

THINK GLOBALLY... ACT LOCALLY

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Slips, Trips, and Falls

by: Joe G. Duran

Did you know...

slips, trips and falls account for 26% of NOAA's incidents reported in 2005?

These incidents occur in workspaces such as offices, ships, laboratories and industrial areas. Although most of these incidents result in minor injury or minimal lost time, when these types of unsafe conditions are ignored it has the potential for serious injury or fatality.



Slips are primarily caused by a slippery surface and compounded by wearing the wrong footwear. In normal walking, slips occur as the heel of the forward foot contacts the walking surface. Then, the front foot slips forward, and the person falls backward.

Trips occur when the front foot strikes an object and is suddenly stopped. The upper body is then thrown forward, and a fall occurs. As little as a 3/8" rise in a walkway can cause a person to "stub" their toe resulting in a trip and fall. The same thing can occur going up a flight of stairs where only a slight difference in the height of subsequent steps can cause a person to trip and fall.

There are two basic types of falls: elevated falls and same-level falls. Same-level falls are most frequent, but elevated falls are more severe.

- Same-Level Falls: high frequency--low severity
- Elevated Falls: lower frequency--high severity

Same-level falls are generally slips or trips. Injury results when the individual hits a walking or working surface or strikes some other object during the fall. Over 60 percent of elevated falls are from less than 10 feet.



The second type of fall occurs when the front foot lands on a surface lower than expected, such as when unexpectedly stepping off a curb in the dark. In this type of fall, the person normally falls forward. Another type of step and fall occurs when one steps forward or down, and either the inside or outside of the foot lands on an object higher than the other side. The ankle turns, and one tends to fall forward and sideways.

Slips, trips, and falls cause numerous injuries every day. However, they are among the easiest hazards to correct. Take the time to look around your worksite for these hazards and work to prevent them. Take care not to cause any slip, trip, or fall hazards as you go about your daily activities. Don't let a slip, trip, or fall keep you from enjoying all that life has to offer.

For safety is not a gadget but a state of mind. ~ Eleanor Everet



A Season for Sharing in Fire Safety

by: Dr. Ben Bond PA, CSP



Each year fires occurring during the holiday season injure 2,600 individuals and cause over \$930 million in damage. According to the United States Fire Administration (USFA), there are simple life-saving steps you can take to ensure a safe and happy holiday. By following some of these tips, you can greatly reduce your chances of becoming a holiday fire casualty.

PREVENTING HOLIDAY TREE FIRES

Special fire safety precautions need to be taken when keeping a live tree in the house. A burning tree can rapidly fill a room with fire and deadly gases.

Selecting a Tree for the Holiday

Needles on fresh trees should be green and hard to pull back from the branches, and the needle should not break if the tree has been freshly cut. The trunk should be sticky to the touch. Old trees can be identified by bouncing the tree trunk on the ground. If many needles brown and fall off, the tree has been cut too long, has probably dried out, and is a fire hazard.

Caring for Your Tree

Christmas trees must be kept moist to prevent becoming a very serious fire hazard. Do not place your tree close to a heat source, including a fireplace or heat vent. The heat will dry out the tree, causing it to be more easily ignited by heat, flame or sparks. Be careful not to drop or flick cigarette ashes near a tree. Do not put your live tree up too early or leave it up for longer than two weeks. Keep the tree stand filled with water at all times.

Disposing of Your Tree

Never put tree branches or needles in a fireplace or wood burning stove. When the tree becomes dry, discard it promptly. The best way to dispose of your tree is by taking it to a recycling center or having it hauled away by a community pick-up service.

HOLIDAY LIGHTS

Maintain Your Holiday Lights

Inspect holiday lights each year for frayed wires, bare spots, gaps in the insulation, broken or cracked sockets, and excessive kinking or wear before putting them up. Use only lighting listed by an approved testing laboratory.

Do Not Overload Electrical Outlets

Do not link more than three light strands, unless the directions indicate it is safe. Connect strings of lights to an extension cord before plugging the cord into the outlet. Make sure to periodically check the wires — they should not be warm to the touch.

Do Not Leave Holiday Lights on Unattended

HOLIDAY DECORATIONS

Use Only Nonflammable Decorations

All decorations should be non-flammable or flame-retardant and placed away from heat vents.

Never Put Wrapping Paper in a Fireplace

It can throw off dangerous sparks and produce a chemical buildup in the home that could cause an explosion. Over 90 percent of fire deaths occur in residential dwellings between 11 p.m. and 6 a.m. when occupants are asleep. Smoke detectors alert occupants when a fire is still small and there is still time to escape.

Artificial Holiday Trees

If you are using a metallic or artificial tree,

make sure it is flame retardant.

USE CARE WITH CANDLES

Candles are a traditional and beautiful part of the season. But they are still a direct source of fire in your home.

Candles Can Be Dangerous

If you do use them, make sure they are in stable holders and place them where they cannot be easily knocked down. Never leave the house with candles burning.

Never Put Lit Candles on a Tree

Do not go near a holiday tree with an open flame — candles, lighters or matches. Finally, as in every season, have working smoke alarms installed on every level of your home, test them monthly and keep them clean and equipped with fresh batteries at all times. Know when and how to call for help. And remember to practice your home escape plan.

For More Information Contact:

NOAA SECO: ben.bond@noaa.gov

Or visit other website:

www.usfa.fema.gov

www.usfa.fema.gov/kids

www.cpsc.gov/cpsc/pub/pubs/611.html

www.nfpa.com

www.elmwoodpark.org/fire/holiday.htm#xmas

www.usfa.fema.gov/safety/tips/holiday.sht

www.firesafety.gov/goodbye.jsp?url=http://



ENVIRONMENTAL ALERT

#2005-0003 Mercury-Containing Equipment Final Rule

General: On August 5, 2005, the U.S. EPA issued a final rule adding mercury-containing equipment (MCE) to the Federal list of universal wastes regulated by the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA). This rule affects persons who generate, transport, treat, recycle, or dispose MCE unless those persons are households or RCRA defined Conditionally Exempt Small Quantity hazardous waste generators. This rule is effective, August 5, 2005.



Previous regulations required persons to determine if the MCE was a hazardous waste. In most cases MCE is considered a hazardous waste due to its toxicity characteristics. Unfortunately, not all generators managed MCE waste as hazardous waste. The EPA concluded that regulating MCE as a universal waste would lead to improved management of the MCE waste and facilitate compliance with hazardous waste requirements.

MCE is defined as an item that contains elemental mercury that is integral to the item's function. This definition does not include mercury waste generated as a by-product of manufacturing or treatment. Some common items include thermostats, barometers, manometers, flow meters, pressure relief gauges, water temperature gauges, gas safety relays, and mercury switches. Batteries and lamps that contain elemental mercury will continue to be regulated separately under the universal waste rules.

Important Note: This new rule is considered less stringent. States are not required to adopt less stringent regulations. Please check your applicable state regulations prior to implementing this new rule change. Also be aware that there may be an impact on shipping MCE wastes across state boundaries. If MCE waste is shipped to or through a state that does not adopt this new change, a hazardous waste manifest will be required for transport in that state.

A copy of this announcement, along with additional information, was published in the Federal Register.

Additional Information: If you have any questions or concerns about this alert, please contact the Department Environmental Manager, Peter Wixted, at (202) 482-3444, or via e-mail .

Our final numbers show a decreasing trend in injuries NOAA wide. With your continuing efforts we were able to meet the reduction goals set for 2005.

NOAA SAFETY STATISTICS

Based on accidents per one hundred employees

REPORTABLE INCIDENTS

<u>2005</u>	<u>GOAL</u>
1.57	1.88

LOST TIME INCIDENTS

<u>2005</u>	<u>GOAL</u>
0.67	0.73

Aviation Safety Newsletter

A new link has been added on the SECO Newsletter Web Page titled "Aviation Safety". The Aviation Safety Board will periodically post their newsletter on this page. Please click on <http://www.seco.noaa.gov/Safety/Newsletters.htm> to view the latest edition of the Aviation Newsletter.

The Countdown to EMS

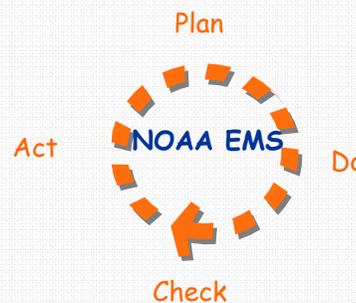
by: Will Freeman

With the E.O. 13148 EMS implementation deadline of December 31, 2005 quickly approaching, a handful of appropriate NOAA facilities have been working diligently to self declare their facilities. After successfully completing an external EMS audit in May 2005, the MOC- Pacific EMS Team lead by Jim Schell, claimed completion of their EMS system (NOAA's first). Following two years of meticulous work by the MOC-Pacific EMS implementation team, with assistance from the SECO staff, the plan-do-check-act cycle has been completed. The MOC- Pacific EMS program was also expanded to include their MOC-Atlantic site who will also self declare by mid December 2005.

Additional accomplishments include the NOS NCCOS sites which recently underwent their first Internal EMS Audit at their Charleston, Oxford, Beaufort, Kasitsna Bay, and Silver Spring sites. These efforts were lead by a highly motivated team comprised of Sabrina Pittillo, Rick Meitzler, Jay Lewis Rauca Semenius, Bernie Gottholm, and Jean Durosko. Their one year of planning and execution paid off with no majors findings discovered during their resent audit. They are on their way to self declaring by mid December 2005.

The recently established Environmental Compliance and Safety (ECS) Committee's NOAA EMS team is currently looking at innovative ways to share limited resources and open communication channels between the vast array of facilities. Even after the December 31, 2005 deadline, the ECS NOAA EMS Team will continue to evaluate potential facilities for EMS implementation, refine and improve EMS tools, and help communicate the EMS word to all NOAA employees.

The SECO office would like to thank all the hard working and dedicated facility EMS teams, employees, and their management for helping launch NOAA into the 21st century with proactive and efficient environmental management systems.



This just in ...

The new CD-574 "Office Safety Inspection Checklist for Supervisors and Program Managers" has been posted on the web site listed below.

<http://www.osec.doc.gov/forms/direct.htm>

This PDF fill-able form will make it easy to document and track your findings as well as developing a corrective action plan. If you have questions regarding the monthly office safety inspection program, please contact, SECO at (301) 713-2870 or email at Thomas.altvater@noaa.gov



UPDATE YOUR BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS EXPOSURE CONTROL PLAN



by: Dr. Ben Bond PA, CSP

On December 6, 1991, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) issued a Bloodborne Pathogens Standard. This occurred after the threat of bloodborne disease transmission to health care worker was increased due to the Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) epidemic. In many US States, Federal OSHA governs over State Managed OSHA Programs, also known as State-OSHA. In these cases, the State-OSHA programs issued their own version of a federal Bloodborne Pathogens Standard. The two documents are very similar but not identical.

Very few NOAA employees are expected to be exposed to blood or bodily fluids as part of their jobs, however, learning about universal precautions is as beneficial as taking first aid training.

The **Exposure Control Plan (ECP)** element of the bloodborne pathogen control plan includes ways the employer will protect the employee from occupational exposure to blood or bodily fluids. The key components of the plan are:

- Ⓢ Determine which employees are at risk of exposure
- Ⓢ Compliance Methods, including the use of Universal Precautions, engineering and work practice controls, disposal of sharps, personal protective equipment (PPE), housekeeping, maintenance and laundry procedures
- Ⓢ Hepatitis B vaccination protocol
- Ⓢ Medical follow-up after contact with blood or bodily fluids
- Ⓢ Warning Signs and labels
- Ⓢ Information and Training
- Ⓢ Recordkeeping requirements

The ECP is designed to protect employees from exposure to bloodborne pathogens. Because of this, it does not address other basic infection control principles, which would protect employees from infection. In addition, it is not designed to protect employees from other infection risks, such as tuberculosis or varicella.

Key points:

1. The Exposure Control Plan must be reviewed annually.
2. Universal Precautions are mandated.
3. Hepatitis B vaccine must be offered to new employees at risk of exposure within 10 days of a possible exposure and after they have received the training.
4. Hepatitis B vaccination records must be kept for the duration of employment plus 30 years.
5. Training must be done on newly hired employees and annually for all employees at risk.
6. Training records must be kept for at least three years.



Contact the SECO or your Field Safety Manager for assistance with your site specific ECP, or for a sample of an Exposure Control Plan.

NECSAS UPDATE - 2005

The NOAA Environmental Compliance & Safety Assessment System (NECSAS) program had a very busy year in 2005. Twenty-two facilities were assessed as part of a Tier I visits. The Safety & Environmental Compliance Office's Environmental Compliance Officers (ECOs) and Field Safety Managers (FSMs) attended NECSAS Tier II Process and Software training in Boulder on March 2005. The ECO and FSM teams then went on to assess nineteen facilities, in nine states, as part of the Tier II compliance process. Eight facilities (in three states) have been completed, reviewed, and uploaded to Web Hosted Assessment Manager (WHAM) for facility and Line Office review and finalization. The remaining Tier II assessments, eleven facilities in six states, are currently in the QA/QC phase. They will be uploaded to WHAM in the near future.

2005 NECSAS Tier I compliance assessments took place in the states of California, Hawaii, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Maine, and Massachusetts. A total of 38 environmental findings and 198 health and safety findings were identified during the process. Here are the top five health and safety and environmental deficiencies identified:

SAFETY

Walking/working surfaces
Electrical Safety
Means of Egress
Fire Protection
Hazard Communication

ENVIRONMENTAL

Hazardous Waste Management
Petroleum oil and Lubricant Mgmt
Hazardous Material Management
Pesticide Management
Cultural Resources Management

Facility personnel did an outstanding job of preparing for, and assisting in, the successful completion of the 2005 Tier I NECSAS process. All data for this year's Tier I NECSAS has been finalized. Facility personnel and Line Office management are currently in the process of addressing all of the identified deficiencies.

Things are shaping up for another busy year in 2006 as well. We are in the process of finalizing a web and CD-ROM based NECSAS training class that will provide information on the use of WHAM for facility managers. We expect to have this up and running prior to the start of the 2006 NECSAS site visits.

Submitted by: Minh Trinh

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.