

August 3, 2020

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SAFETY NEWS ALERT

Safety News Alert, part of the Catalyst Media Network, keeps safety pros up to date on the latest OSHA news, safety training ideas, workers' comp cases and injury cases from other companies. Read what more than 334,000 safety pros turn to regularly for occupational safety information. Safety News Alert's editorial staff is lead by veteran Editor-in-Chief Fred Hosier.

Top causes of workplace injuries costing employers \$1B a week

■ Report shows falls, strains are big financial burden

The top 10 causes of workplace injuries – such as slips, trips and falls, and strains from lifting heavy objects – are costing U.S. businesses more than \$1 billion per week, according to a new report from Liberty Mutual Insurance.

Disabling workplace injuries cost employers \$59 billion per year with the top 10 causes making up 89% or \$52.93 billion of the total cost burden, the report states.

Obviously, getting these top causes under control could keep employees from getting hurt while saving the company a great deal of money.

The annual report is based on information collected by Liberty Mutual, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and National Academy of Social Insurance on the top causes of the most serious workplace injuries – those that cause employees to miss work for more than five days.

The top 5

The 2020 Workplace Safety Index names these causes as the top five:

1. Overexertion involving outside sources, costing \$13.98 billion per year and accounting for 23.5% of the overall national burden.

(Please see Top causes ... on Page 2)

COURT DECISION

Lawsuit dismissed despite missing safety precautions

The family of a worker who drowned in a cooling tower can't proceed with a lawsuit despite allegations the employer knew required safety precautions were missing for weeks before the incident.

A three-man crew with HydroChem PSC was sent to service a cooling tower at a Phillips 66 refinery where one worker slipped and fell into the tower's water basin and drowned.

The worker's family and one co-worker filed a lawsuit, claiming several safety precautions had been ignored, including:

- safety lighting which was turned off
- walking surfaces caked in slippery, oily fluids, and
- missing hard barriers, railings and grates.

A district court dismissed the case over insufficient evidence of an

intentionally wrongful act, and the state supreme court agreed, denying an appeal.

Allegations show 'intentional act'

However, one judge dissented, reasoning that what constitutes an intentional act in conjunction with the allegations presented was enough for the case to go forward.

The lawsuit claims both companies made a deliberate decision to "omit common sense safety precautions – required by OSHA – and then operated for several weeks making it substantially certain that death or serious injury would occur."

Because the companies deliberately violated safety standards, the judge said the facts were sufficient to establish an intentionally wrongful act, so he felt the suit should proceed.

SEVERE VIOLATOR

Contractor owes OSHA millions in fines

An appeals court ordered coercive sanctions June 5 against the owner of two Florida-based contractors that were previously found in contempt of court for failing to pay more than \$2 million in OSHA fines.

Travis Slaughter and his companies, Great White Construction Inc. and Florida Roofing Experts, were previously held in civil contempt by the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals and ordered to pay outstanding penalties of \$2,202,049.

Slaughter's companies are in OSHA's Severe Violator Enforcement Program, having been investigated 19 times in the last seven years, resulting in 42 citations related to improper fall protection, ladder use and eye protection.

Willful violations continue

The court also required Slaughter to certify he and his companies corrected the violations OSHA inspectors found at several worksites, according to a Department of Labor news release.

However, Slaughter – who has since been fined an additional \$1,007,717 by OSHA for egregious willful violations found at several more Florida worksites – has not complied, leading to the court's order for coercive sanctions.

Failure to comply could lead to jail time or "other relief" deemed proper.

Top causes ...

(continued from Page 1)

2. Falls on the same level, costing \$10.84 billion per year and 18.2% of the burden.
3. Being struck by an object or equipment, costing \$6.12 billion per year and 10.3% of the burden.
4. Falls to a lower level, costing \$5.71 billion per year and 9.6% of the burden.
5. Awkward postures – including bending, reaching, twisting, climbing, crawling, kneeling, sitting, standing, walking and running – costing \$4.69 billion per year and 7.9% of the burden.

These injury causes account for 69.5% of the total cost burden employers bear.

The final 5

The remaining five causes, listed below, make up 19.5% of the total cost burden:

6. Vehicle crashes, costing \$3.56 billion per year.
7. Slips or trips without a fall, costing \$2.06 billion per year.
8. Repetitive motions involving microtasks, costing \$2.05 billion per year.
9. Colliding with objects, costing \$2 billion per year.
10. Running equipment or machinery, costing \$1.92 billion per year.

Causes were ranked by their direct cost to employers based on medical and lost-wage expenses, and for the sake of accuracy, the index is based on data from three years prior, so the 2020 index reflects 2017 data.

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.

COMPANY TO BLAME FOR DISREGARD OF SAFETY RULES?

Safety Manager Pete Travers walked into Attorney John Jenkins' office.

"Hey there, John," Pete said.

"Can you look over this citation we got from OSHA?" John mumbled through his mask, getting straight to the point.

John handed over the envelope as he offered Pete some hand sanitizer.

Pete looked over the citation, obviously annoyed by what he read.

"The four workers the inspector caught not wearing their fall PPE were disciplined for the exact same thing once before, about a year ago," Pete said. "They went through the same training as everyone else, so there's no excuse for this."

'Two strikes and you're out'

"You followed the company's strict disciplinary policy, right?" asked John.

"Absolutely. It's a 'two strikes and you're out' kind of deal, and we stick by it," Pete said, making the umpire's classic "you're out" gesture.

"Since they were caught once before, I take it they've been fired for the second offense?" John asked.

"Yes, they were fired, as per our disciplinary policy," Pete said.

"This is a clear case of unpreventable employee misconduct, so we should have no problem fighting this citation," John said.

Pete's company fought the citation. Did it win?

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

SAFETY COMPLIANCE Alert

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COURT CASE

Why did comp bill go up 50%?

■ COMPANY'S SAFETY VIOLATION NETS EXTRA BENEFITS FOR WORKER

An injured machine operator is entitled to enhanced workers' comp benefits because his employer didn't provide easy access to a shut-off on his side of the machine, according to a state appeals court.

The Ohio Court of Appeals upheld a decision finding the worker, who was pressure testing pipes, was acting as a machine operator, not a test hand.

Two workers required

John Roush worked for U.S. Tubular Products and was assigned to run a diesel powered hydro tester, a machine that pressure tests pipes for leaks.

Two workers were required to perform the tests, so Roush was joined by another employee, Phil Dronso.

Roush and Dronso stood at opposite ends of the pipe where they both had duties to perform.

Dronso, at the north end, attached a hose and ran water into the pipe, while Roush closed a valve at the south.

Power for the hydro tester was on

the instrument panel, on the north end, along with the pressure valve, both well out of Roush's reach.

After closing the valve, Roush retreated to a marked safety zone 20 feet away, but returned when he thought Dronso signaled him to do so.

While Roush was near the pipe, it blew off at the north side, hurtling the pipe into him and causing extensive injuries.

'Test hand' or operator?

Roush received enhanced workers' compensation benefits because his injury was caused by his employer's failure to comply with a regulation which says a "means shall be provided at each machine, within easy reach of the operator, for disengaging it from its power supply."

U.S. Tubular appealed, claiming Roush was a test hand who wasn't operating the machine.

The appeals court found Roush was assigned to work at the hydro tester so was considered an operator, and because of that, a violation existed since there was no means to shut the machine down from his side.

CORONAVIRUS

More at risk of COVID-19 than previously thought

More Americans are now considered at higher risk of contracting severe COVID-19, according to an updated and expanded list released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Older adults in general – not just those ages 65 and older – are now considered as having a greater risk of contracting the coronavirus, and the agency has added more underlying medical conditions that could also increase risk of getting the disease.

Expanded list of medical conditions

After reviewing published reports and other data sources, the CDC expanded the list of underlying medical conditions that could make

individuals more prone to contracting severe COVID-19 symptoms.

Consistent evidence from multiple studies found the following conditions increase a person's risk of severe COVID-19, regardless of age:

- chronic kidney disease
- chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- obesity, which is a body mass index of 30 or higher
- immunocompromised from solid organ transplant
- serious heart conditions
- sickle cell disease, and
- type 2 diabetes.

An estimated 60% of American adults have at least one of these conditions, according to the CDC.

TRENDS TO WATCH

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

■ VOLUNTARY ABANDONMENT CLEARLY DEFINED IN COMP

The governor of Ohio, Mike DeWine, signed a bill into law that provides clear guidance on employee voluntary abandonment in regard to workers' compensation claims.

"If an employee is unable to work or suffers a wage loss as the direct result of an impairment arising from an injury or occupational disease, the employee is entitled to receive compensation ... provided the employee is otherwise qualified," House Bill 81 reads.

However, "If an employee is not working or has suffered a wage loss as the direct result of reasons unrelated to the allowed injury or occupational disease, the employee is not eligible to receive compensation."

This law supersedes all previous judicial decisions on claims involving voluntary abandonment.

■ CORONAVIRUS EMERGENCY STANDARD INCOMING?

Virginia could be the first state to implement an emergency safety standard to address worker safety during the coronavirus pandemic.

The state's health and safety board voted 9-3 to agree to create the workplace safety rules based on an emergency temporary standard drafted by the Department of Labor and Industry under Governor Ralph Northam's direction.

New rules under the standard would force companies to notify workers of possible exposure to infected co-workers within 24 hours, while also mandating physical distancing, sanitation, disinfection and hand-washing procedures, according to the *Washington Post*.

The proposed standard is being opposed by many businesses and industry groups.

Roundup of most recent OSHA citations

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

Fatal fall at construction site: \$138K OSHA fine

OSHA fined an Alabama roofing contractor for exposing employees to fall hazards after an employee fatally fell at a worksite.

OSHA conducted the inspection as part of the Regional Emphasis Program on Falls in Construction.

Fine: \$138,118

Company: Elmer Julio Perez, Mobile, AL

Business: Roofing contractor

Reasons for fine:

One willful violation for failure to:

- provide fall protection systems for employees working 6 feet above lower levels

Two other-than-serious violations for failure to:

- report employee death within 8 hours
- report work-related injury within 24 hours

Amputation hazards lead to \$259K OSHA fine

OSHA cited a New Jersey shipping supplies manufacturer for failing to abate hazards after an employee's fingers were amputated by a machine.

In June 2019, the company was cited when the employee attempted to clear a jammed machine, resulting in the amputation of their fingers.

Following the citation, the company agreed to correct hazards relating to its lack of a lockout/tagout program, but inspectors performing a follow-up inspection found the company didn't take the measures it claimed it would.

Fine: \$259,760

Company: Bravo Pack Inc., Pennsauken, NJ

Business: Packing and crating

Reasons for fine:

Three failure-to-abate violations for failure to:

- establish procedures for energy control programs

- provide methods for machine guarding
- provide point-of-operation guard to protect employees in machine area

Company fined \$404K for process safety violations

An Alaska pipeline company is facing citations for 38 serious violations from the state's Occupational Safety and Health Section for violating worker and process safety rules.

The inspection was the result of a complaint Alaska OSH received Dec. 3, 2019, and led to citations involving noise exposure, process safety management of highly hazardous materials, hazard communication and respiratory protection.

Fine: \$404,602

Company: Alyeska Pipeline Service Company, Valdez, AK

Business: Pipeline transportation of crude oil

Reasons for fine:

38 serious violations, including failure to:

- establish and maintain audiometric testing programs
- develop written plan of action for implementation of employee participation in process safety management
- provide employees access to process hazard analyses and other required process safety management information
- review operating procedures to assure they reflect current operating practice, and certify annually they are current and accurate
- inspect process equipment with frequency consistent with manufacturer recommendations
- investigate no later than 48 hours following incidents
- identify and evaluate respiratory hazards in workplace
- provide employees with effective training on hazardous chemicals in work areas
- inform contract employers of known potential fire, explosion or toxic release hazards

WORKERS' COMP DECISIONS

Injured doing task he didn't want to do: Benefits?

A worker who requested not to work a specific assignment claimed he fell and hurt his back while performing the task. Can he collect?

What happened: The worker asked multiple times to be reassigned to another area after the job he was assigned to caused neck and back stress. While working in that area, he claimed he was injured in a fall.

Company's reaction: We don't believe your injury is related to your employment.

Decision: No, he couldn't collect. Despite a large amount of conflicting evidence, the court found the worker failed to prove he suffered a compensable injury.

Cite: *Lewis v. Windsor Windows & Doors*, IA Court of Appeals, No. 19-0576, 1/23/20.

Incapacitated after years of doing same tasks: Benefits?

A worker was permanently incapacitated after 18 years of performing the same tasks repeatedly. Can she collect?

What happened: A cafeteria worker sustained injuries to her hands, wrists and shoulders from 18 years of doing the same tasks. She was found to be permanently incapacitated, so she applied for disability retirement benefits.

Company's reaction: The working conditions at our facility aren't an occupational hazard.

Decision: She could collect. The risk caused by the environment was not common to employment in general, so the court said she was entitled to benefits.

Cite: *Quel v. Board of Trustees of the Employees' Retirement System of the State of Hawaii*, Hawaii Supreme Court, No. SWC-16-0000355, 2/6/20.

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 Trust: Honor Other People's Experiences

One of the keys to building a great safety culture is to trust the people on your team.

How do you do that? Remember the acronym HOPE: Honor Other People's Experiences.

Your experiences and their experiences will be different. The experiences among the people on your team will all be different.

So, when someone tells you a problem or what's going on, they're not complaining – they're communicating.

Here's an example from my experience:

Can I get a larger hard hat?

Sometimes when I visit a site and wasn't told to bring a hard hat, I will need a larger one than provided due to the volume of my hair.

Nine times out of ten instead of getting me a larger hard hat, someone will explain to me the hat's ratchet and how to adjust its size.

I'm a safety professional. I know how to adjust a hard hat.

And I know from my personal experience that

I need a larger one to protect my head properly.

This is an example of someone not honoring my experience.

The take-home: When someone tells you about a problem, take it at face value.

Employees often know how to fix things. You have to listen to them to benefit from their experiences.

(Adapted from a session by Lindsay Bell, Regional Health and Safety Manager, Solway S.A., Baltimore, at ASSP's Safety 2020)

**REAL
PROBLEMS,
REAL
SOLUTIONS**

2 How to deliver bad news to corporate

Early in my career, I worked for a company at this facility that was known for under-performing.

We received a mandate from corporate involving installing strobe lights and beepers on every industrial truck and vehicle in our massive fleet within a short amount of time.

As we got deeper into doing this job, I realized doing this exactly as told would lead to additional hazards and compliance problems with OSHA.

In a meeting to update corporate,

I began highlighting these problems, until one of our leaders said, "I'm hearing all the reasons you can't get it done, but I still haven't heard you explain how you're just going to do it."

Keep it concise, have solutions

This led to an "aha" moment for me.

Leaders have a lot on their minds. A lot is expected of them, and they have a lot of metrics they're measuring, forcing them to take the 30,000 foot view. If you're not careful, they can inadvertently focus

on the wrong thing.

The presentation I gave got too down in the weeds, explaining all the OSHA citations and risk ratings – that's not helpful when you're looking for leadership support.

Instead, keep it concise, addressing problems and any proposed solutions you may have.

Afterward, I changed tactics, and corporate used the solutions I proposed at several other locations.

(Bryce Griffler, Safety, Health and Environmental Manager, BAE Systems, York, PA, at ASSP's Safety 2020)

3 Leading indicators that you're already counting

When it comes to implementing a program to measure leading safety indicators, one of the companies the Campbell Institute worked with, Cummins, found they spent too much time in the initial stage of researching and developing a plan.

Cummins found, during the time they spent in development, they could have been tracking and measuring leading indicators.

They ultimately decided to start small with measuring safety

assessments and preventive actions. Then they added more measurements as they went along.

Start small, add more later

One of the measurements they added was hours spent on safety and health training compared to hours worked.

Cummins found this to be a leading indicator that correlated to how well they were doing with safety.

Something else they do to this day is evaluate the leading indicators they've chosen to measure to see if there's a correlation with lagging

safety indicators (number of injuries).

The lesson learned about leading indicators: Companies can start small and add more metrics to your measurement program later.

There are probably already things you're measuring, like number of safety assessments, preventive actions, etc., that you can already correlate with how your safety program is doing overall (preventing injuries).

(Joy Inouye, Research Associate, Campbell Institute, Itasca, IL, at the Virtual AIHce EXP 2020)

REGULATORY AGENDA

OSHA regulations up for review, revisions in first 2020 agenda

OSHA has listed 24 regulations for review in its first Regulatory Agenda of 2020.

Standards covering cranes and derricks, beryllium, forklifts, silica and workplace violence are on the agenda.

Here's a breakdown by stage in the regulatory process:

Final rules

These are among the standards which are closest to the finish line for revisions:

Exposure to beryllium, review general industry provisions: The revisions OSHA proposes are to clarify the standard in response to comments. OSHA is reviewing comments received.

Occupational exposure to beryllium and beryllium compounds in construction and shipyard sectors: Exposure to construction and shipyards occurs almost entirely during abrasive blasting and welding. The proposal would tailor the requirements for construction and shipyards to those exposures.

OSHA access to employee medical records: OSHA's regulation 1913.10 includes procedures for OSHA personnel when obtaining and using personally identifiable employee

medical information. OSHA has identified several needed revisions.

Proposed rules

OSHA is working on revisions to these standards, but they're further away from completion:

Amendments to the Cranes and Derricks in Construction Standard: This would make various clarifications to the standard. Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) scheduled July 2020.

Update to Hazard Communication Standard: This would harmonize the HCS to the latest edition of the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labeling of Chemicals. NPRM scheduled August 2020.

Powered industrial trucks: OSHA will develop a proposed rule updating the consensus standard of the American National Standard B56.1 to the 2016 version. NPRM scheduled December 2020.

Lockout/tagout update: OSHA would take into account recent technology advances that use computer-based controls of hazardous energy and make changes to its existing lockout/tagout standard. NPRM scheduled April 2021.

Exposure to crystalline silica, revisions to Table 1 for construction: OSHA is interested in control measures, tasks and tools, and dust control methods not addressed in Table 1, Specified Exposure Control Methods When Working with Materials Containing Crystalline Silica. NPRM scheduled March 2021.

Welding in construction confined spaces: OSHA wants to eliminate any ambiguity about the definition of confined space that applies to welding in construction. NPRM scheduled July 2020.

Drug Testing Program and Safety Incentives Rule: OSHA proposes to make official its position that its regulations don't prohibit post-incident drug testing or safety incentive programs. NPRM scheduled November 2020.

Personal protective equipment in construction: This revision would clarify the requirement for the fit of PPE in construction. NPRM scheduled August 2020.

Walking working surfaces: OSHA has received feedback indicating that several regulatory provisions of the 2016 final rule on Walking-Working Surfaces are unclear. NPRM June 2020.

SHARPEN YOUR JUDGMENT – THE DECISION

(see case on Page 2)

Yes, the company won. The court found there was sufficient evidence of unpreventable employee misconduct in the actions of the four workers caught without their PPE.

The company claimed each of the four employees was thoroughly trained on fall hazards and how to avoid them thanks to its detailed safety program.

And evidence was provided showing the same four employees had been previously disciplined for a similar occurrence only a year earlier, and were fired after the recent incident.

OSHA argued the company's training was too vague and didn't clearly address when fall protection was needed.

The court found the company's detailed fall prevention

program was clear enough and its documented disciplinary action was sufficient proof the four workers disregarded their training.

■ ANALYSIS: DOCUMENTING DISCIPLINARY ACTION

This case demonstrates just how important it is to maintain documented proof of disciplinary action – without it, this company would have had no proof of the workers' disregard of their safety training.

The company's well-documented disciplinary program provided evidence the employees were caught disregarding the rules in the past, disciplined and ultimately fired when they failed to conform.

Cite: *Secretary of Labor v. Outfront Media Inc.*, Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission, No. 17-2202, 5/4/20. 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.

RESPIRABLE CRYSTALLINE SILICA

OSHA's compliance officers received a [new directive June 25 regarding uniformity in inspection and enforcement procedures for addressing respirable crystalline silica exposure](#).

Enforcement of most provisions of the construction standard for respirable crystalline silica began in September 2017, and for general industry and maritime in June 2018, according to an OSHA news release.

Some medical surveillance requirements began to be enforced beginning June 23, 2020, and enforcement of engineering control requirements for hydraulic fracturing operations in the oil and gas industries will begin June 23, 2021.

The new directive tells inspectors how to address:

- methods of compliance
- tasks included in Table 1 of the standard
- exposure assessments
- housekeeping
- respiratory protection
- regulated areas
- recordkeeping
- employee information and training
- medical surveillance, and
- communication of hazards.

Info: Check our website for more.

DRIVING WHILE FATIGUED

A fatal seven-vehicle crash is proof issues such as fatigue and lack of collision avoidance systems must be addressed, according to a federal agency.

A National Transportation Safety Board [report on the crash calls out three safety issues that led to the incident which are included on the agency's Most Wanted List: medical fitness for duty, fatigue and lack of collision avoidance systems](#).

The incident occurred when a

commercial tractor-trailer struck an automobile that slowed down due to traffic congestion in the roadway ahead.

This caused a rear-end collision which led to a chain of crashes involving two other large trucks and three more cars, killing one person and injuring five others, according to an NTSB news release.

Investigators found the driver of the commercial truck was likely fatigued due to an untreated sleep disorder, so failed to slow down in time to avoid the collision.

Driver fatigue could've been addressed following an in depth medical certification evaluation process, something the NTSB has recommended on its Most Wanted List.

The Most Wanted List outlines 10 issue areas serving as the agency's road map for safety recommendations that if implemented have the potential to prevent crashes and save lives.

Forward collision avoidance systems have also been suggested on the list, which the agency feels should be standardized and installed on all new passenger and commercial vehicles.

Info: Check our website for more.

TRANSPORTATION REGULATIONS

Bulk transportation of liquified natural gas can now be done via railroad thanks to a June 19 final rule.

The rule, filed jointly by the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration and Federal Railroad Administration, [permits bulk transportation in tank cars with enhanced outer tank requirements and additional operational controls](#).

This rule "carefully lays out key operational safeguards to provide for the safe transportation of LNG by rail to more parts of the country where this energy source is needed," according to a PHMSA news release.

The final rule incorporates new safety requirements, such as enhanced thicker carbon steel outer tanks for DOT 113 tank cars, as well as remote monitoring of the pressure and location of those cars.

WHERE TO GET HELP

NEW ALERT PREPARES FACILITIES FOR HURRICANES

The U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board issued a safety alert and video with guidance meant to help hazardous chemical facilities better prepare for extreme weather events, such as hurricanes.

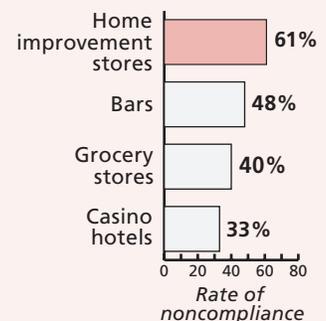
This alert and video are a result of the CSB investigation into the Aug. 31, 2017, fire at the Arkema Chemical Plant in Crosby, TX, which was caused by heavy rains from Hurricane Harvey.

The investigation found a significant lack of industry guidance on planning for flooding or other severe weather events, and resulted in a call on the Center for Chemical Process Safety to produce this safety alert and video.

For links to the alert and video, please visit the [Safety Compliance Alert](#) website.

What safety pros say

Which businesses have the highest rate of noncompliance with state face covering mandates?



Source: Nevada Department of Business and Industry

Nevada OSHA found 85% of businesses in the northern part of the state were in compliance, while only 65% complied in the south.

Info: tinyurl.com/masks600

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?

Employees are having problems wearing their masks during heatwave

The Scenario

Wow it's a hot one today, Manager Mike Kelly thought as he walked through the warehouse.

He was keeping his eyes open for coronavirus-related issues – social distancing is something that can be so hard to keep in mind for some people – along with the usual warehouse hazards.

It's getting way too hot in here, Mike thought. We need more ventilation, and I need to make sure we get some hydration stations going, as well.

"Hey, Mike!" Jason Marks, one of the warehouse material handlers, called out through his cloth face mask. "We got a problem!"

Oh no! Mike thought. Now what?

"What's wrong, Jason?" Mike asked, noting the sweat streaming down Jason's face.

"I can't take this mask, Mike," Jason said. "It's hot, and I can't breathe."

'They're taking their masks off'

Mike noticed a hint of panic in Jason's voice, and he realized the man really was having problems with the mask.

Previously, the company had made sure to check with workers about health problems that could interfere with wearing masks, but Jason never had a problem with them before.

"I'm not the only one having problems," Jason explained. "Some of the guys are saying they can't wear their masks in this kind of heat, and they're taking them off."

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

Reader Responses

1 Stephen Davies, QA Manager, LND Inc., Oceanside, NY

What Stephen would do: I've been wearing a gaiter since returning to work. It's cooler and less restrictive than a regular mask. The company Mission makes a gaiter that can be dampened with water and actually has a cooling effect.

Reason: Keep in mind, gaiters are not N95 respirators, nor are they surgical masks, but they do offer some protection to aerosol particles.

2 Dan Incardone, Director of General Services, Amboy Bank, Old Bridge, NJ

What Dan would do: You could split the work force to take more frequent breaks and let them uncover their noses to breathe better.

Reason: You could also supply bottled water to allow them to cool off and hydrate.

3 Dale Perry, EH&S Manager, Gene Frederickson Trucking, Kaukauna, WI

What Dale would do: Do away with the masks, and use an inexpensive flip down face shield made of light plastic.

Reason: Face shields are more user friendly and provide more room to breathe while still protecting you from others.

4 Roy McConnel, H&S Coordinator, Veolia North America, Johns Creek, GA

What Roy would do: I'd use masks only if they didn't create an additional hazard.

Reason: Bandannas or cooling towels could be used instead of masks.

OUTSIDE THE LINES

5-YEAR-OLD DRIVER JUST WANTED TO BUY NEW CAR

A state trooper pulled over a car being driven by a 5-year-old boy.

That's not the beginning of a joke, but something that actually happened in Utah after the officer saw the car moving slowly and weaving around in the left lane of Interstate 15.

The trooper turned on his siren, and the boy "neatly pulled over to the side of the road," according to Reuters.

Dashboard camera footage of the stop posted by police was viewed almost 760,000 times on YouTube.

Anytime you think it's tough training adults how to safely operate a forklift, just think about how it would be training a 5 year old.

Oh, and the reason he was driving? He was on his way to California to buy a Lamborghini.

Did you know ...

Flexible sick leave leads to safer workplaces during pandemic



OSHA recommends **flexible sick leave policies** so workers can stay home if they're sick, which can help **stop the spread** of the **coronavirus**.

Source: OSHA

If workers can stay home when they're feeling sick, it could keep the coronavirus from spreading to others, according to OSHA.

Info: tinyurl.com/stayhome600

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