



# SAFETY MATTERS

A Newsletter of Hamilton County Human Resources -  
Division of Risk Management

Risk  
Management  
& Safety

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## Risk Management and Safety Committee

The next Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday August 12, 2015 at 10:00am in the Risk Management Safety Office, Room 628 of the Courthouse.

The purpose of the Risk Management & Safety Committee is to bring representatives of the various agencies, departments, and elected officials of Hamilton County together to collaborate on ways to promote a safe environment for employees and the public, and to develop ways to reduce risk to our people, property, and assets.

## Near misses are real issues

*Report and Investigate Them*

According to the National Safety Council, 75% of all workplace accidents are preceded by one or more near misses. You can prevent injuries to yourself and 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.

## More OSHA safety classes

### OSHA 10-hour Training Program

Location: Safety Office: Courthouse, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor, Room 628  
September 15-16, 2015  
October 13-14, 2015

This 1.5 day course provides students with knowledge to recognize and prevent safety hazards in their workplace and an understanding of the most common workplace safety standards. Attendees who complete the program receive an OSHA completion card and training certificate.

Free Parking!

Contact Rodney at [Rodney.Lofland@hamilton-co.org](mailto:Rodney.Lofland@hamilton-co.org)

The OSHA 10-hour course will cover the following topics:

- Introduction to OSHA
- Ohio's Public Employee Risk Reduction Program (PERRP)
- Walking and Working Surfaces, and Fall Protection
- Emergency Action Plans, Fire Prevention, and Fire Protection
- Identifying Electrical Hazards
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Hazard Communication
- Ergonomics
- Hazardous Materials
- Machine Guarding
- OSHA Safety and Health Programs



## news & notes

### 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!

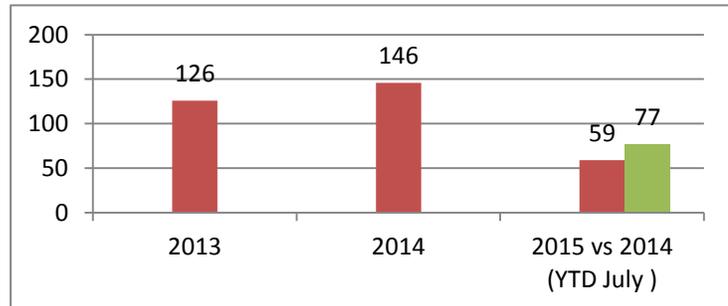
One of the best ways to prevent accidents is to perform daily safety inspections. Don't wait for an accident to discover hazards. Inspect your workstation, work area, PPE, tools, equipment, and materials before each job.



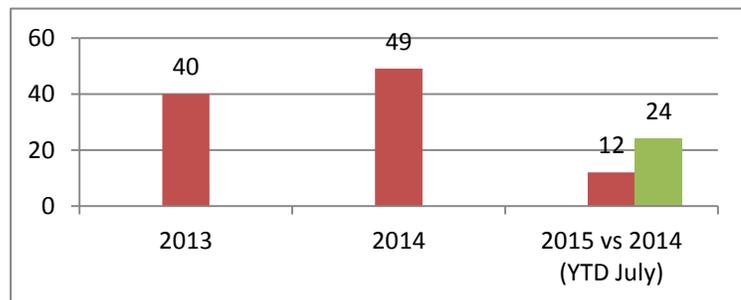
## Safety snapshot of 2015 year to date

*Fewer injuries in first half of 2015 versus first half of 2014*

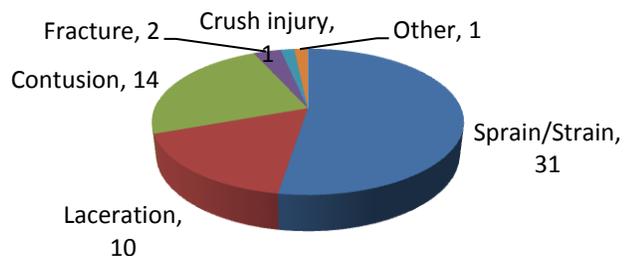
**PERRP (OSHA) Recordable Injuries for years 2013-2015 year-to-date** (injuries that require medical treatment beyond basic first aid)



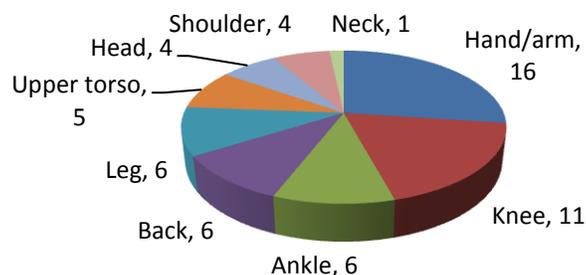
**Lost-time PERRP (OSHA) Recordable Injuries for years 2013-2015 year-to-date** (injuries severe enough to put our employees off work)



**PERRP (OSHA) Recordable Injuries 2015 year-to-date grouped by type of injury**



**PERRP (OSHA) Recordable Injuries 2015 year-to-date grouped by body location of injury**



## news & notes

### Tree care safety tips

Here are some of OSHA's tips for protecting yourself during tree-trimming and removal activities:

**Assume all power lines are energized** until you know otherwise, and contact the utility company to discuss deenergizing and grounding or shielding of power lines before beginning tree work near power lines.

**Ensure that all tree-trimming or removal work within 10 ft of a power line is done by trained and experienced line-clearance tree trimmers.** A second tree trimmer within normal voice communication range is also required.

**Line-clearance tree trimmers must be aware of and maintain proper minimum approach distances** when working around energized power lines.

**To safely fell a tree, determine the fall direction,** provide a retreat path so you and coworkers can reach safety while the tree is falling, and determine the proper hinge size to safely guide the tree in its fall.

**Make sure chain saws and other equipment are in good working condition** and you are trained to use the equipment safely.

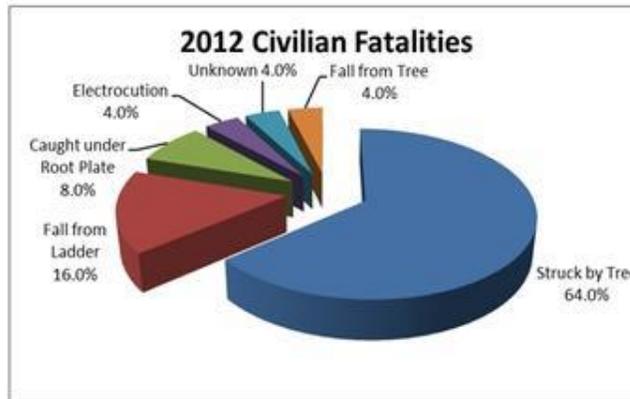
**If possible, avoid felling trees into other trees** or objects.

**Do not trim trees in dangerous weather conditions.**

**Wear the required PPE** to protect yourself from hazards, including gloves, safety glasses, hard hats, and anything else necessary for the conditions to which you will be exposed.

## Tree trimming safety

*Stay safe in the yard*



These sobering statistics are a stark reminder of the inherent dangers for one attempting tree care or tree removal and highlights the need for tree owners to seek out tree care companies with the proper

qualifications and equipment to handle the work safely.

Tree care is undoubtedly one of the most dangerous jobs in the U.S. Pruning large limbs, felling trees and especially climbing into trees are hazardous activities even for trained professionals. Untrained consumers should think twice before trying to duplicate the work of professionals, as evidenced by the graphic above.

Investigating the major causes of accidents in the graphic:

- Felling trees with a chainsaw may look easy on reality TV, but it's very easy to get it wrong. Two-thirds of the time, the victim was struck by the tree when it fell in an unexpected direction. Directional tree felling with a chain saw requires a high level of competency and plenty of experience.
- Three homeowners were killed due to a phenomenon known as "barber chair" - when forces acting on the tree cause it to split and kick back violently before it can be completely cut.
- Three DIY-ers were killed when trees near the one they were cutting fell on them, likely due to the movement of the tree being cut.
- The thought of cutting with a chain saw from a ladder makes even a professional cringe. It's easy to lose one's balance, and the cut branch typically falls straight down, hitting the ladder with great force.

Tree care without proper training or equipment is asking for trouble. Consumers contemplating tree work should assess the risk for attempting the work. Indicators of high risk include:

- using a chain saw
- working off the ground
- cutting off heavy branches
- felling any tree
- using unfamiliar machinery such as platform lifts and brush chippers

If you are at all uncertain about what could happen by attempting your own tree work, contact a qualified tree care professional for help.



**"What's the problem? I'm nowhere near those power lines!"**

## news & notes

### Beat the Odds

Avoid being a lightning casualty 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!

Know that lightning is most likely to occur in hot, humid, summer weather, during the late afternoon or early evening.

### Contact us:

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## Did you know....

### Lightning is 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. If you get caught outside, follow these suggestions to reduce your chance of being struck by lightning:

- 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 shelter 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.

### Hamilton County safety mindset

Hamilton County is committed to promoting and providing a safe and healthy workplace. Let each of us adopt the safety mindset:

- Safety is essential and included in every activity, work task, and project
- Safety is everyone's responsibility
- There is never a time or reason to ever put yourself or others in harm's way
- Yes, we have to get the work done - but we do it safely
- The right way is the safe way

***Make safety a full-time habit!***