UOSH SAFETY LINE

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Preserving Safety in a Tight Economy

As our nation has become all too familiar with the word "recession," many companies are feeling the impact, too. Companies have seen orders drop, layoffs, and profit reductions from the more profitable times. As businesses try to cut costs to compete in this new market, the one thing that can not change is a company's focus on safety and health. Companies that start cutting back on safety may start to see costly claims occur. You want to have all the processes in place to be able to avoid accidents. One way of staying in front of accidents begins with making safety a shared responsibility. The more your employees are involved, the more empowered they will be to champion safety improvements.

Production is important and safety is important; both must remain in balance with one another. You can't just emphasize one. Instead of relying on employees only for production purposes, start relying on them for safety impact as well. Along with employee involvement, to see success management has to make safety a value. Once a month, accidents and near-miss incidents should be discussed in an open forum with top managers, supervisors and production workers. A commitment to training and other engineering controls will help with the issue.

OSHA has developed an effective Workplace Safety and Health Management System (SHMS). The critical elements of an effective SHMS are: management commitment and employee involvement; worksite analysis; hazard prevention and control; training for employees, supervisors and managers. See the OSHA Fact Sheet on the next page.

Critical Elements of an Effective Safety and Health Management System

- management commitment
- employee involvement
- worksite analysis
- hazard prevention and control
- training for employees, supervisors and managers.

Inside this issue:

OSHA Factsheet

Safety and Health Management Systems

Management Commitment and Employee Involvement

__Develop and communicate a safety and health policy to all employees.

__ Demonstrate management commitment by instilling accountability for safety and health, obeying safety rules and reviewing accident reports.

__ Conduct regular safety and health meetings involving employees, managers and supervisors.

__ Assign responsible person(s) to coordinate safety and health activities.

__ Integrate safety and health into business practices (e.g., purchases, contracts, design and development).

__ Involve employees in safety and health related activities (e.g., self-inspections, accident investigations and developing safe practices).

__ Recognize employees for safe and healthful work practices.

Worksite Analysis

__ Evaluate all workplace activities and processes for hazards.

__ Reevaluate workplace activities when there are changes in:

__Processes __ Materials __Machinery

__Conduct on-site inspections, identify hazards and take corrective actions.

__ Provide a hazard reporting system for employees to report unsafe and unhealthful conditions.

__ Investigate all accidents and near misses to determine their root causes.

Hazard Prevention and Control

__ Eliminate and control workplace hazards (e.g., engineering controls, workstation design and work practices).

__ Establish a preventive maintenance program.

__ Keep employees informed of safety and health activities and conditions.

__ Plan for emergencies (e.g., create an evacuation plan, train employees and conduct fire drills).

__ Record and analyze occupational injuries and illnesses.

Training for Employees, Supervisors and Managers

__ Provide training on specific safe work practices before an employee begins work.

__ Provide additional training for new work processes and when accidents and near misses occur.

__ Provide refresher training on a routine basis.

Health and Wellness

When the body is unable to warm itself, serious cold related illnesses and injuries may occur, and permanent tissue damage and death may result.

Hypothermia can occur when *land temperatures* are **above** freezing or *water temperatures* are below 98.6ºF/ 37ºC.

Cold related illnesses can slowly overcome a person who has been chilled by low temperatures, brisk winds, or wet clothing.

FROSTBITE

What Happens to the Body:

FREEZING IN DEEP LAYERS OF SKIN AND TISSUE; PALE, WAXY-WHITE SKIN COLOR; SKIN BECOMES HARD and NUMB; USUALLY AFFECTS THE FINGERS, HANDS, TOES, FEET, EARS, and NOSE.

What Should Be Done: (land temperatures) Move the person to a warm dry area. Don't leave the person alone.

- Remove any wet or tight clothing that may cut off blood flow to the affected area.
- **DO NOT** rub the affected area, because rubbing causes damage to the skin and tissue.
- **Gently** place the affected area in a warm (105ºF) water bath and monitor the water temperature to **slowly** warm the tissue. Don't pour warm water directly on the affected area because it will warm the tissue too fast causing tissue damage. Warming takes about 25-40 minutes.
- After the affected area has been warmed, it may become puffy and blister. The affected area may have a burning feeling or numbness. When normal feeling, movement, and skin color have returned, the affected area should be dried and wrapped to keep it warm. **NOTE:** If there is a chance the affected area may get cold again, do not warm the skin. If the skin is warmed and then becomes cold again, it will cause severe tissue damage.
- Seek medical attention as soon as possible.

HYPOTHERMIA

What Happens to the Body:

NORMAL BODY TEMPERATURE (98.6º F/37ºC) DROPS TO OR BELOW 95ºF (350 C); FATIGUE OR DROWSINESS; UNCONTROLLED SHIVERING; COOL BLUISH SKIN; SLURRED SPEECH; CLUMSY MOVEMENTS; IRRITABLE, IRRATIONAL OR CONFUSED BEHAVIOR

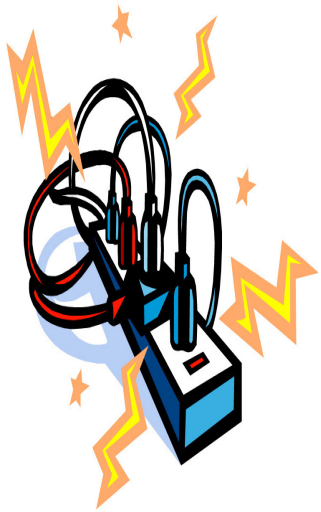
.**What Should Be Done: (land temperatures)**

- Call for emergency help (i.e., Ambulance or Call 911).
- Move the person to a warm, dry area. Don't leave the person alone. Remove any wet clothing and replace with warm, dry clothing or wrap the person in blankets.
- Have the person drink warm, sweet drinks (sugar water or sports-type drinks) if they are alert.
- **Avoid drinks with caffeine** (coffee, tea, or hot chocolate) or alcohol.
- Have the person move their arms and legs to create muscle heat. If they are unable to do this, place warm bottles or hot packs in the arm pits, groin, neck, and head areas. **DO NOT** rub the person's body or place them in warm water bath. This may stop their heart.

How to Protect Workers

- Recognize the environmental and workplace conditions that lead to potential cold-induced illnesses and injuries.
- Learn the signs and symptoms of cold-induced illnesses/injuries and what to do to help the worker.
- Train the workforce about cold-induced illnesses and injuries.
- Select proper clothing for cold, wet, and windy conditions. Layer clothing to adjust to changing environmental temperatures. Wear a hat and gloves, in addition to underwear that will keep water away from the skin (polypropylene).
- Take frequent short breaks in warm dry shelters to allow the body to warm up.
- Perform work during the warmest part of the day.
- Avoid exhaustion or fatigue because energy is needed to keep muscles warm.
- Use the buddy system (work in pairs).
- Drink warm, sweet beverages (sugar water, sports-type drinks). Avoid drinks with caffeine (coffee, tea, or hot chocolate) or alcohol.
- Eat warm, high-calorie foods like hot pasta dishes.

Safety Compliance Corner



Question: After a recent OSHA inspection, the compliance officer left us with the impression that we may not plug two fused power strips into one duplex outlet. My understanding of the rule is that you can plug a UL-listed fused power strip into any open outlet, as long as you follow the UL listing for that device.

Answer: We have a rule that requires an employer to follow the listing and labeling on electrical equipment installed and used (rule 1910.303(b)(2)).

Manufacturers and nationally recognized testing laboratories determine the proper uses for power strips. For example, the Underwriters Laboratories (UL) directory contains instructions that require UL-listed power strips, also referred as relocatable power taps (RPTs), to be directly connected to a permanently installed branch circuit receptacle; they are not to be series-connected to other RPTs or connected to extension cords. UL also specifies that RPTs are not intended for use at construction sites and similar locations.

Power strips are designed for use with a number of low-powered loads, such as computers, peripherals, or audio/video components. Power loads are addressed by 1910.304(b)(4), Outlet devices: "Outlet devices shall have an ampere rating not less than the load to be served." Power strips are not designed for high power loads such as space heaters, refrigerators, and microwave ovens, which can easily exceed the recommended ampere ratings on many power strips. They must also meet the requirements of 1910.305(g)(1), Use of flexible cords and cables. For example, the flexible power cord is not to be routed through walls, windows, ceilings, floors, or similar openings.