



Personal Protective Equipment is in the Spotlight: Make sure the “Whole Program” is done!

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) has been a hot topic with the regulators for the last year or so, and is being looked at closely by OSHA—remember the fines are now “per employee” and not just simply one violation. EHS Associates takes care of most of the full program, but the final implementation and enforcement is up to you.

The PPE program is broken down into several steps, 1) Hazard Assessment, 2) Written Certifications, 3) Equipment Selection, 4) Employee Training, 5) Proper Equipment being used, and 5) Employer Enforcement all of which need to be addressed.

Hazard Assessment – EHS Associates spends hours determining which of your operations require the use of PPE (this is based on the operation, the chemicals being used, and the tools being used in the operation).

Written Certifications—Based on your assessments, a listing of the employee tasks requiring PPE is developed and signed by both the Department Manager and the affected employees.

If the employer (Department Manager) does not enforce the PPE Policy, the OSHA inspectors will assume the Policy does not exist and hand out citations accordingly.

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Equipment Selection – Based on your signed Certifications, EHS Associates assists you with proper protective equipment selection: which type(s) of respirators, gloves and safety glasses are adequate for your operations and chemical products, etc.

Employee Training – Based on the Certifications you sign, EHS Associates conducts training classes with the affected employees (those employees that are required to wear protective equipment).

Employer Enforcement – This is a major stumbling block. If you, the employer (Department Manager), does not enforce the PPE Policy, the OSHA inspectors will assume the Policy does not exist and hand out citations accordingly.

In conclusion; let us help you. We'll get the program put together. You ensure only the approved equipment is being used, and you ensure the equipment is worn during every situation it is required.

By us working together this way, fewer employee injuries will occur, and far less OSHA penalties will be paid.

Noncontact Electrical Tester Recalled by Fluke Due to Shock or Burn Hazard

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission announced a voluntary recall of the following consumer product. Consumers should stop using recalled products immediately unless otherwise instructed.

Name of Product: Fluke VoltAlert® Voltage Detector

Units: About 33,000

Manufacturer: Fluke Corporation, of Everett, Wash.

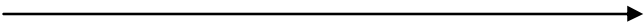
Hazard: The testers can fail to give an indication of live voltage, resulting in the operator falsely believing the electrical power is off, posing a risk of serious injury or death from electrical shock or thermal burns.

Incidents/Injuries: No injuries have been reported.

Description: The Fluke voltage testers look like a pen with a yellow, white and gray body. The testers measure 90 to 1000 volts alternating current (VAC). "Fluke" and the model number are printed on the front of each unit.



What's Wrong With This Picture?



Not a Good Idea for a Fire Extinguisher



Pray for no fires here!



Is this a Photo Shop creation?
I hate it now that I cannot trust any picture I see.



Finding The Root Cause is Elementary



I haven't seen the current Sherlock Holmes movie, but the trailers for the current movie reminded me of the famous detective's wonderful logic, which is, to paraphrase, "after you eliminate all the possibilities, whatever is left, no matter how improbable, is the answer."

Sherlock Holmes' logic is very similar to an incident investigation approach I've embraced: A cause-and-analysis methodology used to find the root cause(s) of any event, natural or otherwise. It's a brainstorming session where everyone involved – supervisors, department heads, vendors – put in their ideas. You get to the end when there are no more 'whys' to answer. It might be tedious, but it's very revealing!

Why We Should Consider the Improbable

Let's be honest now. How often do we spout the entire menu of potential hazards, but we're really just going through the motions? Sure, this or that might happen, but in our heart of hearts we're thinking, "no way!" Well, here are two examples of the improbable being the answer.

Case #1: Something Foul is Afoot

A while ago, an employee had very strong body odor, so I was asked if I could help. They said, "He claims he showers daily BUT..."

Well, I repeated the usual line: "Perhaps it's a health condition." But, of course, everyone was thinking it was hygiene (or lack of it).

However, I soon detected that the employee used company-supplied uniforms and appeared well-kempt otherwise. So I tactfully asked in a round-about way if he experienced any health problems. It turns out that, after a medical exam by his doctor, the employee learned he had an imbalance of some trace mineral in his system that created a strong body odor. A mineral additive soon eliminated the problem.

Case #2: A Curious Incident

Here's another similar case: An employee complained of a rash. He was sure it was caused by something at work, as it allegedly cleared up while he was on vacation. Yet all of his co-workers – many of whom had worked in the same area for far longer – were fine. The only chemicals he came in contact with were the usual auto industry culprits (MSDS's were reviewed). Even chemicals used by maintenance and janitorial staff were found to be innocent. So what was left? Was this another case of an 'off the job' condition being made into a Workers Comp issue?

It turns out that company-provided uniforms were once again in the mix. A check of the MSDS for the detergents used by the laundry service, with a follow-up to the employee's physician, solved the case. This employee was indeed one of those '1 in a 1,000,000' who was sensitive to an industrial detergent.

Conclusion

Can the culprit indeed be that one in a million rather than the obvious? Yes, it can! If you're trying to weed out the root cause of a workplace incident, remember the wise words of Sherlock Holmes: "It's elementary, my dear Watson. After you eliminate all the possibilities, whatever is left, no matter how improbable, is the answer."

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Public vs Private Sector: Which Is Safer?

The Bureau of Labor and Statistics (BLS) released safety statistics last month, comparing government (state and local) and private sector employees.

The report, *Nonfatal Occupational Injuries and Illnesses Requiring Days Away From Work*, features some sobering results: state and local governments combined for 277,680 cases of days away from work in 2008.

Moreover, state government had 170 cases of injuries and illnesses per 10,000 full-time employees, requiring a median of 8 days away from work to recover. Local government had 195, needing 9 days away from work to recuperate. Private sector workers had 113.



Actual Signs From Roadsides, Stores, and Restaurants.

ACCIDENTS ARE PROHIBITED

STOP
No Stopping Anytime

Slow Children
No Hunting

NO SOCCER
May Only Be Played On Archery Range

Accidents Are Prohibited On This Road

WATCH YOUR HEAD
Clearance 8'6"

Evacuation Instructions:
Alternate exit to the left
then right then left then
right then left to exit

Please do not sit on crocodile

From Richard Hawk—Safety Stuff

Bill Steps Up State Plan Oversight

A bill was recently introduced in the House of Representatives to give federal regulators more options when dealing with underperforming state plans. At present, federal OSHA can request improvements or terminate state plans. The first option doesn't offer federal OSHA enough leverage to push underperforming state plans to improve. The second option leaves workers unprotected until a new state plan is developed.

The bill, introduced by Rep. Dina Titus, D-Nev., would give OSHA more authority to require improvements and plans could continue operation while adhering to OSHA's requirements. In addition, the bill requires that state plans be audited every five years. The following states have their own workplace safety: California, Oregon, Washington.

It's interesting in that the Representative introducing this Bill for increased OSHA oversight is from a state that "does not" have a state OSHA plan in place—[not sure what to think about that one!](#)



Don't Let a Workplace Injury Mess with Your Head

Here are a few facts about traumatic brain injuries:

- Men experience twice as many brain injuries as women.
- People between the ages of 15 and 24 are at greatest risk for suffering a traumatic brain injury.
- Motor vehicle accidents account for 28 percent of traumatic brain injuries.
- Brain injuries account for about 34 percent of all injury deaths in the US.
- An estimated 45 percent of traumatic brain injuries occur as a result of falls.
- An estimated 62.3 out of 100,000 Americans ages 15 and older are living with functional impairments caused by a traumatic brain injury.

Brain injuries can occur in all industries, and can be caused by chemical exposure, lack of oxygen, being struck by falling or moving objects, electrical contact or falling.

These injuries can have catastrophic effects on your life and that of your family and friends. Mental and physical ability, emotional stability and personality can all change radically to the point where you are literally not the same person anymore.

Don't let a head injury tragedy happen to you or anyone you care about.



Safety Shorts Supplement

EHS Associates, Inc – Salem Oregon
Safety – Environmental Resource Group

Does The Media Harm Attempts at Workplace Safety?

One of those so-called reality shows takes too cavalier an attitude about safety, according to a blogger in the general media. If that's the case, we want to take the issue one step further: Do the media's messages harm attempts to increase workplace safety?

Marc Hirsh blogs on National Public Radio's Web site that CBS-TV's Survivor has been "dangling ... the prospect of people getting hurt as enticement to watch the show."

"I don't need safety equipment, that's for wimps"

The evidence he presents:

- A recent episode description: Injuries threaten to send two castaways home.
- The first injury took place just 17 minutes into the current season during the first round of the first challenge. Stephanie LaGrossa dislocated her shoulder.
- Host Jeff Probst's comment about LaGrossa: "We have our first injury."
- Later, Probst "gleefully" recounted the injuries suffered in the challenge.
- And all the challenges on Survivor happen without the safety equipment (PPE) required in professional sports — or in the workplace.

Hirsh also opines that "injuring yourself on the show stopped being a sign that you were stupid or clumsy or just plain doing something wrong and turned into a badge of honor."

So there you have it: bodily injury as a badge of honor mixed with an attitude of "come on, tough it out."

And that brings us to workplace safety. Have you ever encountered this situation? One worker, a "tough guy" with an "I-don't-need-safety-equipment-it's-for-wimps" attitude, discourages others from using PPE.

Unfortunately, safety pros tell us that type of worker isn't as rare as they'd like.

And, as the title of Hirsh's article puts it, it's "all fun and games until someone loses an eye."

How do you counter the "tough guy" attitude when it comes to getting employees to wear PPE and follow safety rules? Can we do better, at work and at home, to encourage better safety attitudes?

Extension Cords and Power Strips Recalled Due to Fire Hazard

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission announced a voluntary recall of the following products. Consumers should stop using recalled products immediately unless otherwise instructed.

Name of Product: Indoor and Outdoor Extension Cords and Power Strips

Manufacturer: Howard Berger Co. Inc., of Cranbury, N.J.

Hazard: The extension cords and power strips have inadequate coating material around the cords and copper conductors that are smaller than required, posing a fire hazard to consumers.

Incidents/Injuries: None reported.

Description: This recall involves Brightway heavy duty outdoor extension cords and Brightway indoor household extension cords and power strips. Model numbers involved in the recall are R2600 through R2615 (outdoor extension cords), EE6 through EE20 (indoor extension cords) and MP6DG (power strips). "Brightway" is printed on the cords. Model numbers are printed on the product's packaging.

Sold at: Hardware and discount stores nationwide from August 2009 through October 2009 for between \$1 and \$20.

Manufactured in: China

Remedy: Consumers should immediately stop using the extension cords and power strips and return them to the place of purchase for a full refund.

OSHA Recommends Higher Penalties and Improved Whistleblower Protections

Employers who ignore OSHA's rules and risk workers' lives should pay higher penalties, Assistant Secretary Michaels told Congress March 16. Michaels was on Capitol Hill giving testimony supporting the goals of the Protecting America's Workers Act. "Safe jobs exist only when employers have adequate incentives to comply with OSHA's requirements. Meaningful penalties provide an important incentive to do the right thing," said Michaels to the House Subcommittee on Workforce Protections.

For up-to-date
information, check our
web site at
<http://ehsassociates.com>

Nitrile Gloves

Here are two of the most requested Nitrile gloves we have in stock. Remember, from Longview to Eugene the delivery is free.



Black Nitrile gloves! Glove Plus high performance industrial grade 96-7 mil) black Nitrile gloves. Powder free and latex free. Glove Plus black Nitrile gloves provide superior comfort and strength. We typically have size Large (most common) and XL in stock with a few Medium.

List Price \$13.02 **Your Cost \$6.30**



3mil Nitrile for light duty applications like light industrial applications and automotive service. Xtreme X3 sets the standard for 3mil gloves by utilizing thin wall technology for exceptional dexterity. We typically have size Large (most common) and XL in stock with a few Medium.

List Price \$8.50 **Your Cost \$5.00**

Crews Klondike Glare Reduction Lt Blue Lenses Black Frame



Order # EHS 449
Price: \$ 3.15

Radnor 1300 Series Single Lens Eyewear Clear Lens, Anti-Fog

Order # EHS 338
Price: \$4.58



Crews CheckMate Glasses
Clear Lens No Frame, Anti-Fog

Order # EHS 434
Price: \$ 3.20



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