

Alaska Chapter NECA

September 24, 2004

Alaska Chapter, NECA www.alaskaneca.org

Chapter Calendar

October 12	Anchorage JATC
October 13	Board Meeting/ CANCELLED Membership Meeting/ CANCELLED
October 16-19	National Convention
December 11	Annual Meeting/Christmas Party

Tool Box Talks

October 04, 2004 Shock Hazards

October 11, 2004 Silica Dust

October 18, 2004 Slipping Hazards/Tripping Hazards

October 25, 2004 Testing: Pre-Op and startup

End of summer doesn't mean end of sun hazards

Summer may end in September, but that doesn't mean the sun is going away. You know that sunlight contains ultraviolet (UV) radiation that causes premature aging of the skin, wrinkles, cataracts, and skin cancer. What are you doing to protect yourself? Four reminders are provided below:

- Wear sunglasses that have 99-100 percent UV protection; inexpensive sunglasses that provide 99-100 UVA and UVB protection are just as effective as expensive ones.
- Use a full spectrum (UVA and UVB protection) sunscreen. If you're fair-skinned, use sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 20. Apply it generously.
- Check the sunscreen's expiration date. Shelf life is one to three years depending where it's stored. Avoid storing sunscreen where extreme temperatures will shorten its shelf life.
- Cover up. Don't work outdoors without a shirt. The best protection: a wide brimmed hat and loose-fitting lightweight clothing that you can't see through.

- Limit your exposure. UV rays are most intense between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.



Don't forget about the heat...

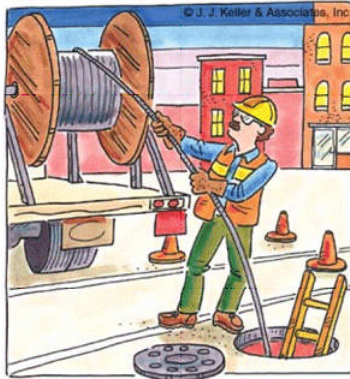
And while you're preparing to protect yourself against the sun, don't forget about heat and humidity; these can be a serious health threat and a safety risk. Start drinking fluids before you get thirsty. Cool water is best. Avoid caffeine or alcohol — both are dehydrating. If possible, give your body time to acclimate to higher temperatures. Wear loose-fitting lightweight clothing and eat light meals before you do strenuous work. If you take medications for a health condition, check with your healthcare provider to make sure that you're able to work in higher temperatures.

Take frequent rest breaks when you work in the heat. Prolonged work makes it harder to concentrate on what you're doing, which can increase the risk of an accident.

May the force be with you...but not excessively

Exerting excessive force is a quick way to get injured. According to Oregon OSHA, there are five force-related conditions to consider which may increase the risk of injury.

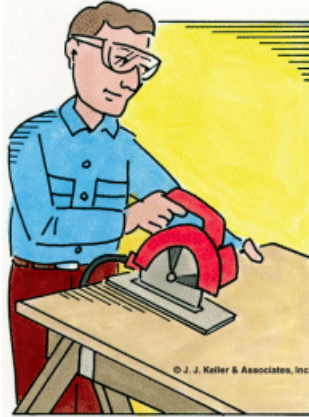
- **Contact Trauma.** When any part of your body presses against an external object, the resulting sustained force may cause too much mechanical stress on tissues. It is also possible for excessive mechanical stress to be produced from the impact shock of an object against a part of the body.



- **Grip.** There's a right way and a wrong way to grip an object. This combination of force and posture, if not accomplished correctly, may result in harm to the hand. Two basic grips are used when handling tools, equipment or materials:
 - The **Pinch Grip** which depends on the fingers to exert the force and manipulate the object. This grip strategy requires much greater muscle strength so it is more likely going to cause an injury.
 - The **Power Grip** uses the muscles of the entire hand to apply force and manipulate objects. Consequently, it's the most effective, and safest, grip to use.
- **Static Exertion.** Standing, sitting, or otherwise remaining in one posture for a long duration while you perform a task, can increase the likelihood of injury. Static exertion combines

force, posture, and duration to create a condition that quickly fatigues our muscles which increases the chances of acquiring a cumulative trauma disorder (CTD). The greater the force, more awkward the posture, and longer the duration, the greater the risk.

- **Gloves.** Have you ever worn thick leather gloves while trying to accomplish some kind of intricate manipulation of small objects? Try it: you will be frustrated. Whenever you wear gloves, more grip force is required to perform a particular task. With the need for more force, increased risk of injury occurs.
- **Bulky clothes.** Wearing bulky clothes, like heavy rain gear or protective clothing for removing hazardous waste, will increase the effort required by muscles to do work. Any time you increase the force necessary to complete a task, risk of injury also increases.



Think safety when using electric tools

Employees using electric tools must be aware of several dangers. Among the most serious hazards are electrical burns and shocks. Electrical shocks, which can lead to injuries such as heart failure and burns, are among the major hazards associated with electric-powered tools. Under certain conditions, even a small amount of electric current can result in fibrillation of the heart and death. An electric shock also can cause the user to fall off a ladder or other elevated work surface and be injured due to the fall.

To protect the user from shock and burns, electric tools need to have a three-wire cord with a ground and be plugged into a grounded receptacle, be double insulated, or be powered by a low-voltage isolation transformer. Three-wire cords contain two current-carrying conductors and a grounding conductor. Any time an adapter is used to accommodate a two-hole receptacle, the adapter wire must be attached to a known ground. The third prong must never be removed from the plug.

Double-insulated tools are available that provide protection against electrical shock without third-wire grounding. On double-insulated tools, an internal layer of protective insulation completely isolates the external housing of the tool.

The following general practices should be followed when using electric tools:

- Operate electric tools within their design limitations.
- Use gloves and appropriate safety footwear when using electric tools.
- Store electric tools in a dry place when not in use.
- Do not use electric tools in damp or wet locations unless they are approved for that purpose.

- Keep work areas well lighted when operating electric tools.
- Ensure that cords from electric tools do not present a tripping hazard.

In the construction industry, employees who use electric tools must be protected by ground-fault circuit interrupters or an assured equipment-grounding conductor program.



“Fire? I’ve been here all break and no one told me about a fire!”

Exit routes: They could save your life

How would you escape from your workplace in an emergency? Do you know where all the exits are in case your first choice is too crowded? Are you sure the doors will be unlocked and that the exit access, such as a hallway, will not be blocked during a fire, explosion, or other crisis? Knowing the answers to these questions could keep you safe during an emergency.



What is an exit route?

An exit route is a continuous and unobstructed path of exit travel from any point within a workplace to a place of safety. An exit route consists of three parts:

- **Exit access** – portion of an exit route that leads to an exit.
- **Exit** – portion of an exit route that is generally separated from other areas to provide a protected way of travel to the exit discharge.
- **Exit discharge** – part of the exit route that leads directly outside or to a street, walkway, refuge area, public way, or open space with access to the outside.

How many exit routes must a workplace have?

Normally, a workplace must have at least two exit routes to permit prompt evacuation of

employees and other building occupants during an emergency. More than two exits are required, except if the number of employees, size of the building, its occupancy, or arrangement of the workplace will not allow employees to evacuate safely. Exit routes must be located as far away as practical from each other in case one is blocked by fire or smoke.

What are the requirements for exits?

Exits must be separated by fire resistant materials—that is, one-hour fire-resistance rating if the exit connects three or fewer stories and two-hour fire-resistance rating if the exit connects more than three floors. Exits are permitted to have only those openings necessary to allow access to the exit from occupied areas of the workplace or to the exit discharge. Openings must be protected by a self-closing, approved fire door that remains closed or automatically closes in an emergency.

What must employers do regarding exit routes?

OSHA standards require employers to do the following:

- Keep exit routes free of explosive or highly flammable furnishings and other decorations.
- Arrange exit routes so employees will not have to travel toward a high-hazard area unless the path of travel is effectively shielded from the high-hazard area.
- Ensure that exit routes are unobstructed such as by materials, equipment, locked doors, or dead-end corridors.
- Ensure that safeguards designed to protect employees during an emergency remain in good working order.
- Provide lighting for exit routes adequate for employees with normal vision.
- Keep exit route doors free of decorations or signs that obscure the visibility of exit route doors.
- Post signs along the exit access indicating the direction of travel to the nearest exit and exit discharge if that direction is not immediately apparent. Also, the line-of-sight to an exit sign must be clearly visible at all times.
- Mark doors or passages along an exit access that could be mistaken for an exit “Not an Exit” or with a sign identifying its use (such as “Closet”).
- Install “EXIT” signs in plainly legible letters.
- Renew fire-retardant paints or solutions often enough to maintain their fire-retardant properties.
- Maintain exit routes during construction, repairs, or alterations.
- Provide an emergency alarm system to alert employees, unless employees can promptly see or smell a fire or other hazard in time to provide adequate warning to them.

Know where the exits are located your workplace because it could save your life in an emergency.



Music Trivia

Question: Which R&B diva, known to many as “Lady Soul,” began her singing career with her

father's gospel choir in the Detroit church where he was pastor?

- a) Diana Ross
- b) Gladys Knight
- c) Tina Turner
- d) Aretha Franklin

Answer: “Lady Soul” is of course the incomparable Aretha Franklin (d). As a child in the 1950s, Aretha Franklin joined her sisters, Carolyn and Erma, in the gospel choir led by their father, Reverend C. L. Franklin. Her gospel roots are clear in such R&B classics as “Respect” and “Chain of Fools.”



Help stop workplace violence

Some 2 million American workers are victims of workplace violence each year. Workplace violence can strike anywhere, and no one is immune. The following is information you need to arm yourself with about workplace violence.

What is workplace violence?

Workplace violence is violence or the threat of violence against workers. It can occur at or outside the workplace and can range from threats and verbal abuse to physical assaults and homicide. However it manifests itself, workplace violence is a growing concern for employers and employees nationwide.

Who is vulnerable?

Some workers are at increased risk for workplace violence. Among them are workers who:

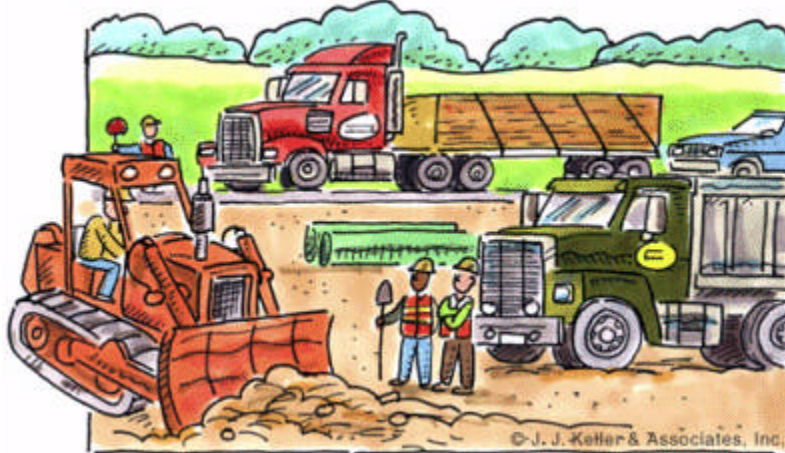
- Exchange money with the public;
- Deliver passengers, goods, or services; or
- Work alone or in small groups, during late night or early morning hours, in high-crime areas, or in community settings and homes where they have extensive contact with the public. This group includes health-care and social service workers such as visiting nurses, psychiatric evaluators, and probation officers; community workers such as gas and water utility employees, phone and cable TV installers, and letter carriers; retail workers; and taxi drivers.

How can you protect yourself?

Nothing can guarantee that you will not become a victim of workplace violence. These steps, however, can help reduce your odds:

- Learn how to recognize, avoid, or diffuse potentially violent situations.
- Alert your supervisor to any concerns about safety or security.
- Report all incidents of workplace violence immediately.
- Avoid traveling alone into unfamiliar locations or situations whenever possible.
- Carry only minimal money and required identification.

By following these simple tips, you can help keep yourself and your co-workers safe at all times.



Work zone safety

Each year, more than 100 workers are killed and over 20,000 are injured during highway and street construction activities. Most of these injuries occur in the “work zone.” The work zone is the area where highway construction, maintenance, or utility work activities are taking place. What makes this work area dangerous is that passing motorists, construction vehicles, and equipment are moving through the same space that employees are working in.

Accidents

Accidents that occur in work zones are usually caused by one, or more, of the following:

- Failure to train workers in hazard awareness,
- Improper traffic control procedures,
- Insufficient equipment maintenance (such as malfunctioning warning devices),
- Poorly designed work zones, and
- Failure to establish and follow policies and procedures for making sure you and your coworkers remain safe.

Work zone hazards

There are two basic types of work zone hazards:

- Internal — hazards within the workspace such as vehicles backing up and excavators digging.
- External — hazards presented outside the workspace like vehicles traveling along the adjacent roadway.

Hazards associated with work zones include the following:

- Being struck by passing traffic or construction equipment,

- Electrocutation caused by contact with energized electrical lines and conductors,
- Falling into trenches or excavations,
- Being crushed between two pieces of equipment or between a piece of equipment and a structure,
- Slipping and falling,
- Caught in machinery, and
- Airborne lead and silica particles.

When working in a work zone, make sure you follow your company's safety policies. You're much more apt to go home in one piece at the end of your shift.



Sports Trivia

Question: *In baseball, an easily caught fly ball is sometimes called a "can of corn." What is the origin of this expression?*

- a.) Cans of corn were once used for fielding practice.
- b.) A can of corn is as commonplace and easy to buy as a fly ball is to catch.
- c.) Years ago, cans of corn stacked high on a grocery shelf were knocked down and easily caught by store clerks.
- d.) It refers to a once-popular joke, where a bat was represented by an ear of corn and the fly ball the can of corn.

Answer: Correct answer is (c). In the grocery stores of the late 1800s, canned goods were stored on high shelves and pulled down with a long pole. An experienced store clerk would have no trouble catching the tumbling can, thus giving rise to the term among baseball players and fans.