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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 led by veteran Editor-in-Chief Fred Hosier.

## Pushed into making bad decisions: Lessons from Kobe Bryant crash

### ■ *What to do when pressure leads to poor judgment*

**W**orkers who are pushed, or push themselves, to meet demanding client needs – whether in a warehouse or in a manufacturing plant – can sometimes end up making poor decisions regarding safety that could result in disaster.

A National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) investigation into a fatal plane crash involving a star athlete illustrates this point perfectly, as the pilot continued the flight to meet his client's travel needs even though his training should have made him alter course.

Kobe Bryant's pilot decided to fly

his helicopter through low clouds so he could get the basketball star to his destination on time, a decision that led to a Jan. 26, 2020, "crash that killed the NBA star, his teenage daughter and six other passengers," according to *The Washington Post*.

### 'Pressure to fulfill client's needs'

The NTSB report on the incident found, among other things, that "the pilot's decision to continue the flight into deteriorating weather conditions was likely influenced by his self-induced pressure to fulfill the client's travel needs."

*(Please see Bad decisions... on Page 2)*

## RESEARCH

### **NSC: 'Workplace impairment' not just substance abuse**

**N**inety percent of employers feel "impairment" at work means more than just substance abuse and can also include mental distress and fatigue, according to results from a 2020 National Safety Council (NSC) survey.

The survey shows 90% of employers are concerned about mental health, chronic stress and fatigue impacting workers' fitness for duty along with concerns regarding substance abuse.

Survey data underscores how the pandemic has impacted workplace safety and highlighted the need to include other factors under workplace impairment, according to an NSC news release.

The NSC urges employers to define "impairment" as anything that could "impede one's ability to

function normally or safely as a result of a number of factors," including chemical substances, fatigue, mental distress and stress.

A holistic assessment of the term was begun in 2020, and NSC found 93% of employers agreed with a broader description that included health and wellbeing.

### Addressing the problem

Only 47% of employers discuss other forms of impairment besides substance abuse during employee onboarding, despite previous research showing, for example, that tired, fatigued employees negatively impacted 90% of employers.

In response to the survey results, the NSC is offering mental health and wellbeing resources along with guidebooks and other materials.

## CDC GUIDANCE

### Report: Double up masks against COVID

A new CDC report suggests ways to increase the effectiveness of masks in slowing the spread of COVID-19.

The CDC conducted experiments to assess two ways of improving masks and both helped:

- using two masks – a cloth mask over a surgical mask, or
- knotting the ear loops of a surgical mask and then tucking in and flattening the extra material close to the face

According to the report, “each modification substantially improved source control and reduced wearer exposure.”

Specifically, in lab tests, exposure to potentially infectious aerosols decreased by about 95% when people wore tightly fitted masks.

#### Getting the fit right

The CDC says other studies show there are multiple ways to get a better mask fit, including:

- using solid or elastic mask fitters

## SAFETY COMPLIANCE *Alert*

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- worn over the mask, or
- placing a sleeve made of sheer nylon stockings around the neck and pulling it up over either a cloth or surgical mask.

The new call for double-masking is explained in an article in the CDC Feb. 10 publication of *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR)*.

### Bad decisions ...

(continued from Page 1)

And this decision was made despite the pilot’s extensive flight training.

But this fatal crash could have been avoided.

“Had this pilot not succumbed to the pressures he placed on himself ... it is likely this accident would not have happened,” NTSB Chairman Robert Sumwalt said in a news release.

Sumwalt explained that “a robust safety management system can help ... provide the support” needed to help pilots resist “such very real pressures.”

Those same pressures are felt by workers in warehouses, manufacturing plants and other facilities on a daily basis as they try to meet customer demands and deadlines.

This is the same type of situation that can lead to driving an overburdened forklift at excessive speeds or attempting to clear a jam without doing proper lockout/tagout.

And just as with the pilot’s decision to continue on when his training dictated otherwise, these kinds of decisions can lead to injury or death.

### When training goes out the window

So what can safety professionals do when all the training they’ve imparted to employees goes out the window during a spike in business?

Cling to the robust safety management system Sumwalt referred to, provide workers with the support they need to stay safe and “maintain awareness of a variety of influences that can adversely affect” a worker’s decision-making.

## 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.

### ■ DID SUPERVISOR KNOW EMPLOYEES IGNORED RULES?

Safety Manager Pete Travers was having a really rough morning.

Why did it have to snow so much, he thought. So much shoveling, so much pain. Everything hurts.

“Pete, do you have a moment?” Attorney John Jenkins asked.

Pete turned, groaning as his aching muscles strained with the effort.

“Are you growling?” John asked.

### Employees ignored the rules

“Time to put aside your personal pains, Pete,” John said. “OSHA’s citing us, so I need you to focus.”

“If this is about the fall protection situation, you can just stop right there,” Pete replied. “There’s no doubt it was unpreventable employee misconduct.”

“Can you elaborate?” John asked.

“The supervisor who was in charge when the inspector showed up had a previous misunderstanding about our fall safety policy a few years ago,” Pete explained.

“That led to a written reprimand, suspension without pay and a personal discussion with our company’s owner,” he continued. “On top of that, a member of the safety department is required to check on his worksites regularly to make sure he adheres to policy.”

“So you think it was the individual employees’ decisions?” John asked.

“Yes,” Pete replied. “I’m sure of it because I spoke with the supervisor and with them – they’ve been disciplined, by the way.”

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

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

## CORONAVIRUS

### Can COVID-19 spread as microdroplets?

#### ■ ORGANIZATIONS CALL FOR GUIDANCE ON COVID AEROSOL TRANSMISSION

A group of health organizations has called on the CDC and OSHA to issue guidance on risk of COVID-19 infection through microdroplets.

A statement from AIHA and eight other health organizations calls for federal agencies to create specific guidelines for workers and communities related to aerosol transmission of the coronavirus.

The recommendations arrive in the wake of “federal agencies’ delay in acknowledging the capability for the SARS-CoV-2 virus to infect people via the inhalation of virus-laden aerosols – that is, small airborne droplets,” according to the statement.

The groups say, despite some acknowledgment of this from the CDC and World Health Organization, guidance has only focused on transmission through larger droplets and contact.

#### Recommendations

The nine groups call for regulation, research and funding to address

airborne transmission, including:

- a temporary emergency standard from OSHA
- continued work by OSHA on a comprehensive infectious disease standard
- research into the roles and designs of dilution and local-exhaust ventilation
- development of simple-to-use, inexpensive ventilation assessment tools, and
- better respiratory protection options for frontline workers.

#### New evidence?

Potential for airborne transmission has received a lot of debate.

A story by FairWarning points toward this being a real hazard.

A case study in a peer-reviewed journal describes an outbreak in a South Korean apartment tower where the virus seems to have spread from floor to floor via a ventilation shaft.

Walls between units that aren’t air-tight may be another source.

If transmission is possible between apartments, it’s also possible between rooms within the same business.

## PANDEMIC

### How COVID may have changed construction forever

The National Safety Council recently held a virtual summit that discussed what the future of work holds in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic.

When asked during a panel discussion what COVID safety changes implemented in the construction industry are most likely here to stay, Catherine West, the director of global safety and health of Jacobs Engineering, came up with these:

- more stringent hygiene practices (e.g., providing hand sanitizer, sanitizing workstations)
- staggering different crews to work at different times
- keeping groups small for foreman

meetings and toolbox talks to

- minimize the spread of illness, and
- radio frequency ID wearables for all crew members “so you know where those people are at any given time. So if you have to go back and do a contact tracing situation, you know where that employee has been, and other work groups they may have been around.”

#### Other changes

NIOSH Director Dr. John Howard, who was also on the panel, added temperature checks and symptom screenings to that list. He hopes that more stringent hygiene practices in construction remain in place “regardless of a pandemic.”

## TRENDS TO WATCH

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

#### ■ STATE GIVEN ONE YEAR TO TRACK INDUSTRY FATALITIES

New York will get one year to put together a system for tracking fatalities in the state’s construction industry.

A bill approved by the state Assembly amends a law signed by Governor Andrew Cuomo in December 2020 giving New York’s Department of Labor a year to put together a system to track construction fatalities.

Under the law, the department must create and maintain a registry of workplace fatalities in the construction industry with details of the incident and “any information deemed pertinent by the commissioner as a result of any investigation, hearing or other proceedings of the department.”

The new bill and the law were both introduced by Senator Jessica Ramos.

#### ■ EMPLOYER HIT WITH FELONY CHARGE FOR WORK FATALITY

An employer can be charged with a felony in connection with a workplace fatality in Washington, according to the state’s Supreme Court.

A recent decision will allow prosecutors to move forward with manslaughter charges against Phillip Numrich, owner of the now closed Alki Construction Company.

One of Numrich’s employees, Harold Felton, was killed during a worksite trench collapse in 2016.

An investigation found shoring was installed on only one side of the trench and there was no ladder for exit from the trench.

Numrich told investigators it was the employees’ responsibility to know the dangers and determine when shore boards were needed.

A trial date hasn’t been set.

## Roundup of most recent OSHA citations

Go to [www.SafetyComplianceAlert.com/fines](http://www.SafetyComplianceAlert.com/fines) for more OSHA fines and injury settlements.

### **Fatal wood-chipper incident at sawmill: \$373K fine**

An Alabama sawmill was cited for four willful and 14 serious violations relating to a fatal wood-chipper incident.

Employee Brandon Van Dyke died May 28 while working on a mechanical issue inside the wood chipper.

Van Dyke shouldn't have been inside the machine, but "he had likely done it hundreds of times," according to an official who spoke to WLTZ First News.

**Fine:** \$373,776

**Company:** MDLG Inc., doing business as Phenix Lumber, Phenix City, AL

**Business:** Sawmill

**Reasons for fine:**

*Four willful violations, including failure to:*

- develop and use procedures for control of potentially hazardous energy
- conduct periodic inspection of energy control procedures
- train employees in recognition of, and methods used to, control hazardous energy sources

*14 serious violations, including failure to:*

- train employees in safety-related work practices pertaining to respective job assignments
- provide standard railings on all elevated walks or platforms 4 feet or more above floor level

### **Contractor hit with \$299K fine for chemical exposure**

A Chicago-based painting contractor is facing a whopping \$300,000 fine after OSHA found multiple willful violations exposing employees to methylene chloride, lead and cadmium.

Inspectors found multiple violations involving a lack of proper PPE and failure to assess employee exposure to hazardous substances along

with some scaffolding and head protection violations.

**Fine:** \$299,825

**Company:** Fortune Painting Company doing business as Fortune Restoration Painting & Masonry, Lincolnwood, IL

**Business:** Painting and wall covering contractors

**Reasons for fine:**

*11 willful violations, including failure to:*

- determine if employees may be exposed to lead at or above action level
- collect personal samples representative of full shift of employees exposed to lead
- determine if cadmium was present in workplace
- provide appropriate respiratory protection to employee until lead exposure levels were determined
- provide appropriate PPE and equipment during assessment of lead exposure

*Six serious violations, including failure to:*

- determine employee exposure to methylene chloride
- ensure shoveling, dry or wet sweeping and brushing of cadmium were used only where vacuuming methods weren't effective

### **Deli worker shot, killed by customer: \$1.5K OSHA fine**

OSHA cited a New York deli after an employee was killed by a customer.

The employee was sitting at the cashier counter when the customer shot and killed him.

Because the deli didn't report the death to OSHA within eight hours, the agency issued an other-than serious citation along with a \$1,500 fine.

**Fine:** \$1,500

**Company:** 2 Deli Grocery Inc., Bronx, NY

**Business:** Grocery store

**Reasons for fine:**

*One other-than serious violation for failing to:*

- report employee work-related death within eight hours of incident

## WORKERS' COMP DECISIONS

### **Can worker get benefits for exposure to toxic mold?**

A grocery store worker claimed he got an occupational illness from pervasive mold in the workplace. Can he get benefits?

**What happened:** The worker, who exercised regularly and was healthy, began to frequently feel sick after moving to a different store. He claimed the store was full of mold, which caused his illness.

**Company's reaction:** Our doctors say your condition is psychosomatic and caused by an anxiety disorder.

**Decision:** He could collect.

Laboratory evidence of elevated levels of "dangerous mycotoxins" in his body convinced the court.

**Cite:** *Cadiz v. QSI Inc.*, HI Supreme Court, SCWC-14-0000594, 6/30/20.

### **Mechanic permanently disabled by tire: Benefits?**

Can a mechanic get permanent total disability benefits for back and shoulder injuries he received while pinned under a tire?

**What happened:** The mechanic was rolling two large truck tires when one tire got away from him. When he attempted to hold onto it, he fell down and was pinned under the tire.

**Company's reaction:** You may have an injury, but you're not permanently disabled.

**Decision:** He was able to collect benefits. The court found one of the mechanic's doctors was persuasive when he stated the mechanic could no longer work. Further, the mechanic's testimony about his condition combined with the medical evidence was enough to convince the court.

**Cite:** *Hedrick v. Penske Truck Leasing Corp.*, TN Supreme Court, No. W2019-01522-SC-R3-WC, 6/26/20.

## REAL PROBLEMS, REAL SOLUTIONS

### Equipment safety takes a trained eye

Maintenance of industrial trucks and other pieces of equipment is an important part of any safety program.

In my 40-year career as a mechanic, I've seen a shift over the past few decades where the service industry went from primarily quality service for maintenance and repair with a strict focus on safety to simply, "How do we make money?"

And that works well for a department store, because you want to know what it has on sale, but it doesn't work well when you're talking about quality maintenance and the safety of your employees.

With this current climate, I know – I've experienced it myself and I've heard it from customers – that equipment owners end up with a gnawing anxiety wondering if their service provider is actually taking care of them when it comes to safety.

#### It fits, but that doesn't make it safe

For example, the main loadbearing items on a forklift are the forks, and each fork is rated for its capacity. You don't need a 10,000 lb capacity fork on a 5,000 lb capacity forklift.

You don't need all that extra metal, weight or expense since the forklift can't lift to that capacity.

But the mountings on these lifts are universal, so you can put the higher capacity forks on the lift even if the lift isn't actually rated for that.

An employer could ask for the higher capacity forks, not realizing it doesn't actually make his lift rated for that weight, and if the service company is only out for money, it'll do the job as asked.

I brought that to the attention of one big service company I worked for, and the manager said he didn't think it was a big deal.

Are you kidding me?

Tires take it to a more relatable level. You know, tires that belong on a Subaru might fit on my Ford Expedition, but my Expedition is a half-ton vehicle and the little

Subaru is not.

That's why there are load ranges on tires. Even though someone may say it fits, it has a load range for that specific purpose.

I've found this sort of situation happens frequently.

There are regulations that govern equipment maintenance, but OSHA tends to focus on the operations side of workplace safety – are you doing your safety checks, training operators correctly and that sort of thing.

The regulations are out there,

#### I've seen a shift away from safety.

but OSHA's not looking closely at the equipment.

Does the forklift have the right seat? Does it have the right seat belt? Is the seat loose? Are all the warning stickers on? Is the operator's manual where workers can easily access it?

And in-house maintenance departments often aren't schooled well enough in these regulations to know better.

#### Experts needed

I assure you, I can look at any used piece of equipment in use today and find issues that would put it out of compliance and in many cases make it unsafe to operate.

But I've made it my business to learn all I can about the hundreds of regulations – whether OSHA, ANSI or other federal or state – so I can police this aspect of safety.

And that's really what's needed in this area: an expert auditor who specializes in equipment maintenance and safety.

Otherwise, you could have problems with compliance, or worse, safety issues that could put employees at risk.

*(Pierre Laudenberg, Senior Auditor, Lift Auditors LLC, San Pedro, CA)*

## TRAINING TIPS

### Maintaining the proper stance for ladder safety

Falls from portable ladders are one of the leading causes of occupational fatalities and injuries, according to OSHA.

That's why employees should know how to maintain proper 3-point contact on a ladder when climbing.

Three-point contact involves ensuring two hands and a foot or two feet and a hand are always on the ladder.

A proper 3-point contact also involves keeping the body near the middle of the step while always facing the ladder during the climb.

For more information, see the training shop on Ladder Safety on our website.

### Remember the GOAL before backing the truck up

When commercial drivers reach their delivery destination, safety is still important even though they're off the highway.

Before backing into a loading dock, parking space or staging area, a driver should remember to Get Out And Look, or GOAL, according to OSHA.

This gives drivers a chance to see pedestrians, obstacles and hazards they may not notice from inside the cab of a truck.

Other things to keep in mind when backing a vehicle in include:

- using flashers, horn and backup alarms
- checking both mirrors
- rolling down windows to hear
- knowing the vehicle's blind spots
- using a spotter, if available
- backing up slowly, and
- standing clear when opening doors in case the load shifted.

## INJURIES AND ILLNESSES

### Report: OSHA needs to crack down on recordkeeping violations

A new report from the Government Accountability Office (GAO) paints a picture of how it thinks OSHA should crack down on companies that don't properly report injuries and illnesses.

According to GAO, a big part of the problem is that OSHA hasn't evaluated the effectiveness of its procedures.

The agency also lacks a plan to correct deficiencies in those procedures.

To find a way to correct this, GAO analyzed 15 years of OSHA recordkeeping violation data and compared that with Census data to estimate how many employers complied with summary reporting requirements.

OSHA procedures and relevant federal regulations were also reviewed, and GAO interviewed OSHA officials and staff as well.

Among GAO's findings was that OSHA identified about 220,000 employers in 2019 who may have failed to report their data.

OSHA mailed reminder postcards to 27,000 of them and cited 255 employers for failure to report their data from mid December 2017 through September 2019 after on-site inspections were conducted.

But because OSHA hasn't evaluated

its procedures, it doesn't know if any of these efforts are improving injury and illness reporting or if it should look into other methods to help improve reporting.

#### Recommendations

GAO says OSHA needs to evaluate its current procedures for ensuring employers report their data and implement a plan to correct any problems it finds.

And OSHA agrees.

The GAO report says, "OSHA committed to assessing whether conducting remote inspections for non-compliance with recordkeeping regulations are an effective and efficient use of resources."

Bottom line: OSHA needs to increase its enforcement efforts in this area and may end up doing more remote inspections on recordkeeping to do so.

### OSHA: No employees at work? Don't post 300A

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, OSHA is waiving its Form 300A posting requirement for employers

who have no employees onsite through the duration of the official posting period.

This is only if an employer has no employees in the workplace from Feb. 1, 2021, and remains empty through April 30, 2021.

### Survey to strengthen fall protection standard

The online Fall Experience Survey from The Center for Construction Research and Training and the American Society of Safety Professionals asks for insights from safety pros on the root causes of falls from height.

Survey results will help the ANSI/ASSP Z359 Protection and Fall Restraint Committee enhance the ANSI voluntary fall protection standard.

The survey is now available and takes about 15 minutes. It asks safety pros for details about a fall incident they experienced, witnesses or investigated. Responses are anonymous.

The survey is open until April 30, 2021.

### SHARPEN YOUR JUDGMENT – THE DECISION

(see case on Page 2)

Yes, the company won. The court found there wasn't enough evidence to prove the supervisor was aware the employees had ignored fall safety rules.

OSHA claimed the company had knowledge of the violation through its supervisor.

The company argued it had temporarily demoted the supervisor while it investigated the incident and found he was unaware the employees were working without fall protection when the inspection occurred.

Evidence was provided on a prior violation from a few years before this incident involving the same supervisor who was unaware that fall protection was required under certain circumstances while working on a bridge.

He had been thoroughly disciplined by the company at the time, so the court in the recent case found he was well aware of the need for fall protection.

And testimony from the workers convinced the court it was a case of unpreventable employee misconduct.

#### ■ ANALYSIS: EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION OF RULES

The company in this case had a thorough fall safety program that was communicated to all of its employees.

As safety pros know, making sure safety protocols are clearly communicated is important so employees have a good understanding of why they need to follow the rules – for their own safety and wellbeing.

**Cite:** *Secretary of Labor v. Shelly & Sands Inc.*, Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission, No. 17-0190, 2/1/21. 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](https://www.safetynewsalert.com/category/federal-activities).

### TEEN WORKERS

A Florida landscaping material supplier was fined more than \$15,000 for employing three teen workers to operate a forklift and for several other child labor law violations.

The Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division (WHD) fined Sunscape LLC \$15,804 for hiring two 17-year-olds and a 13-year-old to operate a forklift.

WHD investigators found Sunscape also violated child labor laws by employing the 13-year-old worker, who was under the legal age for non-agriculture jobs, and allowing them to work before 7 a.m., more than eight hours per workday and more than 40 hours per workweek, according to a Department of Labor news release.

In response to the investigation's findings, the WHD recommends employers review their practices to make sure minors aren't exposed to hazardous occupations and to ensure compliance with child labor laws.

Sunscape also had to pay \$7,522 in back wages to six employees after the investigation revealed Fair Labor Standards Act violations involving overtime.

### TRANSPORTATION

The federal emergency declaration providing relief from certain regulations for motor carriers during the pandemic has been extended through May 2021.

An extension of the emergency declaration was announced Feb. 17 by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), as the original was set to expire Feb. 28.

The extended declaration is effective through May 31, 2021, according to a blog post by law firm

Frost, Brown and Todd LLC.

Through the emergency declaration, commercial motor carriers get relief from parts 390 through 399 of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations when "providing direct assistance in support of relief efforts related to COVID-19 outbreaks."

- This includes transportation of:
- medical supplies and equipment related to the testing, diagnosis and treatment of COVID-19
  - transportation of vaccines, constituent products, medical supplies and equipment related to the prevention of COVID-19
  - supplies and equipment necessary for community safety, sanitation and prevention of community transmission of COVID-19, such as masks, gloves, hand sanitizer, soap and disinfectants
  - livestock and livestock feed, and
  - food, paper products and other groceries for emergency restocking of distribution centers or stores.

### PANDEMIC

As a safety pro, you've probably heard of situations in which OSHA gets a referral from another agency, such as EPA, about possible workplace safety violations. Add one more potential referral situation to the list due to the pandemic.

OSHA is monitoring weekly reports to the Centers for Medicare & Medicare Services (CMS), according to law firm Butler Snow.

CMS requires long-term care facilities to submit COVID-19 data, including suspected and confirmed coronavirus deaths among staff.

OSHA is cross-referencing these reports to see if employee deaths have also been reported to OSHA.

Even if a long-term care facility has followed CMS and OSHA rules about reporting an employee's COVID-19 death, OSHA may launch an inquiry.

Reason: CMS requires facilities to report all COVID-19 employee deaths, whether they're work-related or not. OSHA only requires reporting of work-related cases.

## WHERE TO GET HELP

### ■ CDC INTRODUCES VACCINE TOOLKIT FOR EMPLOYERS

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention introduced a COVID-19 vaccination toolkit for employers of essential workers.

CDC is providing the toolkit to help employers educate essential workers about COVID-19 vaccines.

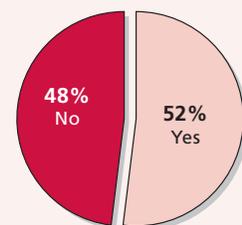
This toolkit is meant to help organizations raise awareness about the benefits of COVID-19 vaccinations and address common questions and concerns regarding the vaccines.

The toolkit includes key messages to pass on to employees, a template letter for introducing employees to your COVID-19 vaccination program, informational posters, a COVID-19 vaccine presentation, sample social media posts and more.

**More information:** [tinyurl.com/lzqh3s8a](https://tinyurl.com/lzqh3s8a)

## What safety officers told us

Is impairment – whether substance abuse, fatigue or mental health – decreasing workplace safety?



Source: The National Safety Council

Employers that said impairment decreased safety at their facilities also blamed it for more near misses, more injuries and increased comp costs for their businesses.

*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?

## An abundance of training refreshers and COVID updates has workers disgruntled

### The Scenario

"Good morning everyone," Manager Mike Kelly said as employees filed into the conference room, keeping as socially distant as possible.

A few employees mumbled "good morning" through their masks, but for the most part everyone was bleary-eyed and quiet.

*You've got to love early morning training sessions*, Mike thought.

"I know it's early, but I hope you're all awake enough to pay attention," Mike said. "We've got a lot to cover."

A disjointed chorus of groans was the response from the assembled workers.

"Come on guys," Mike said, irritated. "This training is important, so I need you to focus. Yes, it's early, but this is mandatory, and it has

to be done, so please work with me here, OK."

### 'It's all starting to blur together'

"Yeah, we'll work with you, Mike," one employee replied. "But this is, like, the third safety training refresher we've had in two weeks."

"Uh huh, and before that we had several COVID training sessions going over updated OSHA guidance," another worker said.

"We know it's important, but we've been getting so much safety training, it's all starting to blur together," the first employee said.

"The training is just nonstop lately," another employee chimed in. "If it's not on the coronavirus, it's a refresher on normal safety stuff."

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

### Reader Responses

#### 1 Roy Spittle, Safety Manager, Taormina Electrical Inc., Gloucester, MA

*What Roy would do:* The presentation needs diversification.

*Reason:* Some examples include:

- Groups need to be addressed independently.
- Information handout sheets with a summation quiz can be helpful.
- A "tool box" talk could be directed on important COVID updates.
- One-to-one on site meetings with key personnel is important.
- Email and cell phone calls covering COVID precautions indicates the importance.
- Posters and signage are helpful.

Office safety meetings are not the only or best manner to be used.

#### 2 Elise Allen, EHS Program Manager, Jergens Inc., Cleveland, OH

*What Elise would do:* I am creating a safety training calendar to help spread the training over the year instead of grouped together.

I also find humor is the best way to keep your audience engaged.

*Reason:* It can be a tough sell to talk about things everyone thinks they know.

I often have a question on a quiz that asks, "What one thing did you take away today that you did not have before the session?"

That also helps me with feedback on how well I am doing.

*For another take on handling this situation, go to our website, [www.safetycompliancealert.com](http://www.safetycompliancealert.com), and search for "abundance of training."*

### OUTSIDE THE LINES

#### ■ BALI GOES TO EXTREMES IN ENFORCING MASK MANDATE

What does it take to get people to wear masks during a pandemic?

If you're visiting or living in Bali, it's the threat of having to do push-ups.

The island was having problems getting foreign visitors to wear their masks.

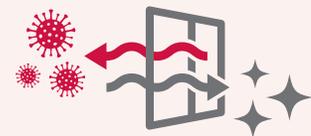
When fines and the threat of deportation didn't work, the government decided to subject violators to extreme punishment: Exercise!

Anyone not wearing a mask in public in Bali will get a \$7 fine or, if they can't pay, up to 50 push-ups. That push-up number is reduced to 15 for people wearing the mask improperly, according to InsideHook.com.

According to reports, 30 people have been subject to push-ups out of about 70 caught without masks.

### Did you know ...

#### Optimize HVAC systems to help prevent spread of COVID-19



OSHA recommends **increasing** an HVAC system's **outdoor air intake** and use of **HEPA filters** to combat the **coronavirus**.

Source: OSHA

At the same time, employers should be sure the exhaust air from HVAC systems isn't pulled back into the building through air intakes or open windows, according to OSHA.

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