SECO Safety and Environmental Compliance Office

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Don't let safety take a holiday

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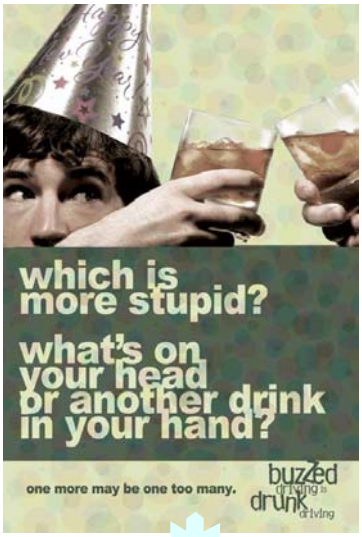
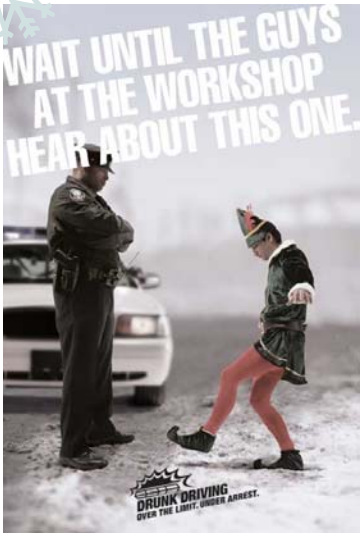




TIS THE SEASON!

By: Joe Duran

The holiday season is an exciting time of year. Record numbers of people will be on the highways, many traveling long distances. Others will stay close to home and plan on attending office parties or family gatherings. However, it's a safe bet that very few drivers start out an evening of fun with the plan to drive home drunk. Unfortunately, the number of drunken driving arrests and traffic fatalities increases every year during the holiday season. Yet, every year several of them wind up in jail cells, sleeping it off and watching helplessly as their once-bright futures slip away in the aftermath. And that's just the lucky ones who got caught. Others never get the chance to learn from this mistake and instead become tragic statistics. If you plan to attend a holiday party, it is important to plan for a safe ride home before taking the first sip of alcohol. The best of intentions can fall apart as alcohol impairs judgment. One night on the town isn't worth the risk. It's not just your career at stake, but your life and the lives of those close to you as well.

Posters courtesy of the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration

2008 Established Safety Goals

The following are the Safety goals for recordable & lost time incidents as established by the White House with concurrence by Department of Commerce for FY 2008:

Line Office	Recordable Goals	Lost Time Goals
NWS	0.75	0.34
NMFS	2.06	0.84
NMAO	4.35	1.71
CORP	0.26	0.26
NOS	0.48	0.18
OAR	0.13	0.13
NEDIS	0.70	0.47
USEC	0.45	0.45
ALL NOAA	1.33	0.62

(Incidents rates are calculated as follows: Number of incidents x 200,000 hrs divided by actual hours worked in that period)

You are the Safety Inspector!

How many unsafe conditions can you identify?

(answers on the last page)

LIFT TRUCK SAFETY

Best Practices for lifting Personnel with Forklifts

Whether you've got one or multiple lift trucks, each is vital for the job they do, including lifting and positioning personnel for elevated work. Scissor lifts and mobile scaffolds are generally recommended over forklifts. But you can use forklifts safely so long as everyone knows OSHA's regulations.

Here are the key rules for lifting and positioning workers using a forklift:

1. Safety Platform

Under no circumstances should a worker stand on a forklift's masts before being raised. OSHA mandates you secure a safety platform or basket to the masts before lifting it. The platform must have guardrails. The worker does not need to tie off with a lanyard so long as he/she's protected by the guardrails.

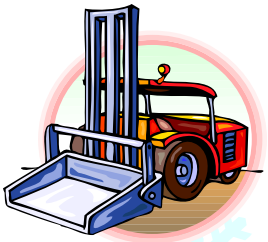
Caveat: The elevated worker must not lean over or climb out of the platform or basket, unless he's stepping onto a rooftop, floor or secured work platform above.

2. Emergency Shut-off

The elevated worker must have a shut-off switch. Example: If the forklift operator raises the masts too high and there's a crushing hazard above.

3. Protection from Falling Objects

Good rule of thumb: The elevated worker should always wear a hard hat for protection from falling objects. Also, you may need a basket or cage with a roof for additional protection from falling objects.



4. Forklift Operator on duty

The forklift operator must be inside the forklift at all times. No breaks.

5. Masts Guard

A guard must be installed between the elevated worker and the masts.

For more information on this topic please visit:

www.osha.gov/SLTC/poweredindustrialtrucks/index.html

EPA Compliance Tips

The EPA has given many federal laboratory compliance and pollution prevention (P2) classes across the country, with emphasis on focused compliance and P2 ideas. This classroom information can now be accessed through a link on the SECO website. The link is located under the Environmental section on the SECO Homepage and is titled "**EPA Compliance Tips for Federal Labs**". The "Table of Contents" link contains a listing of the files and the "Full Lab Tips Package" link contains all of the files and class discussions. You will find information regarding laboratory compliance tips, P2 ideas, product substitution ideas and even Environmental Management System Information. Here is your way to receive pertinent information to help you get your laboratory in compliance.

BE EXTRA CAREFUL AROUND TRAINS

The National Safety Council estimates that in 2005, 300 deaths and 1000 nonfatal injuries were the result of motor vehicles colliding with trains. Approaching and crossing railroad tracks requires drivers to use extreme caution. Here are some important safety tips from the State of Illinois Department of Motor Vehicles:

WARNING SIGNS

Railroad crossings are marked with one or more of these signs:

A round railroad advance warning sign means a crossing is ahead. In rural areas, this sign is posted 750 feet before the tracks. This sign is your indication of a possible dangerous situation with a train.

Some crossings also have gates that lower. It is against the law to drive through, around or under these gates.

Crossbuck signs are posted at most tracks. The sign will indicate if there is more than one track.

Flashing red lights always means a train is near or is switching tracks nearby. Always stop when the lights begin to flash.

SECOND TRAIN

More than one train may be on the tracks. After one train has passed, always look for a second train on another track before proceeding.

NEVER GET TRAPPED

Sometimes you may be moving with a stream of vehicles across a railroad track. Check carefully to make sure there is enough room for your vehicle on the other side of the track. If there is not enough room, do not cross the tracks.

NEVER SHIFT GEARS

If your vehicle has a manual transmission, shift down before reaching the tracks. To avoid stalling, you should not shift gears while crossing the tracks.

NEVER RACE A TRAIN

Trying to race a train may cost you your life and those of your passengers.

SOME VEHICLES MUST STOP

These include commercial buses, school buses and vehicles that carry hazardous material. Be prepared to stop when you are behind these vehicles.

Article credit to NSC Traffic Safety Vol. 07 – No. 10

SECO employee is now webmaster for youth oriented web site

Ben Bond, Field Safety Manager, has graciously taken over as webmaster for the FedNet web site, a Labor Department sponsored youth oriented safety web site in which NOAA has had an active and leading role for a number of years. This site will be accessible from the SECO Safety home page.

ERGONOMIC TIPS FOR THE PROFESSIONAL DRIVER

Sitting for long periods of time can create pressure on the spine and result in lower back pain. This situation is most true for people who make their living as drivers and who are exposed to vibration effects on the road. Over time, the combination of bad posture and vibration can have a cumulative effect, said Drew Bossen, vice president of product development for Atlas Ergonomics, an ergonomic service and technology provider based in Grand Haven, IN.

In transportation, slouching or sitting with a flexed, rounded posture can significantly impact the spine, particularly the discs, said Bossen, a physical therapist of 29 years. But if the driver positions their seats correctly to help maintain good posture, the additional lumbar support will help alleviate intra-discal pressure and muscle strain. Bossen suggested the following tips for the professional drivers:

- First, maintain your line of sight and then find a good sitting position with your feet flat on the ground so you have the ability to shift your weight.
- Adjust the seat back angle by starting completely upright at a 90-degree angle, then tilt back between 8 and 12 degrees. This adjustment lowers pressure on you spine.
- Adjust your lumbar supports to prevent lower back strain.
- Make sure you can engage with the accelerator, brake and clutch without reaching.
- Lay the steering column back into the hands and make sure you do not elevate your shoulders.
- Use armrests to prevent pressure on discs when not driving in heavy traffic.

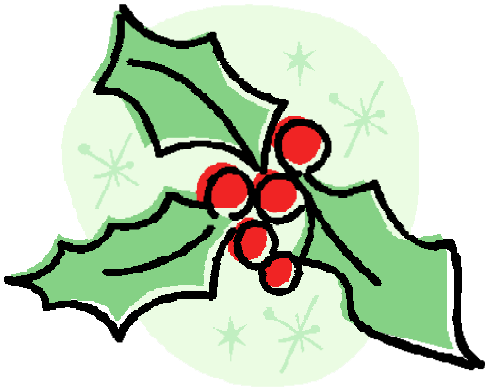
Do not engage in very physical activities after driving for a long time. Prolonged seat posture makes your spine more vulnerable to injuries.

Article provided by the National Safety Council's Traffic Safety Newsletter Vol.07 No. 11 – November 2007

FACTOID

Did you know that:
Minor or Near Miss Incidents involve 39.7% of all accidents
First Aid: 12.1%
Reportable Medicals are 20%
Reportable Lost Timers are 16.4%.

These are incidents where at least one full day is lost.
Non injury vehicle incidents involve 11.8% of all accidents.



The world is full of willing people, some willing to work, the rest willing to let them.

- Robert Frost (1874 – 1963)

2007 Safety Stats

An analysis of the accidents involving NOAA employees and contractors shows that NOAA continues to experience these same types of accidents.

- Handling of tools and manual moving of things account for the majority of the causes at 35.1%. This includes all accidents involving unsafe use of tools and improper lifting or body positioning.

- Falls of every kind rank second at 28%. This includes weather related falls while launching balloons, walking on board ships in heavy seas, walking up and down stairs in offices, or tripping in the parking lots.

- Being struck by or against is the third highest at 17.4%. This includes being struck by equipment.

- The remainder are miscellaneous categories and vehicular incidents.

The 3 major types of injuries continue to be muscle sprains @ 32.1%, contusions @ 24.4% and cuts @ 20.1%.

Unsafe acts, such as failure to wear personal protective equipment, failure to maintain situational awareness and failure to follow safe operating procedures are the key causes of these types of accidents.

Answers to Safety Inspector:

1. The compressed gas cylinder is not securely chained to prevent tip-over. *29 CFR 1910.101(a)*
2. The room is cluttered and disorganized, could cause a slip, trip or fall and potentially impede emergency egress. *29 CFR 1910.22(a)(1)*
3. The electrical raceway located on the work bench (right side) has an unguarded flexible cord which is in contact with a sharp corner which could cut the cord causing an electrical short and potential for a fire. *29 CFR 1910.303(b)(1)(ii)*

ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER

This newsletter is brought to you by the staff of the Safety and Environmental Compliance Office (SECO). The issues will be produced on a quarterly basis and posted on http://www.seco.noaa.gov/ to help increase awareness of the environmental, safety and health programs. If you have any questions or comments, please contact SECO at (301)713-2870.