OHBA Safety Pages: Safe Driving - Back to School

School days bring congestion: yellow school buses are picking up their charges, kids on bikes are hurrying to get to school before the bell rings, harried parents are trying to drop their kids off before work.

It's never more important for drivers to slow down and pay attention than when kids are present – especially before and after school.

If You're Dropping Off

Schools often have very specific drop-off procedures for the school year. Make sure you know them for the safety of all kids. More children are hit by cars near schools than at any other location, according to the National Safe Routes to School program. The following apply to all school zones:

- Don't double park; it blocks visibility for other children and vehicles
- Don't load or unload children across the street from the school
- Carpool to reduce the number of vehicles at the school

Sharing the Road with School Buses

If you're driving behind a bus, allow a greater following distance than if you were driving behind a car. It will give you more time to stop once the yellow lights start flashing. It is illegal in all 50 states to pass a school bus that has stopped to load or unload children.

- Never pass a bus from behind – or from either direction if you're on an undivided road – if it is stopped to load or unload children.
- If the yellow or red lights are flashing and the stop arm is extended, traffic must stop.
- The area 10 feet around a school bus is the most dangerous for children; stop far enough back to allow them space to safely enter and exit the bus.
- Be alert; children often are unpredictable, and they tend to ignore hazards and take risks without thinking.

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SAFETY PAGE MEETING GUIDE Topic: Safe Driving – Back to School

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Supervisor's remarks: _____

Supervisor: _____ _ _____

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OHBA Safety Pages: Noise & Hearing Loss

Our hearing is precious to us. Once we diminish or lose our hearing, we can never fully recover it. Both on the job and at home there are many sources of noise which can damage our hearing. These sounds can damage sensitive structures in the inner ear and cause noise-induced hearing loss (NIHL). Approximately 26 million Americans have some type of noise-induced hearing loss. According to the CDC, over 22 million workers are exposed to hazardous noise levels at work each year. Occupational hearing loss is one of the most common workplace injuries today in the United States.

How the Ear is Damaged from Noise

Hearing depends on a series of events that change sound waves in the air into electrical signals. Our auditory nerve then carries these signals to the brain through a complex series of steps. To breakdown the process simply- the sound waves travel through the ear and eventually move hair cells up and down in the ear that cause channels to open. This allows chemicals to rush into a cell that creates an electrical signal that translates the sound into something we can understand.

Most noise-induced hearing loss is caused by the damage and eventual death of these hair cells. Unlike bird and amphibian hair cells, human hair cells don't grow back. They are gone for good.

Signs and Symptoms of Noise Induced Hearing Loss

Most damage due to noise is gradual and over time. Because of this, many people ignore or do not realize that their hearing is being damaged. It becomes noticeable to an individual when it is harder to understand someone talking or needing to turn the TV volume up.

Damage can also occur from a single loud impulse noise such as a gunshot or explosion. These types of noises can rupture the eardrum or damage the bones in the middle ear. This kind of NIHL can be immediate and permanent. Loud noise exposure can also cause tinnitus—a ringing, buzzing, or roaring in the ears or head. Tinnitus may subside over time but can sometimes continue constantly or occasionally throughout a person's life. Hearing loss and tinnitus can occur in one or both ears. Sometimes temporary hearing loss can subside, however the event that caused it can still cause long term damage to your hearing.

Hearing Damage Prevention

- The best way to protect yourself is to eliminate exposure to the noise. That can be achieved by removing yourself from the area the noise is in or eliminating the excessive noise altogether.
- Engineering controls are the second-best choice in protection from noise. Sound barriers, enclosures, and noise dampening systems are examples of engineering controls that will bring down the level of noise in an area.
- Administrative controls such as training on using hearing protection, job rotation, breaks, and routine maintenance programs are some ways that protect workers from being exposed to hazardous noise.
- PPE is the last line of defense. It is important to know the levels of noise that remain after applying the other techniques mentioned above. For noises between 85 decibels and 100 decibels on an 8 hour TWA, ear plugs will be enough to protect you if worn correctly. Over 100 decibels requires double hearing protection, an example is earplugs and earmuffs.

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OHBA Safety Pages: Emergency Preparedness

Are You Ready for a Disaster?

National Preparedness Month, sponsored by the Federal Emergency Management Agency and held annually in September, is a good reminder that natural and man-made disasters can strike at any time. It's important to have a planned response when you're at work, on vacation or on the road.

Over the last few years, weather-related deaths are up 35% from 2017, while the number of weather events have increased 7% and injuries have decreased 15%. In 2021, 61,105 weather events resulted in 974 deaths and 1,667 injuries. Winter weather, heat, and floods were responsible for the most deaths during 2021. The largest number of reported injuries resulted from tornadoes, winter weather, and high winds (including thunderstorm winds). The most deadly weather events in the United States over the past few years include Hurricane Irma, the 2021 drought and heat wave, and the California wildfires.

The National Safety Council offers safety tips specific to each of the following emergencies:

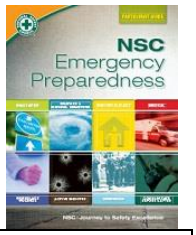
- Earthquake, Flood, Hurricane, and Tornado

Federal agencies, like Ready.gov, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, also are valuable resources for emergency preparedness. When you face a natural or man-made emergency, try to stay informed through radio, TV or the Internet. In some cases, however, cable, electric and cell phone service will be disabled, making communication nearly impossible. The National Safety Council recommends the following general precautions that apply to many disaster situations:

- Make sure to have a family/employee communication plan in place; all members of the family or employees should review and practice the plan.
- Have all family members', employees' and other important phone numbers written down or memorized.
- Have an emergency kit in your car and at least three days of food and water at home
- Be sure to store all important documents – birth certificates, insurance policies, etc. – in a fire-proof safe or safety deposit box.
- Assign at least one family member or employee (preferably many) the responsibility of learning first aid and CPR.
- Know how to shut off utilities.

Workplace Emergency Preparedness Training

From weather-related issues to active shooters, it's critical for employees to know what to do before, during and after an emergency.



Visit https://www.nsc.org/home-safety/safety-topics/emergency-preparedness for tips, plans, and training materials.

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OHBA Safety Pages: Portable Cement Mixer Safety

Construction machinery frequently has pinch and nip point hazards including gears, belts, chain drives, sprockets, and rotating parts. Portable cement mixers can be hazardous due to the rotating mixing drum or rotating paddles inside the drum. A body part can be caught between the rotating drum and a stationary part of the mixer. Electrical power can also be a potential hazard.

Recommended Safe Practices Prior to Use

- Observe work area conditions. Work areas should be clear of debris and obstructions which could cause the operator to slip, trip or fall into the mixer. The cement mixer should be on a flat and level surface to prevent tipping, rolling, or falling. Do not use it in wet locations.
- Dress properly. Do not wear loose clothing or jewelry as they can be caught in moving parts. Wear proper Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and wear restrictive hair covering to contain long hair.
- Check for wear and damaged parts. Before using, check to determine that the mixer will operate properly. Any broken or missing parts must be repaired or replaced before using. Check for proper machine guarding and ensure the electrical power cord is in good condition. Have Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter protection when using an electric powered mixer outdoors or in damp locations to prevent a shock/fire hazard. Do not use a cement mixer if it is not in proper working order.
- For gas powered mixers, always shut off the engine before fueling. Be aware of hot exhaust and do not use gas powered mixer indoors as carbon monoxide may accumulate and cause a atmospheric breathing hazard.

Recommended Safe Practices During Use

- Make sure all tools and other equipment are removed from the cement mixer prior to turning it on.
- The cement mixer should be rotating when filling or emptying the mixer.
- Do not overload the mixer. An overload could damage the mixer.
- Never leave the mixer running unattended.
- Do not move the cement mixer during operation. The mixer could tip over or the motor could be damaged.
- When transporting the mixer, disconnect the power cord or shut off the engine and make sure the drum is empty of all material.
- Keep guards in place during operation.
- Only use accessories that are recommended by the manufacturer.
- Disconnect the power or shut off the engine from the mixer and place the switch in the locked or off position before servicing, adjusting, installing accessories or attachments. Such preventive safety measures reduce the risk of starting the cement mixer accidentally.
- Practice environmental pollution control procedures by cleaning the mixer in a designated area where concrete and rinse water can be contained so they do not pollute storm drains or surface water.

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OHBA Safety Pages: Housekeeping

The lack of proper housekeeping on the job is one safety hazard common to all construction sites and manufacturing shops. Good housekeeping is one item that can help improve not only the safety on the job, but also the morale and productivity of the job.

- Helps to limit potential of slips, trips and falls from spills or cluttered floor or ground areas.
- Increases production and efficiency of the operation. Time is not spent maneuvering over or around someone else's mess or looking for proper tools and materials.
- Helps to prevent a fire that could cause an injury and/or shut down the job site.
- Creates a good "first impression" of workplace environment and reflects well on the quality of work.
- Keep scrap lumber with protruding nails separate from other debris; bend nails over or remove from lumber.
- Keep all waste debris in neat piles and away from the immediate work area.
- Store materials only in their designated areas.
- Place trash barrels where needed to eliminate food and other lunch debris.
- Keep tools and equipment stored neatly.
- Keep extension cords from being trip hazards. If necessary, run them overhead; same applies to air compressor hoses.
- Don't let trash and debris build up. If it does, make an extra effort to get it cleaned up.

Good Housekeeping Can:

- Help to prevent minor injuries like cuts, punctures, and slivers.
- Help prevent major accidents like slips, trips, falls and fires.
- Also help to prevent strains and sprains from not having to lift, push or pull material or equipment from around or over debris.

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