job
3. Before you perform any task, you need to keep a lookout for the following:
  - a. unsafe workplace conditions
  - b. unsafe behavior
  - c. both a. and b.
4. As long as you're sure you've selected the proper PPE for the task, you can put it on and get right to work.  
True or False
5. At the start of each task, you should inspect your immediate work area for...
  - a. spills, leaks, and tripping hazards
  - b. any other hazards that should be removed, repaired, or reported
  - c. both a. and b.
6. If you've read all the related safety signs, instruction manuals, safe work procedures, and container labels, it's okay to start a task - even if you're not certain you understood the safety instructions.  
True or False
7. Machinery and equipment require many safety checks, including checks to be sure that...
  - a. cords and plugs are intact, guards are securely in place, and you're wearing the proper PPE as well as safe personal attire.
  - b. special lockout/tagout procedures are used during unjamming, servicing, and repairs
  - c. both a. and b.
8. To avoid ergonomic injuries, it's important to arrange your work area to prevent unnecessary stress and strain, such as overreaching, bending, and twisting.  
True or False
9. When it comes to lifting a heavy or bulky object, you should...
  - a. handle it yourself to avoid wasting productive work time
  - b. handle it yourself to prove to everyone how strong you are
  - c. use a mechanical lifting aid, or call on a co-worker for help, or break the load down into smaller parts
10. Your attitude and personal commitment to the safety rules have a definite impact on your personal safety.  
True or False



## ***Don't Spoil Your Summer Fun!***

Don't take a vacation from safety. Summer activities have many hazards, so don't let an accident spoil your fun.

Here are some reminders for summer recreational safety:

When traveling- whether to a nearby lake or across the country - drive safely. Allow enough time to drive within the speed limit and to rest frequently. Wear your seat belt and insist everyone does the same.

Wear the appropriate Personal Flotation Device in a boat. You can be thrown into the water unexpectedly if the boat collides with another craft or an underwater object. Even in summer, lake and rivers can be cold enough to cause hypothermia leading to death.

Don't mix alcohol with water sports, boating or driving. Fatal collisions, diving accidents and drownings are too often the result of alcohol consumption.

Protect your skin from exposure to the sun. Sunbathing can be an unsafe activity because it can lead to skin cancer without proper protection. Wear hats and clothing to protect your skin when outdoors and apply sunscreen.

Drink water frequently to prevent dehydration and heat illness. Soft drinks and coffee do not count because they can actually deplete the body's supply of fluid.

Get in shape before trying strenuous sports. If you don't, the result can be strained muscles or worse injuries.

Wear the right gear to prevent injuries. Helmets and pads are necessary for rollerblading. Sturdy boots with ankle support help prevent hiking injuries.

Never use a candle or a heater in a tent. The result can be a fire from which there is no escape.

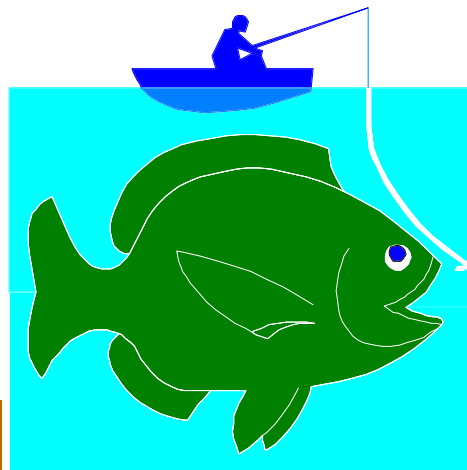
Prevent forest fires to protect lives and property. Build a campfire only where permitted, and make sure it is completely out before you move on.

Keep your eye on the weather, so you can get to shore or shelter before lighting or winds put you in jeopardy.

Protect your personal security at all times - on the road, in parking lots, at parks and campgrounds. Most people are there to have a good time just like you, but a few will prey on unwary vacationers. Lock your doors and say alert. Know where your family members are at all times when you are traveling away from home.

Eat a nutritious diet, and get enough sleep and rest. Good health habits will help you stay alert, strong and able to ward off accidents.

*The summer season is a time to escape from your everyday concerns and really enjoy life. Just be sure to take safety with you.*



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](http://www.CLS-Skilledlabor.com)

## **PREVENT THE THREAT OF TETANUS**

Minor cuts and abrasions are commonplace in the workplace. However, minor injuries can turn into major problems if you don't take care of them right away. Did you know that even small cuts can lead to tetanus, a serious-sometime fatal-disease of the nervous system?

Tetanus is caused by bacteria that thrive in dust and dirt. When dust or dirt gets into an open wound-regardless of its size-the tetanus germs may enter and multiply. Therefore, even minor cuts and abrasions should be treated seriously.

To prevent infection, clean all cuts and abrasions with an antiseptic, and cover the wound with a sterile bandage. However, if any of the following conditions apply, you should seek immediate, professional medical attention:

You have not received a tetanus shot in three to five years.

The wound is very dirty or has foreign matter in it.

You develop signs of infection, such as swelling or redness.

Tetanus germs can also result in acute symptoms that include fever, profuse sweating, and lockjaw-painful muscle spasms in the jaw that make it difficult for the infected person to open his or her mouth. Under these circumstances, immediate medical care is critical. Tetanus can be successfully treated with an antitoxin injection.

