

Safety

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October 20, 2014

WHAT'S ONLINE

If you haven't been to our website recently, here's exclusive online content you've been missing:

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Training Shop
Ladder safety



Checklist
Confined spaces



What Would You Do?
See other safety pros' comments on challenging scenarios

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Workers rushing to finish job forget about safety

'What were you *thinking*?' Wake workers up to safety hazards

■ Expert offers 3 ways to get 'em to stop taking risks

After a worker takes an unnecessary safety risk, have you ever thought, "Why'd he do that?"

It's a question many exasperated safety pros have asked themselves. The answer ties directly to the worker's risk tolerance at that moment.

The more you know about workers' risk tolerance, the better you'll be at influencing them to take fewer risks.

That was the message in the presentation, *How to Develop Safe Behaviors for Employees Working Alone*, by Phillip Ragain, Director of Research & Development, the RAD Group, at the National Safety

Council's 2014 Congress.

While Ragain's presentation focused on lone workers, many of the concepts apply to all types of workers.

Acting in the moment

Workers rarely set out to take a needless risk or make a safety mistake.

When workers take a risk, it's because it made sense in that moment.

That's "local rationality." What's most obvious and pressing at the moment determines what the worker thinks makes the most sense to do.

Example: An employee removes a

(Please see Hazards ... on Page 2)

ENFORCEMENT

OSHA's focus on this hazard results in \$235K fine

OSHA inspectors recently hit a limestone manufacturer with nearly 30 workplace safety violations after uncovering a laundry list of hazards at its Texas plant, federal regulators said.

All told, Mezger Enterprises, Ltd., based in Austin, TX, was fined \$234,900.

More than half of that penalty stems from two willful violations for failure to:

- conduct hearing tests for workers exposed to noise levels exceeding 90 decibels, and
- guard large, circular stone saws.

Mezger also received 23 serious violations for hazards including failure to:

- provide proper sanitation
- guard machines

- inspect cranes, and
- repair electrical hazards.

The firm also received two other-than-serious violations.

Limited inspection expanded

The company was first targeted under an OSHA Regional Emphasis Program focused on noise hazards.

But once inspectors were inside, they expanded the scope of the inspection to include machine guarding, electrical and other workplace safety concerns, OSHA inspectors said.

It's a good reminder for safety pros if an inspector shows up at your facility: Whenever possible, make sure you identify the scope of the visit, and limit inspectors' exposure to the specific focus of the inspection.

RAILROAD INDUSTRY

Firm rehires worker who recorded hazard

A railroad machinist was awarded \$51,000 in back pay and damages after he was suspended when he videotaped a safety test of a faulty air compressor, federal regulators say.

OSHA also ordered Union Pacific Railroad to amend its policies banning cell phone recordings of railroad safety hazards.

OSHA investigators said the worker videotaped footage on his cell phone of an air compressor aboard a locomotive that he reported was unsafe and unusable.

The worker was ordered to continue using the machine and to delete the video he recorded.

Worker suspended

A few days later, the machinist was suspended when he informed railroad management he had sent videotape of the safety test to the Federal Railroad Administration.

This is the 11th time in the past

four years that OSHA has found Union Pacific Railroad in violation of whistleblower protection provisions of the Federal Railroad Safety Act.

The agency says the railroad industry has the second-highest number of whistleblower complaints, and 60% of them involve workers who say they were terminated for reporting injuries.

Hazards ...

(continued from Page 1)

guard while a machine's still running which leads to a serious arm laceration and could have resulted in an amputation or even death.

To the frustrated safety pro it seems obvious removing a guard while a machine running is a bad idea.

But the worker was likely experiencing "unit bias" – just wanting to finish the task at hand, even if a new distraction or hazard pops up.

Unit bias is human nature, and doesn't just affect frontline workers.

Keep in mind two other factors that affect local rationality:

- **Power Position:** Those in positions of power are more likely to take risks.
- **Authority Pressure:** The slightest pressure from an authority figure can cause workers to tolerate more risk.

Talk, ask, educate

Want to shake workers of their local rationality (especially lone ones who don't have supervision nearby)? The key is to change their context:

- **Tell stories.** Make the risk feel closer to home by telling specific stories from actual co-workers about "how this happened to someone else."
- **Ask questions.** Find out what motivates workers and where their strongest sources of unit bias are. Help them be more aware of what influences their decision-making.
- **Educate them.** Explain unit bias – that it's human nature to continue a task and take a risk rather than stop to make the situation safer.

SHARPEN YOUR JUDGMENT

This feature provides a framework for decision making that helps keep you and your company out of trouble. It describes a recent legal conflict and lets you judge the outcome.

■ WORKER SAYS FALL CAUSED HEARING LOSS, WANTS COMP

It was almost lunchtime, and Safety Manager Pete Travers was trying to decide where to get lunch.

Suddenly, company lawyer, John Jenkins, poked his head into Pete's office.

"Hey, Pete, you're really not going to believe this one," said John.

"I don't like the sound of that," replied Pete. "What's up?"

"Maggie wants workers' comp from her trip and fall," John began.

"Well, she did fall on the job; I don't see the crisis, John," said Pete.

"Pete, she wants comp from her fall for hearing loss," said John.

"What?" said Pete, "You can't be serious! How could she possibly think we'd give her comp for hearing loss from falling down?"

'It sounds crazy'

"She's serious, Pete," John replied. "She says that the trauma from the fall somehow triggered her hearing loss. She says it's been getting worse over the past few months."

Pete shook his head in disbelief.

"I can't believe Maggie's trying this – it has got to be the most ridiculous thing I've ever heard. A knee injury, back pain, even a concussion, I could see, but hearing loss?"

"Pete, calm down," said John. "She claims to have medical records, but I don't think they'll hold up in court. This'll be easy to fight."

Pete's company tried to get the case thrown out. Was it successful?

- *Make your decision, then please turn to Page 6 for the ruling.*

Safety COMPLIANCE ALERT

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INFLUENZA

Flu season's here: Keep workers healthy

■ KEYS TO STOPPING THE SPREAD OF THE VIRUS IN YOUR WORKPLACE

With flu season fast approaching, now is the time to show your employees ways they can take initiative and stay healthy this winter.

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), between 5% and 20% of the U.S. population will get the flu each year.

This results in around 31.4 million doctor visits, 200,000 hospitalizations and \$16.3 billion in lost earnings annually, said the CDC.

However, only 45% of the population will get flu shots this fall, even though the CDC encourages virtually everyone 6 months and older to get a flu shot.

The CDC has encouraged employers to get involved and educate workers on what they can do to stay healthy this flu season. These 10 tips could help keep the illness out of your workplace:

Help employees get vaccinated

Let employees know the importance of prevention by

encouraging them to get a flu shot:

1. Lead by example and get vaccinated annually
2. Offer free or discounted vaccines through your company
3. Host a vaccination clinic or promote a community vaccination event
4. Team up with a pharmacy or provider, and
5. Tell your employees of flu shot opportunities via emails, fliers or paycheck inserts.

Practice prevention

A flu shot may be the first line of defense, but reminding workers of these simple hygiene practices helps, too:

6. Stay away from sick people
7. If you get sick, stay home and avoid contact with others
8. Use a tissue to cover your mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing
9. Try not to touch your eyes, nose and mouth, and
10. If you do get the flu, be sure to take any medications your doctor prescribes.

LAWSUIT

Was being short-staffed a safety hazard?

One worker claims that his employer is responsible for injuries he sustained from moving office furniture and is suing for \$150,000.

A former Amtrak employee badly hurt his shoulder when he and a co-worker tried to move a filing cabinet in their office.

Attempting to complete the task left the employee with debilitating shoulder injuries.

Is company at fault?

The employee said that Amtrak should have provided him with workers who had the ability to move the furniture without getting hurt.

According to the complaint, the employee felt that by not doing so, Amtrak had committed a "breach of its duty to provide a safe [work]place." He felt this act of negligence was a violation of the Federal Employers' Liability Act.

The employee, who had worked for Amtrak for over 31 years, retired two months after the incident.

Since then, he has had medical treatment and rehabilitation for a torn rotator cuff, tendinitis and osteoarthritis, all of which stem from his work injury.

He said that he has had to pay for the medical expenses himself in his retirement.

TRENDS TO WATCH

Watch what's happening in various states. Some actions indicate trends.

■ NEW LAW: VIOLATORS MUST FIX HAZARDS RIGHT AWAY

A new law would require firms that receive safety fines to fix the violations before starting the appeals process.

A newly passed law will prohibit California employers from appealing safety violations before the hazards are fixed. The law also forbids California OSHA from changing the civil penalties for abatement or giving companies credit for abatement unless they fix serious violations by their next inspection and before they receive citations.

Before this law, employers did not have to fix violations during the appeals process, which could be drawn out for years. This meant that serious, hazardous situations could exist in the workplace, putting workers in potential danger for a long time.

The California Chamber of Commerce has criticized the law, saying that it automatically assumes employers are always at fault.

■ HAWAII REGAINS OVERSIGHT OF SAFETY PROGRAM

Federal OSHA is releasing its control over this state program a year early, thanks to improvements made in the state's efforts in workplace health and safety.

Hawaii OSHA will take over inspections of general industry employers, according to KITV4. The fact that the state agency is taking back the reins a year early shows it has made big improvement in its efforts to be at least as effective as federal OSHA.

The feds will still handle process safety management inspections, which are often more time consuming and complicated. The state is expected to resume these inspections in 2015.

Roundup of most recent OSHA citations

Go to www.SafetyComplianceAlert.com/finesdef for more OSHA fines and injury settlements.

Worker killed in confined space: OSHA issues fine

OSHA investigators said the worker was tightening a nut on an elevator cylinder inside an oil-filled quench tank chamber when the outer metal door came down and struck him his chest.

Fine: \$64,000

Company: Certified Heat Treating, Inc., Miamisburg, OH

Business: Vacuum heat treating of metal parts

Reasons for fine:

10 serious violations, including failure to:

- implement lockout/tagout procedures
- install a restraining device to prevent the door from operating during service and maintenance
- train worker on safety procedures
- secure entry permits to enter confined space
- post an attendant outside the confined space during entry
- train workers in confined space hazards

2 fatalities in this industry prompt \$134K fine

In a disturbing trend in the communications industry, two more workers were killed when a cell tower they were trying to dismantle in Kansas collapsed.

Fine: \$134,400

Company: Wireless Horizon, Inc., St. Peters, MO

Business: Wireless communications contractor

Reasons for fine:

2 willful safety violations for failure to:

- inspect the wire rope slings prior to use
 - provide protection to the slings when rigged over sharp objects
- 4 serious safety violations for failure to:
- conduct an engineering survey

- develop a rigging plan prior to demolition
- provide technicians with a load chart
- provide workers with an operations manual

Machine guarding hazards led to critical injury: \$89K

The worker suffered a broken back, a collapsed lung and partial paralysis of his left leg after becoming pinned in a machine, OSHA said.

Fine: \$89,500

Company: Columbus Castings, Columbus, OH

Business: Steel foundry

Reasons for fine:

2 repeat safety violations, including failure to:

- guard machines
- 2 serious safety violations, including failure to:
- implement lockout/tagout procedures while machines are being serviced

Workers' comp claim prompts \$133K OSHA fine

One of the company's workers reportedly suffered respiratory inflammation after doing a welding job on a rail car in Omaha, NE. The agency initiated the inspection after state's workers' compensation officials reported the injury to OSHA.

Fine: \$133,900

Company: Watco Investments, LLC, Pittsburg, KS

Business: Rail car repairs

Reasons for fine:

3 repeat safety violations for failure to:

- implement training, procedures and practices for safe entry into confined spaces
 - evaluate confined spaces for hazards
 - equip workers with communication devices or other measures to prevent unauthorized entry to confined spaces
- 3 serious safety violations, including failure to:
- protect workers from electrical hazards

INJURY SETTLEMENTS

Does company have to pay for walk-in bathtub?

A doctor said a walk-in bathtub was necessary to treat a worker's injury. Did the firm have to pay?

What happened: A worker injured his back and settled his workers' compensation claim in 2011 which obligated the company to pay his future medical expenses for his injury. The employee's doctor ordered a walk-in bathtub to treat the worker's lower back pain.

Company's reaction: We're not paying. Installing a walk-in bathtub would cost \$18,500, compared to a installing a \$110 shower transfer bench that would be an adequate alternative.

Decision: The court sided with the company, ruling a walk-in bathtub wasn't "reasonable and necessary."

Cite: *Flanagan Lumber Co. v. Tennison*, The Court of Civil Appeals of AL, No. 2120911, 8/22/14

Was touring grounds part of job? He wants comp

Can this foreman get comp for an injury he got while touring a jobsite on an ATV?

What happened: A foreman and his crew were touring the grounds of a farm, exploring possible new construction sites. The ATV crashed and the foreman suffered head injuries. He filed for comp.

Company's reaction: We're not paying. The tour was not a job duty he was required to perform.

Decision: The court sided with the company. The court said the foreman's injuries did not take place "in the proximity" of his place of employment just because it happened on the property.

Cite: *Carhahan v. Morton Buildings*, Ohio Court of Appeals, No. 11-14-02, 9/22/14

WHAT'S WORKED FOR OTHER COMPANIES

SCA subscribers include a broad range of small, medium and large firms involved in all types of economic activity. In this regular section, three of them share a safety success story.

1 Increased employee involvement in safety

Some workers just don't want to be on a safety committee.

However, many of these same people have the knowledge to make great contributions to our workplace safety.

They're frontline workers. They know the most about some hazards because they're confronted by them every day.

Why didn't they want to be on the safety committee? One reason: They thought they had a particular area of

focus. There were parts of the safety committee process they just didn't want to get involved with.

Work on your specialty

To get some of these people more involved, we created safety subcommittees.

Example: We put together a group of employees for our arc flash subcommittee.

We also had smaller groups focussed on equipment checks, procedures and even our safety newsletter.

This allowed people to

get involved in their particular area of focus. For some people, that's really what they wanted to do. Our subcommittees fit them well.

This got more people involved. It's probably not the only reason, but now we have plenty of workers who want to be on the safety committee. We have so many volunteers, we have to turn people away.

(Based on a presentation by Jason Fink, Health and Safety Leader, PPL Electric, Allentown, PA, at the National Safety Council 2014 Congress)

**REAL
PROBLEMS,
REAL
SOLUTIONS**

2 Changed perspective to tackle ergo issues

Our safety program had always focused on compliance – follow our rules or face the consequences.

But we could see the slaps on the wrist workers were getting for breaking safety rules weren't having an impact – they weren't buying in.

Workers and top brass saw safety as expensive and slow. We needed a new model that showed safety wasn't at odds with productivity.

Instead of forcing workers to follow our safety rules, we started

treating them like the experts and asking for their input.

Questions started conversation

We got the conversation going by asking workers a few simple questions, like, "What's difficult about your job?"

We listened for instances where workers said, "We've always done it that way." That's a good indication there's room for improvement in a specific process.

When it came to ergonomics, we stressed the simple message that the

easiest way to do something is often the best way.

The results have been great. Workers are buying into our safety program because we're treating them like the experts and using their opinions.

And because workers are coming up with safer ways to do their jobs, injuries are on the decline.

(Adapted from a presentation by Russ Nicolai, Corporate Safety Director, Snyder Roofing, Portland, OR, at the Applied Ergonomics Conference 2014 in Orlando, FL)

3 New hazard means bringing in the experts

Things were running smoothly at my company, but we noticed a potential hazard in the field.

We weren't really sure what to do about it, as it was something that we hadn't seen in our line of work before.

We wanted to educate our workers about potential risks and safety procedures, but we knew we couldn't do it ourselves.

We started looking outside the company for others who'd have more information, but without a lot of cost.

In this case, we were able to turn to public safety officials for guidance.

The hazard: Meth labs were recently discovered in the woods where our employees frequently worked. We knew our local state troopers could provide guidance for our workers if they ever came across one of the labs in the field.

Getting advice from the outside

So, we decided to invite a state trooper to one of our scheduled safety meetings. The police have lots of experience with these types of incidents, and we knew they could

teach our workers about safe procedures in this kind of situation.

Now, we feel a lot better sending our employees out into the field, knowing how to handle this potentially dangerous situation.

The takeaway: Don't hesitate to use outside resources like police, insurance companies or other safety experts. Going to others for help can ensure that everyone stays safe, no matter what the situation may be.

(Mary Adamini, Director of Personnel and Employee Relations, Marquette Board of Light and Power, Marquette, MI)

ENFORCEMENT

Where are proposed OSHA rules in regulatory pipeline?

Will the Obama administration get to enact new or revised OSHA regulations before the end of the President's term in January 2017?

Some clues came from Robert Burt, deputy director of the OSHA Directorate on Standards and Guidance, at his presentation to the National Safety Council 2014 Congress in San Diego.

Silica on the way – but when?

One of the biggest questions hanging out there about revised OSHA regulations is: When will the revised silica standard be completed?

Burt called the proposed silica revisions the largest OSHA rulemaking in the last decade and added it's a "top priority in the next couple of years."

That makes it pretty clear that the earliest this reg will likely be finalized is after the November 2016 elections.

The comment period is over, and OSHA is dealing with concerns from industry as it finalizes the rule:

- whether OSHA has made adequate provisions for privacy in its surveillance of medical cases, and
- whether a new permissible exposure limit is needed (50 micrograms per cubic meter of air instead of 100).

Burt said there was still a lot of work to do on this one.

A rule that may be closer to its final stages than silica is Walking-Working Surfaces and Personal Protective Equipment.

Burt said this is one OSHA hopes to finish "in the next few months." The revised rule would improve protection from slips, trips and falls on walking and working surfaces.

Status of other rules

Burt also gave a quick status update on some other rules:

- **Update of beryllium standard:** This is at the Office of Management and Budget, a key step toward the publishing of a final rule
- **Infectious disease reg for healthcare employees:** This is in Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act (SBREFA) review now
- **Combustible dust standard:** OSHA hopes to submit this to a SBREFA review next year
- **Injury and Illness Prevention Programs:** The next step in the development of this regulation would also be a SBREFA review
- **Review/Lookback of OSHA Chemical Standards:** OSHA recently announced an initiative focused on

chemical hazards and permissible exposure limits (for more, visit safetycompliancealert.com), and

- **Process Safety Management regulation update:** OSHA is one of several agencies under a presidential executive order to review this area following the fatal explosion in West, Texas. OSHA expects to conduct a SBREFA review on this by June 2015.

Producers, director fight OSHA fines after death

Film producers are contesting two OSHA fines totaling \$74,900 after the death of camera assistant.

Sarah Jones was killed on the Wayne County, GA, set of *Midnight Rider*, a biopic about the Allman Brother's Band musician Greg Allman. She was hit by a train while filming a dream sequence on a trestle.

The producers – Randall Miller, Jody Savin and Jay Sedrish – are also charged with criminal trespass and involuntary manslaughter. Wrongful death suits filed by Jones' parents are also making their way through the courts.

SHARPEN YOUR JUDGMENT – THE DECISION

(see case on Page 2)

No, the company wasn't successful. The case held up in court, and Maggie was granted workers' compensation.

Maggie tripped and fell at work one day, injuring her head and neck. But, she claimed that the incident caused her to progressively lose her hearing as time went on.

Her doctor backed up her claim, saying that the fall did not produce the hearing loss directly.

However, there was a good chance that it dislodged something in Maggie's ear, which triggered the hearing loss.

The court found that the doctor's report provided enough evidence to show a relationship between Maggie's fall and her hearing loss in the months that followed.

Therefore, Maggie was given workers' compensation benefits.

■ ANALYSIS: GET YOUR OWN MEDICAL EXPERTS

This case serves as a great example to remind companies that injuries are not always what they seem.

The assumption would be that injuries sustained from a fall would not include something like hearing loss. However, there was strong enough medical evidence to show something like this was actually possible.

This company got into trouble when it didn't do enough to counter the medical opinions of the employee's doctors. Whenever possible, get an independent doctor to look at employees' injuries.

Cite: *Cox v. Sykes Enterprises, Inc., and Zurich American Insurance Company*, Court of Appeals of VA, Salem, Virginia, No. 1182-13-3, 3/11/14. Dramatized for effect.

Government notices on workplace safety

Here's SCA's digest of key notices that appeared recently in the Federal Register (FR) or on OSHA's website concerning workplace safety issues. For the FR listings and other related links, go to SafetyComplianceAlert.com/category/federal-activities.

CRANE OPERATORS

OSHA has extended the deadline for crane operator certification in the Cranes and Derricks in Construction final rule that was published in 2010.

The rule required crane operators on construction sites to meet one of four qualification/certification options by Nov. 10, 2014.

That deadline is now Nov. 10, 2017.

The rule also extends by three years an employer's responsibility to ensure crane operators are competent to operate a crane safely.

Companies and other organizations had expressed concerns about the requirement to certify crane operators by type and capacity of crane and questioned whether operator certification was sufficient to determine if someone could operate the equipment safely.

OSHA will use the next three years to address operator qualification requirements.

The four options were:

- a certificate from an accredited crane operator testing organization
- qualification from the employer through an audited employer program
- qualification by the U.S. military (only applies to employees of the Defense Department or Armed Forces and not their private contractors), or
- licensing by a state or local government.

ELECTRICAL INDUSTRY

OSHA released a series of more than 70 corrections to its recent Electrical Power and Equipment rule.

OSHA's Electric Power Transmission and Distribution;

Electrical Protective Equipment rule was published in April and focuses on the construction and maintenance of power lines, as well as workers' protective equipment. However, the rule contained a slew of mistakes, and while some were only typos, others were more serious.

OSHA revised the rule by making more than 70 corrections. Smaller adjustments included simply fixing the typos and adding dollar signs where needed. Some of the larger modifications included fixing incorrect references to other regulations.

One example is in the rule's preamble, which talks about how workers who operate circuit breakers must receive training in accordance with one of two regulations. However, neither regulation that was listed was related to this type of training.

OSHA also made changes to some charts and tables, including dollar amounts that were placed in the wrong column of a table, and incorrect references to certain parts of the rule in the flow chart.

OSHA says that these new corrections were effective starting Sept. 24.

CHEMICAL SAFETY

The U.S. Chemical Safety Board (CSB) issued a warning against a flammable chemical commonly used in lab demonstrations. This follows an incident at a science museum where people were sent to the hospital for burn treatment following a demonstration.

The CSB warned educators against using Methanol in classroom demonstrations after an incident at the Terry Lee Wells Discovery Museum in Nevada. The chemical caused an explosion, which sent nine people, mostly children, to the hospital to be treated for burns. The CSB said Methanol is commonly used in lab and classroom demonstrations to produce a "fire tornado," a colored flame that spins into the air.

WHERE TO GET HELP

■ FEDS ISSUE EBOLA GUIDANCE FOR HEALTHCARE INDUSTRY

Due to the recent Ebola outbreak, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) provided prevention recommendations for healthcare workers. But the threat has lessons for safety pros in any field.

The CDC reminded healthcare workers to stay protected in light of the recent Ebola outbreak. With this new challenge facing the healthcare field, the CDC has compiled information to help prevent the spread of disease among healthcare workers.

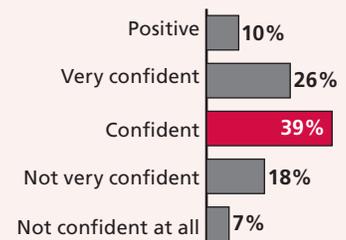
To read all the advice on dealing with Ebola from the CDC, visit safetycompliancealert.com/ebola

» Be sure to add our address sca@safetycompliancealert.com to your safe senders list to keep our safety updates out of your spam folder – and your company in the know.

What safety officers told us

Are you prepared for GHS changes?

How confident are you that you know all you need to about OSHA's new hazard communication rules?



Exclusive PBP survey of 368 safety pros

OSHA's transition to the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS) is rolling out in stages. Most safety pros say they are on top of it.

Each issue of SCA contains an exclusive survey to give safety professionals insight into what their peers nationwide are thinking and doing.

WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

Here's a challenging scenario you could encounter. We've asked three of your peers what they'd do. How would you handle it?

Workers rushing to finish job forget about safety: What would you do?

The Scenario

It was a sunny Wednesday morning, and Manager Mike Kelly was in a great mood. He headed to the shop to share some good news with one of the supervisors.

"Bill, have you seen these numbers?" Mike asked, "Production is way up!"

"That's great," Bill said. "Our guys have been really motivated lately."

"Why is that?" asked Mike.

"A few of them got bored one day and decided to make a race out of how fast they could get their jobs done and it's caught on," said Bill. "Top producers for the week get drinks after work on Fridays."

High numbers mean less safety

"I'm glad they are so self-motivated," said Mike with a laugh.

Suddenly, he frowned as he looked out at the floor.

"It looks like some of them aren't following proper safety procedure ... and I definitely see a bunch without proper PPE," said Mike.

"That's the downside," said Bill with a sigh. "Some of them are so focused on the win that safety goes right out of their minds."

"Have you said anything?" Mike asked.

"I reminded everyone in the meeting earlier this week that they need to follow protocol, but I don't know that it did much," Bill said. "I know it's important, but production and morale are really up, and I hate to throw a wrench into things."

"Better production is great," said Mike, "but I don't want them to compromise safety."

If you were Mike, what would you do in this situation, and why?

Reader Responses

1 Michael Humes, Maintenance Department Supervisor, Geary Community Hospital, Junction City, KS

What Michael would do: I'd sit the workers down and tell them doing the job safely is a condition of their employment. Otherwise, we need to find someone else who's up for the job.

Reason: Ultimately, higher production doesn't matter because if safety doesn't come first, what's the point of doing what you're doing?

2 Bobby Clinton, Port/Director of Compliance, McAllister Towing of VA Inc., Norfolk, VA

What Bobby would do: In my experience, rewards or bonuses for output caused a monumental decrease in safety practices. Accidents and

other safety related bonuses keep workers from reporting what they consider to be "small accidents." In Mike's case, the production reward is definitely working, however I would add this caveat: "Any worker that violates company safety policies to enhance their production for the competition, will not be eligible for the Friday night bonus."

3 Julie Clark, Safety and Training Coordinator, Millcreek Gardens LLC, Ostrander, OH

What Julie would do: Never reward with alcohol. Instead, I'd use workers' high morale to remind them of how their behavior could affect safety. Then, I'd ask them what other incentive would keep their interest.

Reason: In the end, safety trumps production because the cost of either fines or injuries are going to exceed bottom line production increases.

THE LIGHTER SIDE

THE WORST SNACKS TO EAT WHILE BEHIND THE WHEEL

You might be able to multitask, but eating these foods while driving might just be crossing the line.

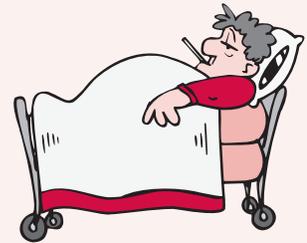
Here are the 10 most dangerous things to eat and drink while driving, according to one auto insurance company:

1. Coffee
2. Soup
3. Tacos
4. Chili dogs
5. Hamburgers
6. Ribs and wings
7. Fried chicken
8. Jelly donuts
9. Soda, and
10. Chocolate.

You might want to check what your drivers are taking from the company cafeteria ...

Did you know ...

The cost of the flu



Each flu season, nearly 111 million workdays are lost to the flu.

Source: Centers for Disease Control

Peak flu season is fast approaching. One of the best ways to keep the flu from spreading at your workplace: Tell sick workers to stay home (see *related story, Page 3*).

This feature in each issue of SCA charts trends in national workplace safety and health to help safety professionals perform their jobs.