

## **Save the Ears!**

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When hearing of someone's misfortune from being involved in an accident, you may hear the words "I never saw it coming." You can be injured simply because you were not paying close enough attention to your surroundings.

We leave our home each day without thinking we could be injured in an accident. At some point in our lives we may hear the statement. "Safety is up to me!" We may be performing job duties or simply walking or driving at the end of the day without thinking of consequences and not being aware of our surroundings. Simple awareness can help us be safe when we are away from home.

Safety is important to us while we are on or off the job. We may simply be in the wrong place at the wrong time if we are not on the lookout for possible hazards. Proper planning can eliminate or reduce workplace accidents or illnesses.

### **Safety Tips to consider:**

#### **Survey Work Area**

- Evaluate your work area for any safety hazards before performing any tasks. (foot traffic, facility operations, vehicles, etc.)
- Be aware of your surroundings.
- Understand the present hazards of performing the task.
- Is there adequate space to perform the inspection.
- Keep work area clean and orderly.
- Look for objects, uneven surfaces, trip hazards that you need to move around.
- Take reasonable care to not put others at risk while performing your job.
- Perform daily safety checks.

#### **Policies and Procedures**

- Understand, implement, and follow health and safety procedures/policies to complete the job.
- Be aware of safety procedures and policies of the businesses we inspect.

#### **Focus**

- Stay focused on the task at hand. When your attention and thoughts divert to other things injuries can occur and create an unsafe environment not only for yourself but those around you.
- Multitasking may cause us to overlook potential hazards.
- Don't take your eyes off the task.
- Don't be distracted by others or loud noises.
- Don't get too comfortable and familiar with inspection site that you overlook potential hazards.
- Understand onsite hazards and meet with personnel regarding safety concerns.

### **Use Safety Equipment**

- Safety equipment has been issued for a reason. Make sure it is used. Have it handy and accessible.
- Make sure all equipment is in good working condition.
- Wear, maintain, and properly store personal protective equipment.
- Do not misuse equipment or supplies.
- Safely store any loose items.
- Wear appropriate clothing for the job, avoid wearing loose clothing, jewelry that may get caught in equipment, make sure your hair does not get caught in machinery.

### **Take Time**

- Don't be in a rush to complete a task and neglect safety to finish the job. Sometimes we get so busy and in a hurry with all the numerous tasks we need to complete that we lose focus on what we are doing. We forget and neglect basic safety.
- Do not create any safety hazards that could be prevented.
- Taking a break will help keep us alert.
- Do not work while fatigued or extremely tired.
- Take reasonable care for your own health and safety.

### **Inform Supervisor**

- No one knows your job and tools better than you do.
- Notify supervisor of any injury, strains, illnesses suffered as a result of doing your job.
- Let your supervisor know if you are taking medication that affects the safety of yourself and others, especially if you drive or operate machinery.
- Speak up. Share concerns.
- Let supervisor and co-workers know of damaged equipment, hazardous conditions or unsafe behaviors.
- Report all near misses, injuries or illnesses.
- Share ideas to make equipment and the process safer.

### **Don't Create Additional Hazards**

- Don't be in a rush to complete a task and neglect safety to finish the job.
- Do not create any safety hazards that could be prevented. (e.g. laying an extension cord on the ground that can cause a tripping hazard for others.)
- Put away tools when finished.

### **Watch for Potential Hazards from Others**

- Be aware of those who are around you. (e.g. Cars speeding through gas stations or someone who approaches with a cigar in their mouth when working with flammable liquids.)

### **Other Things to Consider**

- Use proper lifting techniques.
- Become familiar with products, chemicals, material safety data sheets and any other items you may come in contact with.
- Use safety barriers when needed.

### **Think**

We don't expect to have an accident when we leave home each day. Being aware of our surroundings is of utmost importance to protect ourselves against injury. We must do our part to protect ourselves and others from unforeseen dangers.

If injured we may be faced with long term health conditions and expensive medical bills. Our family may be forced to deal with losing us or taking care of us long term. Taking just a few moments to evaluate potential risks can save lives.

"Safety it's up to me!" is a good reminder for everyone.

### **SOURCES**

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