

# TRANSNEWS



Volume 43

## Hazard Recognition

W.F. Clayton offers unsurpassed resources to assist in your commitment to safety and loss control. If there are any questions please contact us.

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- View the Employee as the Client of Safety, Not the Problem **2**



### Quick Tips

#### Professional Development

Okay, so you have a steady job. That doesn't mean you have to stop improving. What are you doing to stay at your best? Here is a list of ideas to keep you and your skills relevant. How many of these can you cross off the list?

- Take a class
- Teach yourself a skill
- Volunteer
- Master an online tool
- Seek out people who are on the career path you aspire to
- Find a mentor
- Read
- Attend a conference
- Don't neglect your soft skills

#### Introduction

A key component to a successful safety program and a way to reduce workers compensation costs is being able to recognize hazards at the workplace, and implementing corrective measures to control those hazards. Personnel at any level can overlook hazards at the workplace, so it is important to implement effective hazard recognition techniques to identify hazards before the occurrence of unwanted injuries, illnesses, or property damage.

#### What is a Hazard?

A hazard is the potential for harm. In practical terms, a hazard is often associated with a condition or activity that, if left uncontrolled, can result in an injury or illness.

#### What Management Techniques can be used to Identify Hazards?

The following paragraphs list a few simple and practical hazard recognition techniques that

management can implement at their facilities to help recognize hazards.

#### Safety Audits and Inspections

Walkthrough safety audits and inspections are an ideal way of identifying hazards at the workplace through the use of administrative safety audit forms and facility checklists. Conducting regular safety audits and inspections allow companies to constructively observe work while it is happening. These observations provide trained personnel with a chance to view work practices, verify that company safety policies and procedures are being used properly, and to examine the physical conditions of the facility. The use of safety audits and inspections not only allow the company to identify safety deficiencies in procedures and physical conditions at the facility, but it is a good way to track these problems and assure that corrective actions have been implemented to resolve

these issues.

#### Job Hazard Analysis

A Job Hazard Analysis is a technique that can be used to identify hazards that may occur during a specific job task. The job task is focused on as a way to identify hazards before they occur. It is a way to concentrate on the relationship between the worker, the working environment, the task performed, and the tools being used. This method of hazard recognition will let employees know what hazards they may encounter while performing a specific job task and inform them of the proper precautions to take throughout the task to avoid accidents.

#### Accident and Near Miss Incident Reports

Accident and near miss incident reports are a good way to identify hazards after an incident has occurred. Granted all companies would like to identify hazards prior to an incident, but sometimes

*Hazards (Continued on Page 2)*

We can help you with your Workers' Compensation, Umbrella/Follow-form Excess, and Property needs! Ask us for more information!

**Hazards (Continued from Page 1)**

the only thing that can be done is to analyze these incidents to prevent the same type of accident or near miss from reoccurring. These reports should be completed after a thorough investigation of the incident and include any employee witness statements that may be available. Once the investigation is completed, a root cause should be determined and corrective actions should be implemented within a strict timeline to prevent incident reoccurrence.

**Employee Safety Suggestions**

One resource that is very beneficial in recognizing and eliminating hazards in the workplace are the employees themselves. Employees on the floor or out in the facility have a fairly keen sense of recognizing hazards even if awareness training and education

are inadequate. Management should develop policies and procedures for reporting hazards and encourage employees to do so. These policies and procedure should not only encourage the reporting of workplace hazards but they should also include a way to inform employees of the outcome to their suggestions.

**Training and Education**

Another key component to hazard recognition is the training and education of company personnel and raising awareness on potential hazards in the workplace. Training and education not only gives employees information and instructions on their day-to-day workplace activities, but it allows them to ask questions and become more involved in the company's safety program. Employees need to be educated on the various types of hazards that exist in the workplace and how those hazards

can potentially affect employees. Once they understand what hazards are and their potential adverse effects, employees should be trained on methods to help recognize hazards such as conducting daily walkthroughs, equipment inspections, and job task pre-planning techniques.

**Summary**

Implementing various hazard recognition techniques is a proactive approach to a safety and health program. The hazard recognition program involves the participation of an entire organization with the overall goal of preventing workplace losses and reducing worker's compensation costs. The hazard recognition techniques that the company implements should be effectively managed and periodically updated, so that the program can continue to improve and be successful as a loss control instrument.

## View the Employee as the Client of Safety, Not the problem

Almost every mediocre safety program is focused on controlling or managing workers, even to the point of "beating" them into compliance. The unspoken assumption is that the worker is the problem and if we can solve the problem, we will be good at safety.

Excellent safety programs are focused on selling safety to the workers. At first, it seems contradictory that intelligent workers would need to be sold on safety. They don't need to be sold on safety; they need to be sold on your organization's approach to safety. Workers don't want to get injured and they take steps to avoid it. Their experience and job-logic tell them that their approach makes sense.

When managers (especially the ones not often seen in the workplace) make new rules or start new programs, workers are skeptical of the practicality and value of such efforts. Well-designed safety efforts communicate the rationale of new efforts or even involve workers in designing new programs and processes to ensure buy-in and engagement from the outset. Organizations that view the worker as the problem still tend to dictate without inclusion or explanation and thus continue to suffer from the ever-widening gap between their managers and the workforce. Very few organizations are really good at marketing safety to their own workforce, but the ones that do reap outstanding benefits.

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## Unsafe Driving Habits and Behaviors

W.F. Clayton, LLC offers unsurpassed resources to assist in your commitment to safety and loss control. If there are any questions please contact us.

### Inside this issue:

Unsafe Driving Habits and Behaviors **1**

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We all have habits. We all have settled tendencies or usual manners of behaviors. The way we brush our teeth, comb our hair, put on our shoes and socks, or prepare our coffee are all habits that develop over time. Most of the tendencies that we develop over time occur because they work. They get the job done and we are comfortable with them. Most of the habits are inconsequential and do not affect others. This however is not the case when it comes to driving habits. The way we drive can and does affect many people.

Drivers begin to acquire habits from the time they first sit behind the wheel. Some driving habits that we develop are good and some are bad. It is important to identify both and work to retain the good (safe) habits and remove the bad (unsafe) habits. To be successful at this, drivers must utilize the four R's: recognize, replacement, repetition and retention. Drivers must first recognize their bad habits, replace them with good habits, and then repeat this process until the good habits are retained.

This article identifies some common unsafe driving habits and provides practical instruction to help you improve.

### Driver Inattention

Paying attention is the key to safe driving. Unfortunately, the actual act of driving becomes second nature for many drivers and as a result, they fail to focus on the safe driving techniques that will help them arrive safely at their destination. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), 80% of all crashes and 65% of near crashes in the U.S. involve some type of distraction.

There are two classifications of driver distraction: physical and mental. Most people are aware of the physical distractions: eating and drinking, passengers, cell phones, etc. Less familiar and less recognizable are the mental distractions that occur while driving. Loss of focus due to family concerns, inattention created when drivers become angry or stressed while operating the vehicle are examples of

mental driver inattention.

### Physical Distractions

*Eating and Drinking* – It is common to see drivers eating and drinking while they speed down the highway. The distraction of eating and drinking is bad enough, but what is worse is the distraction created by a spill. When a drink gets on clothes or is tipped over; all of the attention goes to the spill. Drivers need to understand that eating or drinking while operating a vehicle can put themselves and their passengers at risk.

*Passengers* – Passengers can be a major distraction when operating a vehicle. Unruly passengers, crying babies, fighting kids, over-talkative passengers and any other types of passenger distractions you can possibly think of can all have a major affect on the focus and attention of drivers. Drivers should be familiar with company policies and procedures regarding passenger behavior. Ensure you know exactly what to do if passengers on the vehicle become too distracting.

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### *Unsafe (Continued from Page 1)*

**Cell Phones** – With the development of cellular technology, humans' ability to communicate has grown exponentially. This increased ability to communicate has taken driver distraction to another level. Many studies have shown that a person talking on a cell phone is as likely to crash as a person who has a blood alcohol concentration of .08%; the legal limit in all U.S. states. Drivers should never send or receive calls, text or email while operating the vehicle.

### **Mental Distractions**

The other type of distraction is mental. Whereas phone conversations and texting can cause mental distractions, the simple loss of driver focus is what is being discussed here. A driver may start to think about family issues, or daydreaming about an upcoming vacation or night out. S/he may get angry and lose focus due to the acts of other drivers. This can cause the driver to center his/her attention on the other driver and fail to maintain safe driving techniques.

Whatever takes a driver's thoughts away from driving is dangerous. To combat this, a driver must first recognize that it is occurring. Once you recognize that your mind is wandering, a simple way to regain focus is to verbalize what you observe while driving. Describe aloud the surrounding traffic. Verbalize any possible hazards as they occur. This may sound strange, but verbalizing driving forces the mind to focus on driving, where the focus should be.

### **Intentional Disregard of Laws and Company Rules**

There are drivers who intentionally disregard laws and company rules. These hazardous drivers operate their vehicles in a manner that ignores the safety of passengers,

pedestrians and other vehicles on the roadway.

Drivers such as these often engage in unsafe behaviors such as; speeding, texting and chatting on cell phones, blatantly disregarding road markings and traffic control devices, tailgating, and crowding or forcing their way through traffic.

Unfortunately these types of drivers will often not correct their habits until a tragic event occurs, they are fined, lose their job or employment driving privileges as a result of these unsafe behaviors. If you are a driver who is engaging in these types of unsafe behaviors, understand that it is not a matter of if you are going to crash; it is a matter of when you are going to crash. Don't wait till it's too late to change these habits.

### **Drunk Driving**

No driver of a commercial motor vehicle should use alcohol, be under the influence of alcohol, have a detected presence of alcohol or be in possession of alcohol while on duty or while operating a commercial motor vehicle.

A driver convicted of operating a commercial motor vehicle with an alcohol concentration of 0.04 percent or more is guilty of a misdemeanor. In addition to paying fines and/or serving jail time, the driver will be disqualified from driving a commercial vehicle requiring a CDL for one year (first conviction) and face the likelihood of losing their job. Any presence of alcohol in your system while operating a commercial vehicle can potentially affect your employment status.

Understand the risks of drunk driving and realize that drunk driving is not only a threat to yourself, but the general public as well.

### **Fatigue**

Driver fatigue is a physiological and psychological condition that significantly affects driving ability and judgment. Sleepy driving impairs alertness and response time and increases the risk of accidents. Unfortunately, fatigued driving can become part of a drivers' routine. We set schedules and priorities and do not sway from them, even if that means driving at times when we haven't had enough rest.

The National Sleep Foundation estimates that 1.9 million drivers have fatigue-related crashes or near misses every year. Fifty-four percent of drivers surveyed admitted that they have driven while fatigued in the past year, and 28% have admitted doing within the past month. These statistics are not coincidence.

The best way for you to combat fatigue is by getting better sleep at night. Try to get a full seven to eight hours of sleep each night, and improve your sleeping environment. Other ways to help combat fatigue include: watching your caffeine intake, diet and exercise, good personal relationships, reduced stress, and eliminating tobacco use.

### **Conclusion**

Few things in life can change many lives as quickly as a vehicle crash. What takes fractions of a second to occur can cause devastation that, those left behind, are not recovered for a lifetime.

Driving is a skill that must be worked on each time a driver gets behind the wheel. Drivers must be diligent in the effort to improve and must remember the four R's: recognize, replacement, repetition and retention. Replace bad habits with good ones. It truly does come down to each driver making a decision to drive safely or unsafely.



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## Hazard Recognition

### Introduction

The most important attribute an employee must maintain is their health and wellness. Injured or ill employees not only affect themselves, but it impacts the well-being of the employee's family and their company. An employee must be able to recognize hazards to avoid potential injuries and illnesses at the workplace. This article will help you understand what potential hazards are, how to recognize these hazards, and techniques that can be done to avoid these hazards and potential injuries and illnesses.

### What is a Hazard?

A hazard is the potential for harm. In practical terms, a hazard is often associated with a condition or activity that, if left uncontrolled, can result in an injury or illness.

### Job Hazard Classifications

**Physical** – The physical environment that could increase the potential for

harm to the body. (physical objects, falling, noises, vibration, etc)

**Chemical** – An interaction with a solid, liquid or gas that has hazardous chemical characteristics which could cause harm to the body. (toxic, corrosive, radioactive, flammable, etc)

**Ergonomic** – These are hazards that impose strain, stress, and tension on the body. (improper work layouts, improper tools, repetitive work motions, etc)

**Other** – These are all the other hazards that exist which affect mental health, cause diseases, & cause other health afflictions.

### When can hazards be recognized?

#### Before being exposed to a hazards

It is ideal for hazards to be recognized prior to work being performed. Recognizing and eliminating hazards should be done during the design, pre-planning, and work preparation phases of a job task. An adequate amount

of time should be left to conduct a thorough review of the job process to determine if there are any potential hazards.

#### During exposure to a potential hazard

Once work has started it is not uncommon for potential hazards to be found. These hazards should be corrected immediately before an unwanted incident occurs.

#### After exposure to the hazard

Hazard recognition can also be a result of an incident such as an injury, illness, or property damage, which occurred while work was being performed or after a review of the work process was conducted. It is very beneficial to determine the root cause of previous incidents and correct any hazards before a similar incident re-occurs.

### Pre-Planning Job Tasks

Before an operation is started you should take time to ensure that hazards are eliminated or

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controlled, such as unanticipated vehicle movement. Below are some key questions that employees can ask themselves before starting a job task to help recognize potential hazards and reduce potential risks:

- What am I about to do?
- What tools do I need to do this job
- How will I do the job?
- How could I get hurt?
- What am I going to do to prevent myself or others from getting injured?

**Equipment Inspections**

Equipment inspections are another good practice for recognizing hazards. These inspections should be done prior to starting work and include thorough inspections of the tools, safety equipment, and any other gear that may be used during the work process. These inspections do not necessarily need a checklist; a basic visual inspection for equipment deficiencies would be adequate. Any equipment or tools that are found to be defective should be

immediately placed out of service, repaired, or disposed of properly.

**Daily Walkthroughs**

The purpose of a daily walkthrough is to inspect the work area to ensure that any potential hazards that may exist can be recognized and corrected before an unwanted incident occurs. These daily checks are conducted by the users to assure that the equipment and working area have met the minimum safety requirements prior to operation. Daily workplace walkthroughs should be documented and if any hazards are discovered they should be corrected before work can start.

**Employee Communications**

Employee communication is another key component in a successful hazard recognition program. Employees should not only share their concerns about workplace hazards with their fellow employees, but they should voice those concerns to management. Employees are usually the first to recognize hazards that have been overlooked, but do not seem to

want to voice those concerns to management. If a hazard is recognized and the problem is not brought to the attention of management, the hazard may not be corrected until it is too late. Every company should have policies and procedures for reporting hazards in place and it is important for employees to take advantage of that system and report recognized hazards before a coworker is potentially injured.

**Summary**

A hazard recognition system is an essential function to a successful safety program and plays a vital role in reducing workplace injuries and illnesses. Employees should embrace the hazard recognition techniques that were discussed in this article and take advantage of the hazard recognition programs that the company offers. A critical function for continuing good quality health and wellness can be achieved by incorporating these techniques in your daily functions.

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## Using a Fire Extinguisher

It's easy to remember how to use a fire extinguisher if you can remember the acronym **PASS**, which stands for **P**ull, **A**im, **S**queeze, and **S**weep. **A fire extinguisher is only to be used for small fires.**

**Pull the Pin.**

This will allow you to discharge the extinguisher.

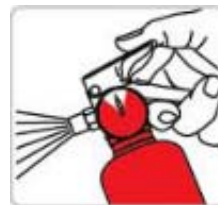
**Aim at the base of the fire.**

If you aim at the flames the extinguishing agent will fly right through and do no good. You want to hit the fuel.

**Squeeze the top handle or lever.**

Remember a standard fire extinguisher has less than 30 seconds of spray time.

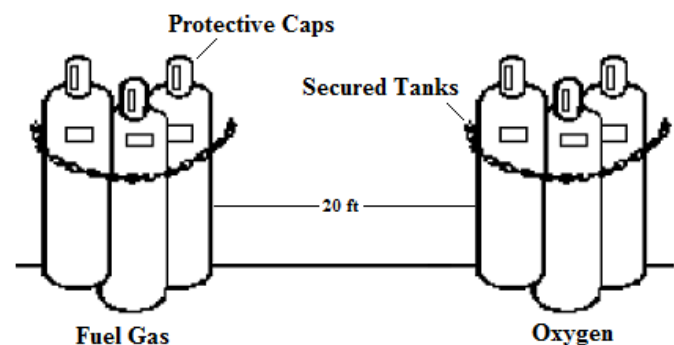
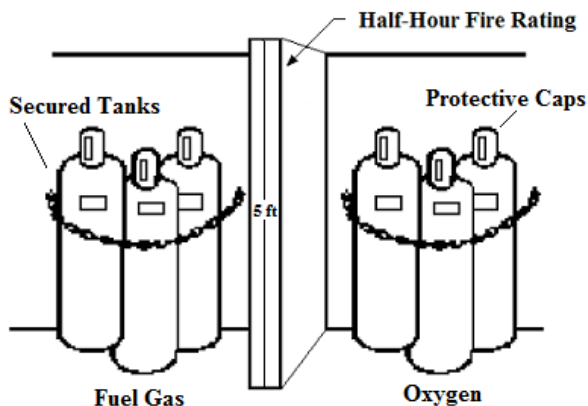
**Sweep from side to side** until the fire is completely out. Start using the extinguisher from a safe distance away, then move forward.



# Compressed Gas Cylinder Safety



- **Secure cylinders properly at all times**
- **Store cylinders in cool, well-ventilated areas away from heat and potential ignition sources**
- **Store flammable gases away from oxygen**
- **Keep cylinders vertical**
- **Close valves and tighten caps when not in use**
- **Regularly check hoses and valves for leaks**
- **Do not use a cylinder that is leaking**
- **Be certain that cylinders are properly labeled**
- **Transport cylinders on handtrucks and carts that are designed for that purpose**
- **Strap cylinders to handtrucks or carts before transporting**
- **Do not roll or drop cylinders**





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