



# Alaska Chapter NECA

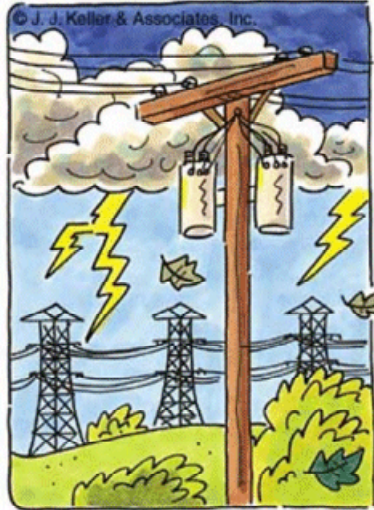
April 26, 2004 Alaska Chapter, NECA  
[www.alaskaneca.org](http://www.alaskaneca.org)

## Chapter Calendar

May 11	Anchorage JATC
May 11	Safety Committee Meeting
May 12	Board Meeting 4:30pm Membership Meeting 6pm
July 25	Golf Tournament
October 16-19	National Convention
December 11	Annual Meeting

## Tool Box Talks

May 03, 2004	Fire Protection
May 10, 2004	First Response, Medical Moving an Injured Person
May 17, 2004	Flame Resistant Apparel
May 24, 2004	Grounding and Shock Hazards of Electricity
May 31, 2004	Health Hazard Recognition



## Keep an eye on the weather when line clearing

OSHA prohibits line-clearance tree trimmers from performing line-clearance tree-trimming work when adverse weather conditions make the work hazardous.

The following are examples of adverse weather conditions that are presumed to make line-clearance tree trimming work too hazardous to perform safely:

- Thunderstorms in the immediate vicinity
- High winds
- Snow storms
- Ice storms

Work in less severe weather conditions, including rain or drizzle (unless accompanied by high winds, freezing conditions, or thunder and lightning), is not prohibited by OSHA.

Additionally, tree trimming work is not prohibited when adverse weather conditions are present if **all electric power lines in the area to be cleared have been deenergized** according to OSHA regulations.



## It's stop and go traffic...

It's a common occurrence for utility work to involve elements of traffic control. One of the most basic considerations when working in a work zone is flagging road users. While it may seem like a simple-enough task, there are important procedures that need to be followed.

### **Flagging**

The Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices provides the following methods to use when signaling with paddles:

- To stop road users, the flagger shall face road users and aim the STOP paddle face toward road users in a stationary position with the arm extended horizontally away from the body. The free arm shall be held with the palm of the hand above shoulder level toward approaching traffic.
- To direct stopped road users to proceed, the flagger shall face road users with the SLOW paddle face aimed toward road users in a stationary position with the arm extended horizontally away from the body. The flagger shall motion with the free hand for road users to proceed.
- To alert or slow traffic, the flagger shall face road users with the SLOW paddle face aimed toward road users in a stationary position with the arm extended horizontally away from the body.

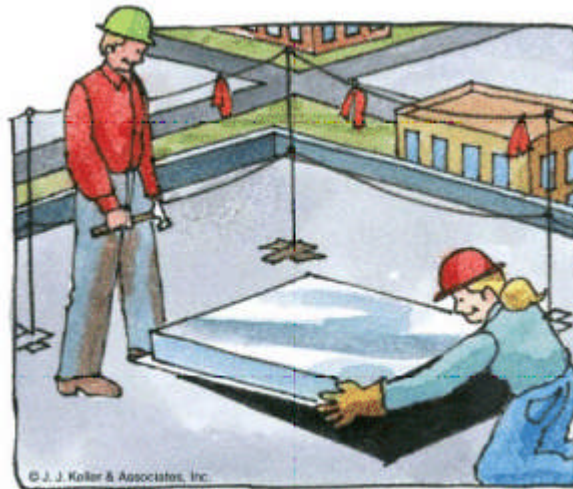
To further alert or slow traffic, the flagger holding the SLOW paddle face toward road users may motion up and down with the free hand, palm down.

Remember, only perform flagging when you have been trained to do so by your employer.

# Look out below...

The vast majority of workers have level working surfaces to walk on (office floors, hallways, factory shop floors, etc.). While slips, trips, and falls are still common occurrences, the likelihood of a critical injury from these types of falls is not great.

However, many employees, including utility workers, need to work in areas where there may be hazardous holes in the floor, openings in the walls, or open-sided platforms. Falls through these openings or holes and falls from open-sided floors, platforms, and runways can result in serious injury or death.



OSHA's regulations for guarding floor and wall openings and holes concentrate on ways to protect employees from fall hazards. The rules specify situations that require protection and outline the safe design and construction specifications for railings, toeboards, and covers.

## Types of floor/wall openings

There are many different types of floor and wall openings. Each have specific safety requirements that must be met.

- Floor hole — An opening measuring less than 12 inches but more than one inch in its least dimension, in any floor, platform, pavement, or yard, through which materials but not persons may fall.
- Floor opening — An opening which measures 12 inches or more in its least dimension, in any floor, platform, pavement, or yard, through which persons may fall.
- Platform — A working spaces for persons, elevated above the surrounding floor or ground.
- Wall hole — An opening less than 30 inches but more than one inch high, of unrestricted width, in any wall or partition.

- Wall opening — An opening at least 30 inches high and 18 inches wide, in any wall or partition, through which persons may fall.

### **Guarding floor and wall openings**

Stairway openings are to be protected by standard railings on all sides, except at the stairway entrance.

Loading docks are to be protected by a standard railing, if four feet or more above the adjacent floor.

Floor openings may be covered rather than guarded with rails. When the cover is removed, a temporary guardrail must be in place, or an attendant is to be stationed at the opening to warn personnel.

While the cover is not in place, a floor hole is to be constantly attended by someone or must be protected by a removable standard railing.

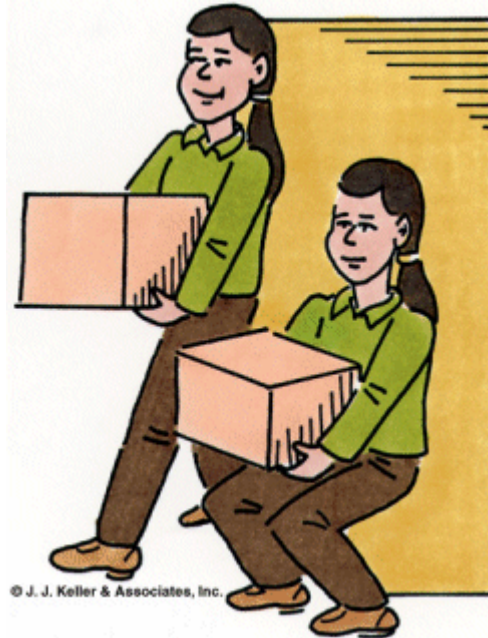
Open-sided floors, platforms, and runways are to be guarded by a standard railing on all open sides, except entrances.

Regardless of height, open-sided floors, walkways, platforms, or runways above or adjacent to dangerous equipment, galvanizing tanks, degreasing units, and similar hazards are to be guarded with a standard railing and toeboard.

Every flight of stairs with four or more risers is to have standard stair railings or standard handrails as specified in OSHA's standard.

### **Do your part**

Do your part by being cautious around floor and wall openings and by not removing any railing or guarding. Also, if you notice an unsafe situation or a missing or damaged railing or guarding, notify your supervisor.



## How do I lift thee?

Sprains and strains to the muscles, tendons, ligaments, and disks of the back may be the most commonly reported workplace injury. Most of these back problems are preventable through the use of proper lifting technique.

### Rules of good lifting

Rules of good lifting include the following:

- Size up the load before lifting—test by moving a corner or pushing the load.
- Bend the knees when lifting—let your legs do the work.
- Place feet close to the object and center yourself over the load.
- Lift straight up in a smooth motion.
- Do not twist or turn your body once the lift is made.
- Make sure there is a clear path—don't fall over something you can't see.
- Set the load down properly.
- Always push a load that is on a cart—never pull it.
- If it is a long object, get some help.
- Split the load into smaller loads if possible.

### Other factors

Back injuries can also occur off the job. Some non-work-related factors can also contribute to back problems. Hobbies and leisure activities can prove to be a source of back problems. Keep yourself in good physical shape and monitor your activities off the job as well.



## Fire extinguisher basics

Fire extinguishers are one of the most basic emergency tools. Whether at home or at work, everyone may have occasion to use a fire extinguisher at some point.

To understand how fire extinguishers work, you need to understand a little about fire. Fire is a very rapid chemical reaction between oxygen and a combustible material, which results in the release of heat, light, flames, and smoke.

For fire to exist, the following four elements must be present at the same time:

- Enough oxygen to sustain combustion,
- Enough heat to raise the material to its ignition temperature,
- Some sort of fuel or combustible material, and
- The chemical reaction that is fire.

### How a fire extinguisher works

Portable fire extinguishers apply an extinguishing agent that will either cool burning fuel, displace or remove oxygen, or stop the chemical reaction so a fire cannot continue to burn. When the handle of an extinguisher is compressed, it opens an inner canister of high-pressure gas that forces the extinguishing agent from the main cylinder through a siphon tube and out the nozzle. A fire extinguisher works much like a can of hair spray.

### PASS or fail

Most fire extinguishers operate using the following P.A.S.S. technique:

1. PULL... Pull the pin. This will also break the tamper seal.
2. AIM... Aim low, pointing the extinguisher nozzle (or its horn or hose) at the base of the fire.

Note: Do not touch the plastic discharge horn on CO2 extinguishers, it gets very cold and may

damage skin.

3. **SQUEEZE...** Squeeze the handle to release the extinguishing agent.
4. **SWEEP...** Sweep from side to side at the base of the fire until it appears to be out. Watch the area. If the fire re-ignites, repeat steps 2 - 4.

**Only if you're trained and able...**

You should not fight workplace fires unless you've been trained and designated by your employer to do so.

If you have the slightest doubt about your ability to fight a fire....**EVACUATE IMMEDIATELY!**

