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TAKE CARE WITH COMPRESSED AIR

S.C. SWIDERSKI LLC
EXPERTISE | EXPERIENCE | INTEGRITY

Take Care with Compressed Air Toolbox Talks

Compressed air tools are commonly used in many workspaces. Many workers take them for granted, ignoring the hazards involved in their use. Compressed air is not "just air." It is a focused stream of air driven at a high velocity, which can cause injury or death to its operator or person in the immediate area.

Fooling around with compressed air can be lethal. In one case, a blast of air playfully directed behind a worker startled him and caused him to fall against a moving piece of machinery. A misdirected blast of compressed air can "pop" an eyeball from its socket, rupture an eardrum, or cause a brain hemorrhage. Directed at the mouth, it can rupture the lungs and intestines. If used to blow dust or dirt off clothing or body parts, it can cause bubbles of air to enter the bloodstream, even though a layer of clothing, and inflate and rupture body organs.

To prevent accidental injury when working with compressed air, here are several precautions to follow:

- A compressed-air tool operator must wear eye protection and other appropriate personal protective equipment.
- Before operating an air hose, examine all connection to make sure that they are tight and will not come loose under pressure. A loose air hose can make a dangerous bullwhip.
- Check the air hose carefully to make sure it is in good condition before opening the valve to let air into the hose; when the job is finished, turn off the valves on both the tool and the air line.
- Hold the nozzle when turning the air on or off.
- Before turning on the air pressure, make sure that dirt from machinery will not be blown onto other workers.
- Do not kink the hose to stop the airflow; always turn off the air and the control valve.
- Continuously check the condition of a compressed air tool and the air hose for damage or signs of failure.
- Never point a compressed air hose nozzle at any part of your body or another person.
- Never use compressed air for a practical joke.
- Never look into the 'business end" of a compressed air tool.
- Never use compressed air for cleaning work clothes or machinery.
- Keep air hoses out of aisle ways where they can be damaged by traffic or be a tripping hazard.

Compressed air tools are safe and reliable when properly used.

When is the last time that you inspected your air powered tools and hoses?

RATIONALIZING

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Rationalizing Unsafe Choices

Making the decision to follow every single safety rule or procedure doesn't come naturally to most. We constantly must work towards making the right decisions every single day. All too often we find ways to rationalize not working safely. Ever use the statement, "this will only take a second." I have, and my 1st grader typically reminds me, "Dad, that was way longer than one second." It is important for each of us to recognize this error trap and address it when it arises.

Why We Rationalize Unsafe Choices

For the most part, we all know what the right choice is when it comes to safety during a specific task. Safety training, policies, procedures, etc. We must all communicate what needs to be done to mitigate hazards and work safely. The problem is, there are many factors that affect whether we want to make the right decisions at any given moment. A few of these factors include:

- Time, schedule, pressure, end of the day
- Lack of supervision
- Lack of enforcement of rules
- Energy Levels
- Mood

Individuals experiencing these factors may use them to rationalize why a certain safety rule does not need to be followed. For example, "I forgot my fall protection, but it will only take a minute to go up and right back down, so I will be fine."

What's the "Normal" behavior

When there are other people around who are not making the correct choices, it becomes the "normal thing to do despite not being the correct thing to do. When the norm is working unsafe, it makes it difficult for even the individuals who want to work safely to do so. Make the decision to keep yourself safe/healthy despite what others may be doing.

Summary

Recognize when you are falling into the trap of rationalizing a poor decision, whether that is in your personal life or while on the job. Fight the urge to make the easy decision.

HOUSEKEEPING

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Jobsite Housekeeping

Companies that hold general housekeeping of work areas to a high standard usually have a better safety culture than those that do not. Poor housekeeping promotes inefficiency as well as leads to injuries and property loss.

Poor housekeeping leads to:

- ✓ Slip, trip, and fall injuries
- ✓ Property damage incidents involving moving equipment or vehicles
- ✓ Caught in/between injuries
- ✓ Sprains/strains due to unnecessary lifting and handling of objects that are in the way
- ✓ Littering, environmental concerns
- ✓ Improve productivity

Ways to improve the general housekeeping in our work areas:

1. Create lay-down yards for equipment and tools.
2. Have adequate number and placement of trash containers
3. Coordinate emptying of trash cans and dumpsters to prevent over filling.
4. Designate walking areas or paths for employees in the work area and deep equipment and objects out of that path.
5. Designate parking areas within specific work areas to avoid clutter and vehicles or equipment striking objects.
6. Barricade or place orange fencing around objects or areas were equipment, vehicles or people should not be. This also helps control points of access into work areas.

Summary

Paying attention to the small details translates to bigger changes in OUR safety culture. Not only does good housekeeping help to lower property loss incidents as well as injuries, but it also shows the maturity of a safety culture within a company.

What's something you and your team can do This Morning to improve the housekeeping on your site?

DID YOU KNOW - GATORADE

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"Did You Know"
Gatorade Toolbox Talk

We've all heard of and likely drink the beverage know today as Gatorade. But do you understand why it was developed, what it does for the body or where it came from in the first place?

Gatorade was first formulated by a group of scientists to literally aid the performance of the Florida Gators football team. Hence, Gatorade….

In the summer of 1965, University of Florida Assistant Football Coach Dewayne Douglas met with a group of scientists on campus to determine why many of Florida's players were so negatively affected by the heat. Especially in the 3rd & 4th quarters of the game.

"They developed a drink that contains salts and sugars that could be absorbed more quickly," according to a University of Florida history of medicine, "and the basis for Gatorade was formed."

Not immediately a hit with the players. The drink reportedly tasted so awful that some athletes vomited after consuming it.

Moving on; when your body sweats it loses water, salt, and electrolytes. Drinking water obviously replaces the water but not the salts and electrolytes.

That's were Gatorade, All Sport, Squincher and other modern sports drinks/mixes can be beneficial. They are available in a wide variety of flavors and options such as zero sugar (key for anyone with diabetes). They contain important nutrients such as sodium, carbohydrates, potassium, vitamin c. These can help prevent dehydration, muscle cramping, and low blood glucose levels during intense activity.

Healthy diet and water are sufficient for your body's health on the average/temperate days. On those long hot summer days make sure you replenish your electrolytes.

Gatorade and All Sport Zero drink mix will be made available through Site Superintendents.