

THE

CONNECTION

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Psst! Want Less Stress?

Try cutting out some of the noise in your life.

Generally, daytime noise levels shouldn't exceed 75 decibels, roughly the loudness of a dishwasher.

For regular doses of peace and quiet:

Visit your local library ...

walk in the woods ...

Get up earlier.

STAYING COOL WITH CONCRETE

On hot summer days temperatures in larger Michigan cities can be from 2 to 10°F hotter than in the surrounding countryside. This difference in temperature is largely due to air that is warmed as it blows over a city's hot asphalt roofs, roads and parking lots that have been baking in the sun all day. These surfaces absorb - rather than reflect - the sun's heat, causing surface temperatures and overall ambient temperatures to rise. Scientists call this phenomenon the 'urban heat island effect'.

Fortunately, there is a material available that substantially reduces the urban heat island effect -- concrete. Since concrete is lighter in color and is more reflective than asphalt, it does not retain heat like asphalt. If you have ever walked across an asphalt parking lot to your car on a hot summer day, then you know firsthand how hot both you and your car get. More reflective concrete parking lots, however stay cooler during hot summer days and emit less heat at night, reducing energy costs in adjacent buildings by lowering air conditioning demands. The use of concrete pavements with strategically placed landscaping and trees has been shown to reduce the average temperature in urban areas by as much as 10°F.

In addition, concrete's naturally light color reflects artificial light better than darker paving materials, significantly improving night visibility in parking lots and reducing the amount of night light required. In fact, concrete reflects light up to three times better than darker asphalt. As a result, fewer lighting fixtures are needed for concrete parking areas, saving money up front, and on energy bills year after year.

Concrete is an environmental friendly building material. Unlike petroleum based products such as asphalt which use our fossil fuel reserves, concrete is made from three abundant, readily available ingredients: water, aggregate (stone, sand and gravel), and Portland cement (a fine gray powder made from abundant natural materials). Since it is not a petroleum based product, oil and fuel drippings do not soften or deteriorate concrete as they do with asphalt. Given its resistance to chemicals, water and weather and its greater strength, concrete has a decades longer service life than asphalt and a much lower life-cycle cost.

During its lifetime (which often extends to 40 years or more), concrete is virtually maintenance free, reducing annual repair costs and expensive pavement management programs. Since concrete parking areas can be constructed to meet specific flow conditions, its thickness can be varied from area to area to accommodate different types of vehicles, from passenger cars to heavier trucks. And, when the time finally arrives to replace a concrete parking surface, it can be totally recycled. Not that's really cool.



Keep A Close Eye on Anything With A Blade

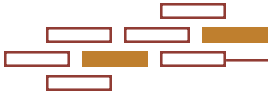
Workers can suffer an amputation when an appendage becomes crushed. They can also lose a finger or an arm if they come into contact with something that cuts.

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 reviewing these tools. Although power tools are certainly dangerous, non-powered hand tools can cause an amputation almost as easily.



THE MICHIGAN CONCRETE ASSOCIATION



Horseplay Is Never Harmless

Most of the time, a sense of humor is a great asset. It helps people cope with the ups and downs of life and makes relationships at home and at work run more smoothly.

But expressing a sense of humor through horseplay can be downright dangerous. Many people don't stop to consider the consequences of seemingly innocent acts, such as roughhousing, pulling a practical joke or prank, or just fooling around.

For example, suddenly moving a ladder out of a person's reach could result in several broken bones, even if the fall is from only a few feet in the air. Pulling a chair out from under someone could cause permanent back injury. And what about taking chances with compressed air? Dust can easily be blown into the victim's eyes, or those of a bystander, causing serious injury, including blindness.

Avoid horseplay at all times. Broken bones, hurt backs, injured eyes. These and other injuries are anything but fun. And stopping or reporting co-workers' horseplay doesn't make you a snitch or spoilsport. It means that you just won't tolerate jeopardizing your safety or that of your co-workers.

HAND SAW OR CHAINSAW?

Sawing wood, 1920

Old Jake had cut firewood by hand with a swede saw for a living going on 50 years. He averaged about four cords a day. His son was home from college and watching him work remarked, "You could probably cut 10 times as much if you bought yourself a chainsaw."

"Not interested in those new fangled things," Jake responded.

His son returned to college and Jake began to think that maybe the young guy was right; his old body seemed to ache more and more at the end of the day. So he went into town and bought a brand new top of the line chainsaw.

The first couple days were not very productive he only cut one cord each day. By the third day he had cut 3 cords but was dead tired. "This is not working," he thought to himself, "My son said I should be able to cut 10 cords a day. I'm taking this stupid thing back."

The next day he was in the hardware store complaining to the sales clerk about his lack of production. "Blade seems a little dull, but not that bad. Let's start it up," the clerk muttered as he pulled the starting cord.

"What the heck is that noise?" Jake hollered.

Lift With Your Head, Not With Your Back

The majority of back-related injuries are caused by improper lifting techniques. Whether you lift heavy items on a regular basis or very rarely, here are some tips on how to save your back:

Size up the load and determine if you can lift it alone

Stand close to the load with your feet wide apart.

Bend at the hips and knees, not your waist.

Keep the curve of your back in its natural position.

Hug the load.

Avoid twisting your spine.

Don't hold your breath while lifting.

Move heavy items slowly and steadily.

Squat down when you set the load down.



They Deserve a Break Today

Thornapple Manor Residents Lucy Heckman (left) and Virginia Fuller talk with construction project manager Mark Hires while the workers take a cookie break at Thornapple Manor Wednesday. Six of the residents baked cookies and talked to the construction workers, who have begun work on renovating and expanding the medical care facility, which voters county wide approved funding a year ago. (Photos by Megan Lavell)

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A nice, not to mention, tasty break for the CLS personnel on the job.

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