Syracuse Builders Exchange FOUNDED 1872

BIE SAFETY ADVISOR

Top Ten Hazards on Construction Sites

Falls from Heights
Falls from heights are a leading cause of injuries and fatalities on construction sites, often occurring on scaffolding, ladders or near unprotected edges.

Prevention involves installing guardrails, safety nets, and/or personal fall arrest systems, and providing training.

Struck-By Incidents
Struck-by hazards occur when workers are hit by falling objects, vehicles or machinery, often due to unsecured materials or poor visibility.

Prevention includes securing materials, toe boards, hardhats, warning signage, and spotters for moving or backing equipment.

Electrocution
Electrical hazards occur when workers encounter live wires, faulty equipment or improper grounding.

Prevention includes using insulated tools, ensuring proper grounding of equipment, providing training on electrical safety and implementing lockout/tagout procedures during maintenance.

Caught-In/Between Hazards
Caught-in/between hazards occur when workers are trapped or crushed by machinery, equipment or materials, which are all common risks on construction sites.

Prevention involves using proper machine guarding, training workers on safe operation, maintaining equipment, and securing energy sources during maintenance.

Hazardous Materials
Hazardous materials pose risks to workers' health and safety through exposure to chemicals, toxic substances or flammable materials on construction sites.

Prevention includes providing Safety Data Sheets (SDSs), ensuring proper hazardous materials use, storage, and training, using appropriate PPE, and implementing a spill response plan.

Respiratory Hazards
Respiratory hazards arise from exposure to harmful dust, fumes, gases or vapors.

Prevention involves conducting air quality assessments, providing proper ventilation controls, providing appropriate respirators, and ensuring workers are trained in their use.

Ergonomic Hazards
Ergonomic hazards occur when workers face repetitive motions, awkward postures or excessive lifting, leading to musculoskeletal disorders and injuries.

Prevention includes providing ergonomic training, promoting proper lifting, and providing regular breaks to minimize fatigue.

Noise-Induced Hearing Loss
Noise-induced hearing loss occurs when workers are exposed to excessive noise levels on construction sites.

Pr**evention** includes conducting regular noise assessments, utilizing engineering controls to reduce noise levels, providing hearing protection, and training workers on the risks of noise exposure.

Heat Stress and Weather-Related Hazards
Heat stress and weather-related hazards can pose serious health risks to workers, particularly during extreme temperatures or inclement weather conditions.

Prevention includes weather monitoring, hydration, providing breaks in shaded areas, appropriate clothing, and training workers and supervisors on heat-related illnesses.

Slips, Trips and Falls (at Ground Level)
Slips, trips and falls at ground level are common hazards on construction sites, often caused by uneven surfaces, wet conditions or cluttered work areas.

Prevention includes keeping work areas clear of debris, using proper footwear, providing adequate lighting and training workers on safe walking practices.

Monthly Toolbox Talk

Cold Weather Driving Tips

- Keep a bundle of cold-weather gear in your car, such as extra food and water, warm clothing, a flashlight, a glass scraper, blankets, medications, and more.
- Make certain your tires are properly inflated and have plenty of tread.
- Always keep at least half a tank of fuel in your vehicle.
- Never warm up a vehicle in an enclosed area, such as a garage.
- Do not use cruise control when driving on any slippery surface, such as on ice and snow.

Tips for Driving in the Snow

- **Stay home**. Only go out if necessary. Even if you can drive well in bad weather, it's better to avoid taking unnecessary risks by venturing out.
- **Drive slowly**. Always adjust your speed down to account for lower traction when driving on snow or ice.
- **Accelerate and decelerate slowly**. Apply the gas slowly to regain traction and avoid skids. Don't try to get moving in a hurry and take time to slow down for a stoplight. Remember: It takes longer to slow down on icy roads.
- **Increase your following distance** to five to six seconds. This increased margin of safety will provide the longer distance needed if you have to stop.
- **Know your brakes**. Whether you have antilock brakes or not, keep the heel of your foot on the floor and use the ball of your foot to apply firm, steady pressure on the brake pedal.
- **Don't stop going up a hill**. There's nothing worse than trying to get moving up a hill on an icy road. Get some inertia going on a flat roadway before you take on the hill.

Tips for Long-Distance Winter Trips

- **Check the Weather:** Check the weather along your route and when possible, delay your trip if bad weather is expected.
- **Stay Connected:** Before hitting the road, notify others and let them know your route, destination and estimated time of arrival.
- If you get stuck in the snow:
    - **Stay with your vehicle**: Your vehicle provides temporary shelter and makes it easier for rescuers to locate you. Do not try to walk in a severe storm. It is easy to lose sight of your vehicle in blowing snow and become lost.
    - **Don't overexert yourself:** When digging out your vehicle, listen to your body and stop if you become tired.
    - **Be Visible:** Tie a brightly colored cloth to the antenna of your vehicle or place a cloth at the top of a rolled-up window to signal distress. At night, keep the dome light on if possible. It only uses a small amount of electricity and will make it easier for rescuers to find you.
    - **Clear the Exhaust Pipe:** Make sure the exhaust pipe is not clogged with snow, ice or mud. A blocked exhaust pipe can cause deadly carbon monoxide gas to leak into the passenger compartment of the vehicle while the engine is running.
    - **Stay Warm:** Use whatever is available to insulate your body from the cold. This could include floor mats, newspapers or paper maps. Pre-pack blankets and heavy clothing to use in case of an emergency.
    - **Conserve Fuel:** If possible, only run the engine and heater long enough to remove the chill. This will help to conserve fuel.