SAFETY MATTERS

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Stay Safe in the Heat

Follow these 6 steps to protect yourself from the heat this season:

1. **Practice pre-hydration.** Before you start work, drink up to 16 ounces of fluid. After you begin work, drink 8 ounces every 20 minutes during the activity.
2. **Drink the right stuff.** Plain water is the best for quenching thirst. Never drink alcoholic beverages when working in the heat.
3. **Become acclimated to the heat slowly.** If possible, take 5 to 7 days to reach a full work schedule in the heat. If you've had previous experience with the job, your heat acclimation may be quicker than if you're new to the job and/or new to working in the heat. Remember that after about 4 days of working in cool conditions, your heat acclimation will decrease.
4. **Don't wear a hat.** The body loses a lot of heat out of the top of the head. If you're in hot shade, don't wear a hat. If you're in direct sun and need shading, wear a visor that's open at the top. Also see #6.
5. **Wear the right fabric.** Cotton is great at absorbing moisture from the skin while sweating, but it can create a problem if it gets soaked. If possible, wear a loose, thin, white, synthetic t-shirt while working in the heat. Synthetic material does not absorb sweat, but sends it off the skin to be quickly evaporated.
6. **Don't remove PPE.** You must wear required PPE even in the heat. Pay attention to your reaction to the heat and ask for a break if you start to feel overheated.

June is **National Safety Month.** Let's all pledge this month to work more safely and do everything we can to prevent accidents in our workplace.

Facts about Workplace Safety

According to OSHA and the Bureau of Labor Statistics there are more than 6 million workplaces and 93 million workers in this country, and on a typical workday:

- 17 workers are killed on the job by traumatic injuries
- 137 more workers die of occupationally-related illnesses
- 17,138 workers are injured

Annually, over 4 million U.S. workers suffer work-related injuries or illnesses. Among the most common injuries are:

- Sprains, strains, and tears (427,740)
- Injuries to the back (250,870)
- Falls (234,450)

Over 5,000 employees die every year as a result of their work-related injuries or illnesses. Over 1,000 of those deaths are the result of highway accidents. And nearly 1,000 are the result of falls.

DON'T WAIT FOR AN ACCIDENT!

One of the best ways to prevent accidents is to perform daily safety inspections. Don't wait for an accident to discover hazards. Inspect your workstation, work area, PPE, tools, equipment, and materials before each job.

Near Misses are Real Issues

Report and Investigate Them

Near misses are accidents that almost happened or accidents that did happen but that did not cause injury or damage. Near misses are also sometimes called "close calls" because the difference between a near miss and an accident could be a fraction of an

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Beat the Odds

The odds of an average person being a lightning casualty over your lifetime are about 3,000 to 1. Those are pretty good odds. But you can make them even better by following the 30-30 rule.

Here's how:

1. **Watch for dark skies,** threatening clouds, or increasing winds, even if it is not raining.
2. **When you see lightning, count the seconds** until you hear thunder.
3. **If that time is 30 seconds or less, the thunderstorm is within 6 miles** of where you are and is dangerous. You are close enough to be struck.
4. **Seek shelter immediately.**
5. **Wait at least 30 minutes** after the last clap of thunder before leaving shelter.
6. **Don't be fooled** by sunshine or blue sky!

Furthermore, be smart by being prepared when you participate in outdoor summer activities:

- Listen to weather forecasts—have a radio with you—and plan ahead for possible shelter in case of a thunderstorm.
- Know that lightning is most likely to occur in hot, humid, summer weather, during the late afternoon or early evening.

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inch or a split second.

According to the National Safety Council, 75 percent of all workplace accidents are preceded by one or more near misses. With that startling statistic in mind, treat near misses as warnings that an accident is likely to occur. Just because you narrowly avoided a disaster this time doesn't mean that you are safe and that the same situation couldn't cause an accident and injury next time.

You can prevent injuries to yourself and your co-workers by paying attention to near misses and taking them seriously as safety incidents that require immediate attention. Here's how to respond effectively to near misses:

- If you can safely eliminate the hazard that caused the near miss, do so immediately.
- Report all near misses to your supervisor right away, even if you have removed the hazard.
- Never dismiss a near miss as just a lucky break and forget about it.
- Explain to your supervisor what happened, when it happened, which equipment or materials were involved, who was involved, and what you think caused the incident.
- Cooperate in investigations of near misses; don't worry about being blamed.

Lightning the #2 Weather Killer in US

Being caught outside with no safe shelter is a severe emergency

One hazard of summer weather is lightning, which has been the #2 weather killer in the United States over the past 30 years. In fact lightning kills more people than hurricanes and tornadoes combined.

Understand that no place OUTSIDE is safe during a thunderstorm. Being caught outside with no safe shelter is a severe emergency. Follow these suggestions, which won't protect you but may improve your odds:

- Do not seek shelter under tall, isolated trees.
- Do not seek shelter under partially enclosed buildings or in tents.
- Stay away from metal objects, such as fences, poles, or golf clubs.
- Stay away from water.
- Find the lowest spot around and crouch down.

The SAFEST location is a fully enclosed building with wiring and plumbing. Such buildings are safe because of their wiring and plumbing. Unsafe buildings include picnic or beach shelters, large outdoor tents, or other buildings that do not have electricity or plumbing.

The second safest location is a hard-topped car, SUV, bus, or other hard-topped vehicle. Do not seek shelther in a soft-topped convertible. Close all the windows and doors and do not touch any metal surfaces.

If someone is struck by lightning, call 911 or your local emergency number to get immediate medical care. You are in no danger of an electrical charge if you touch a lightning victim or administer CPR.

Check out the sidebar for tips on how to be prepared and to **"Beat the Odds"** of a lightning strike. Stay safe in summer storms.