



Alaska Chapter NECA

June 22, 2004

Chapter Calendar

July 5	Independence Day
July 6	Anchorage JATC 5:00PM
July 9	JATC Dedication Ceremony 4:00PM
July 12	Golf Registrations Due
July 13	Safety Committee 5:00PM
July 14 July 25	Board Meeting Cancelled Golf Tournament
October 16-19	National Convention
December 11	Annual Meeting

Tool Box Talks

July 06, 2004	Injury Prevention, Hands, Neck
July 12, 2004	Ladder Safety
July 19, 2004	Lift Trucks
July 26, 2004	Lockout/Tagout, Energy Sources, Procedures



On the road again...

Motor vehicle-related incidents are consistently the leading cause of work-related fatalities in the United States. Of approximately 6,000 worker fatalities annually reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, over 35% are associated with motor vehicles. Between 1997 and 2001, on average:

- 1,421 workers died each year from crashes on public highways.
- 368 workers died each year in crashes that occurred off the highway or on industrial premises.
- 382 pedestrian workers died each year as a result of being struck by a motor vehicle.

Because utility workers spend a lot of time on and around the road, it's important to take safety precautions. And, there's another reason:

- According to the Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI), 1992-2001, the industry divisions with the highest number of fatalities was Transportation/Communications/Public Utilities (4,358, 33% of the total).

Safety tips

If driving is part of your job, take the following steps:

- Use seat belts at all times. Let other workers ride with you only when the vehicle has a seat belt for each person.
- Always drive within the speed limit.
- Do not drive if you are fatigued.
- Be familiar with the maintenance procedures for all vehicle systems.
- Pull off the road to a safe location to place calls, write notes, read maps, etc.

Work zones

Driving is not the only roadway hazard you need to be concerned with. If you are walking or working near the roadway, you are also at risk. If you work in a road work zone, take the

following steps:

- Wear high-visibility clothing.
- Use barriers and traffic control efforts when working on or near public roads.



Footloose... footloose... put on those safety shoes

Workers must wear protective footwear when there is a risk of foot injury from sharp items or falling/rolling objects—or when electrical hazards are present. As with hard hats, always follow the manufacturer’s instructions for cleaning and maintenance of footwear. Remember that cuts, holes, worn soles, and other damage can reduce protection.

How do I choose the right footwear?

The footwear must be ANSI approved. ANSI approval codes are usually printed inside the tongue of the boot or shoe. Footwear will be marked “EH” if it is approved for electrical work. (The ANSI approval stamp alone does not necessarily mean the footwear offers protection from electrical hazards.) Note that footwear made of leather must be kept dry to protect you from electrical hazards, even if it is marked “EH.”

What about non-electrical hazards?

All ANSI approved footwear has a protective toe and offers impact and compression protection. But the type and amount of protection is not always the same. Different footwear protects you in different ways. Check the product’s labeling or consult the manufacturer to make sure the



footwear will protect you from the hazards you face.

Don't let heat rash get you down

If you work in a hot environment, you may experience heat rash from time to time. The condition, also known as prickly heat, is likely to occur in hot, humid environments where sweat is not easily removed from the surface of the skin by evaporation and the skin remains wet most of the time. The sweat ducts become plugged, and a skin rash soon appears.

When the rash is extensive or when it is complicated by infection, prickly heat can be very uncomfortable and may reduce a worker's performance.

Recognizing heat rash

Heat rash looks like a red cluster of pimples or small blisters. It is more likely to occur on the neck and upper chest, in the groin, under the breasts, and in elbow creases.

What to do

The best treatment for heat rash is to provide a cooler, less humid environment.

Also, try to keep the affected area dry. Dusting powder may be used to increase comfort, but avoid using ointments or creams—they keep the skin warm and moist and may make the condition worse.

Treating heat rash is simple and usually does not require medical assistance. Other heat-related



problems can be much more severe.

Is it a confined space or a permit-required confined space?

Did you know that most of the requirements in OSHA's confined spaces standard, 1910.146, actually apply to "permit-required" confined spaces and not to "confined spaces" in general?

But, what's the difference?

A confined space

By definition, a confined space:

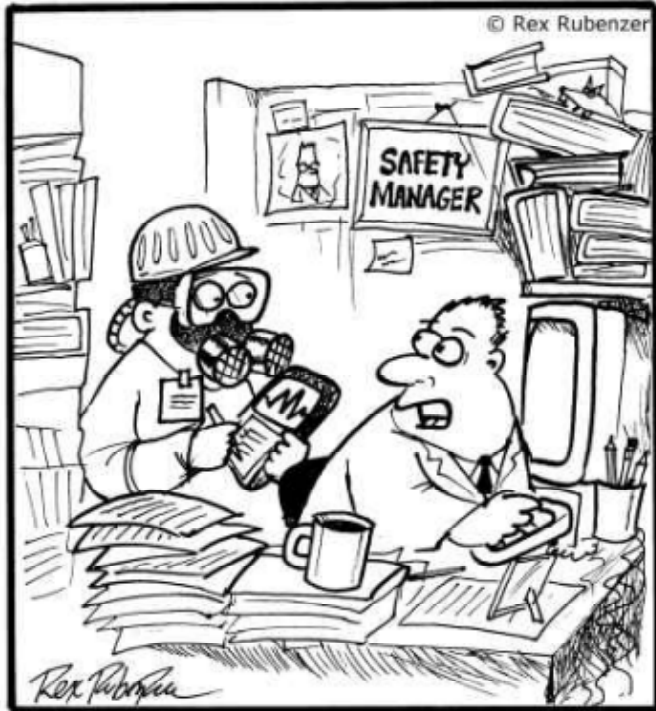
- Is large enough for an employee to enter fully and perform assigned work;
- Is not designed for continuous occupancy by the employee; and
- Has a limited or restricted means of entry or exit.

These spaces may include underground vaults, tanks, storage bins, pits and diked areas, vessels, silos and other similar areas.

A permit-required confined space

By definition, a permit-required confined space is a confined space that has one or more of the following characteristics:

- Contains or has the potential to contain a hazardous atmosphere;
- Contains a material with the potential to engulf someone who enters the space;
- Has an internal configuration that might cause an entrant to be trapped or asphyxiated by inwardly converging walls or by a floor that slopes downward and tapers to a smaller cross section; and/or
- Contains any other recognized serious safety or health hazards.



I keep telling you, John, this is not a permit-required confined space.



Protect your eyes against UV rays and home-related hazards

There are many common products around the home that contribute to thousands of eye injuries every year, yet 90% of these injuries are preventable. In 2002, there were an estimated 125,000 eye injuries related to common household products—this figure is low, as it includes only eye injuries treated in U.S. hospital emergency rooms. “Items that are used everyday by millions of people and taken for granted, can be potentially blinding if proper safety measures are not followed, especially with young children,” said Daniel D. Garrett, Prevent Blindness America (PBA) spokesperson. Another serious threat to vision is the sun, which can contribute to cataracts and cancer, but with proper precautions, these health risks can be decreased.

The following are the top 10 categories contributing to the largest number of estimated eye injuries from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission:

- Bleaches (non-cosmetic), 5,881
- General Purpose Cleaners, 4,847
- Grooming/Cosmetics, 4,817
- Bathroom Fixtures and products, 4,639
- Paper/Cardboard products, 4,589
- Pens and Pencils, 4,329
- Yard and Garden, 4,192
- Kitchen (flatware, dishes, glasses), 3,508
- Furniture, 3,365

- Cleaning and Polishing products, 3,073

Nearly one million Americans have lost their sight to an eye injury. More than half of all product-related eye injuries happen to people age 25 and younger. Another one-third happens to those between the ages of 25 and 44. Males are twice as likely to suffer eye injuries as females. Children left playing alone are also at risk.

You can prevent eye injuries at home by:

- Knowing the dangers
- Taking steps to remove hazards
- Wearing proper eye protection

UV rays

Most people are aware of the risks of developing skin cancer from the sun, but are less aware that UV rays can cause damage to the eyes. Long-term exposure to UV rays has been linked to skin cancer around the eyelids. One of the risk factors for developing cataracts is long time exposure to UV rays.

According to PBA, there are nearly 20.5 million Americans age 40 and older with cataract. Cataract affects more than half of all Americans by the age of 80, so you should take any steps you can to decrease your risk. “Sunscreen is essential to protecting your skin, but a good pair of sunglasses will help protect your eyes now, and as you age,” said Garrett.

UV radiation in sunlight, including both UV-A and UV-B, has been shown to be harmful to the eye. Constant exposure to bright sunlight can damage the cornea (the clear outer part of the eye that allows lights through to the retina), the lens (the part of the eye responsible for focusing), and the retina (the innermost layer of the eye that sends an image to the brain). The risk is greatest at midday, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. and during summer months. The best defense for everyone is to wear sunglasses that screen 99 to 100 percent of UV rays, and brimmed hats. It is also very important to protect children’s sight from the damaging effects of the sun – choosing unbreakable, well-fitted sunglasses and a hat that shades the face is the best way.

Can your emergency generator kill you?

In times of needs, emergency generators are a vital resource. But news reports tell of people dying of carbon monoxide asphyxiation caused by running unvented emergency generators in their homes. Exhaust from emergency generators must be vented outside if the generator cannot be located out of doors.

Sources of carbon monoxide

Carbon monoxide is a colorless gas or liquid, and is practically odorless. Sources include:

- unvented kerosene and gas space heaters;
- leaking chimneys and furnaces;
- back-drafting from furnaces, gas water heaters, wood stoves, and fireplaces;
- gas stoves;

- generators and other gasoline powered equipment;
- automobile exhaust from attached garages; and
- tobacco smoke.



Health effects

At low concentrations, exposure to carbon monoxide can cause fatigue in healthy people and chest pain in people with heart disease. At higher concentrations, it can cause impaired vision and coordination, headaches, dizziness, confusion, and nausea. Exposure can cause flu-like symptoms that clear up after leaving home.

Carbon monoxide is fatal at very high concentrations.

To reduce your exposure to carbon monoxide:

- Keep gas appliances properly adjusted.
- Consider purchasing a vented space heater when replacing an unvented one.
- Use proper fuel in kerosene space heaters.
- Install and use an exhaust fan vented to outdoors over gas stoves.
- Open flues when fireplaces are in use.
- Choose properly sized wood stoves that are certified to meet EPA emission standards. Make certain that doors on all wood stoves fit tightly.
- Have a trained professional inspect, clean, and tune-up central heating system (furnaces, flues, and chimneys) annually. Repair any leaks promptly.
- Do not idle a vehicle inside the garage.



Classic TV Trivia

Question: *What was Colonel Potter's first name on MASH?*

Answer: Sherman.