

THE

CONNECTION

MAY 2005

Forklift Safety: It's Not Just for Drivers

While it is essential to make certain that forklift operators are properly trained and licensed, all workers must understand how to work safely around these machines.

Take these steps to make certain the work area is safe for both drivers and pedestrians.

Make sure forklift operators are properly trained in all aspects of the job, including safe parking rules.

Watch operators in action. Are they operating with their loads more than 6 to 10 inches off the ground? Are they moving too fast? Are they taking sharp turns? All of these activities can pose a threat to pedestrians.

Separate forklift traffic and other workers whenever possible.

Limit some aisles to workers on foot only or forklifts only.

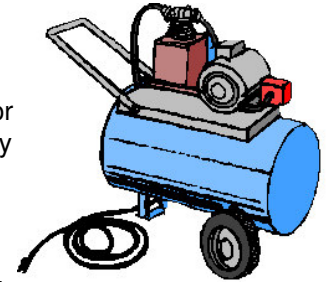
Evaluate intersections and blind corners to determine whether overhead dome mirrors could improve visibility of forklift operators or workers on foot.

Tell drivers to make every effort to alert workers when a forklift is nearby.

Use horns, audible backup alarms, and flashing lights to warn workers and other forklift operators in the area.

Compressed Air: It's a Blast

Compressed air mishaps usually involve abuse, misuse or inattention to hoses or nozzles. Lack of attention to safety not knowing the proper procedures when handling compressed air have led to many accidents and deaths.



Compressed air can strike you blind, deaf or dead at very low pressures.

These may sound like harsh words, but they are not. Compressed air is something we use in so many different ways, almost without thinking. We have to remind ourselves to handle this power source with care and attention.

Take the time to learn about compressed air in your workplace and how to use it.

Here are some safety suggestions:

Use the correct personal protective equipment, including safety eyewear when handling compressed air.

When not in use, store hoses in a cool place and protect them from the elements.

Don't use hoses that are longer than necessary. Longer hoses can be easily damaged or kinked. The longer the hose, the greater the risk of rupture.

Check all air hoses for cracks or bubbles, at least once daily.

Test any hoses that show signs of wear or damage.

Have leaks properly repaired immediately. Never attempt to block a leak with your hand. Never use tape to repair the hose. This is not only ineffective, it's unsafe.

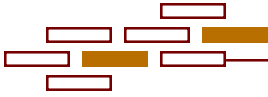
Do not aim or point compressed air nozzles at yourself or another person.

Do not use compressed air to blow dust off clothing.

Never use industrial compressed air in a supplied air respirator.

When changing tools, turn off the air supply and depressurize the line. Make sure all connections are tight before turning the air pressure back on.





New Workers at High Risk

If you're new at your job, your risk of injury is much greater than for more experienced co-workers. In fact, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) has reported that 40% of workers injured have been on the job less than one year.

WHAT CAN YOU DO

Be sure you understand all necessary safety measures before you start to work. If the explanation is unclear, ask again. Use what you learn -- all the time.

If respirators or other personal protective equipment are required, wear them consistently and maintain them properly. If guards are required on equipment make sure they are in place.

Don't take short cuts; follow safety and health instruction to the letter.

Follow the hazard warnings on chemicals you use. Obtain further information from the material safety data sheet on hazardous chemicals.

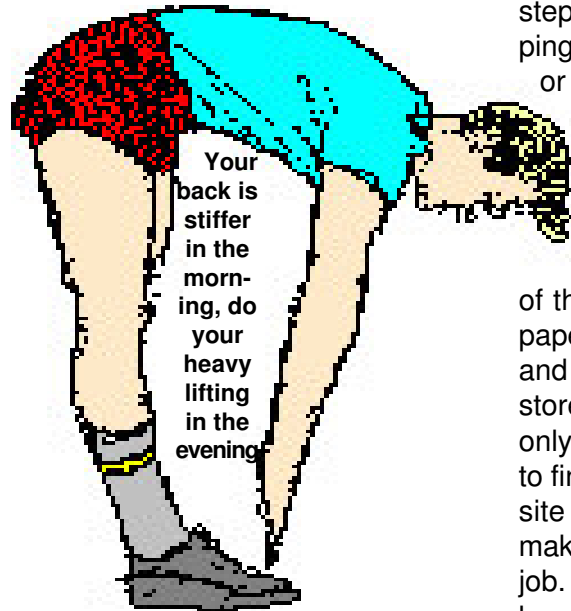
Ask your employer about emergency procedures and be prepared to follow them.

A SAFE SITE IS AN ORDERLY SITE

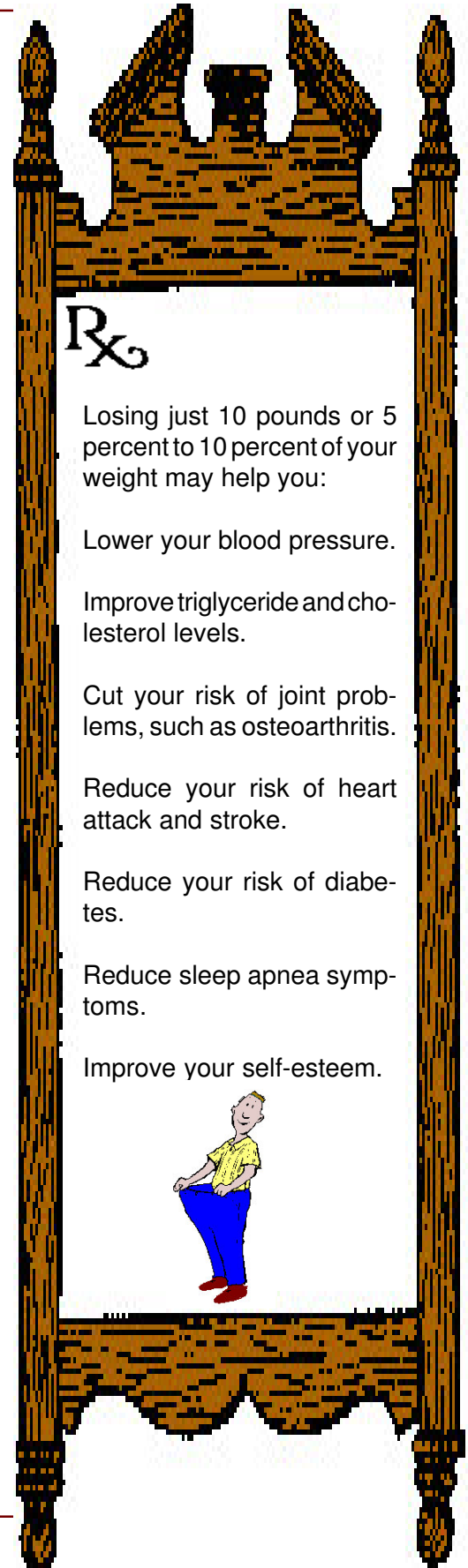
What does good housekeeping mean to you? For some, it might mean straightening the doilies on the sofa arms. But on a construction site, it's a matter of arranging the tools and materials you use in the safest possible way. Let's talk about a few of the ways we can make a work site safer with good housekeeping.

Most poor housekeeping accidents involve tripping or stumbling over things that aren't where they're supposed to be, stepping on sharp objects, slipping on a puddle of oil or water, or using a tool that has not been properly maintained.

Good housekeeping is a matter of separating scrap from usable material and storing it in scrap piles out of the work area. Rags, scrap paper, old rope, and dust are fire and accident hazards. Tools stored in their proper place not only look better, they are easier to find. Keeping a safe, orderly site not only protects you, it makes you feel better about your job. It's a boost to your morale to know you're not walking into a mine field every morning. And it makes a big impression on anyone who is interested in the quality of your work.



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



Losing just 10 pounds or 5 percent to 10 percent of your weight may help you:

Lower your blood pressure.

Improve triglyceride and cholesterol levels.

Cut your risk of joint problems, such as osteoarthritis.

Reduce your risk of heart attack and stroke.

Reduce your risk of diabetes.

Reduce sleep apnea symptoms.

Improve your self-esteem.

