

July 1, 2021

WHAT'S INSIDE

2 Sharpen Your Judgment

Did failure to follow rules cause injury?

3 What's Coming

Weed use continues to rise in workforce

4 Who Got Fined – And Why

Worker in trench struck, killed by excavator

5 What's Worked for Other Companies

Building safety culture through SHARP

6 Safety Regs Update

OSHA proposes clarifying Walking-Working Surface standard

8 What Would You Do?

Shooting has supervisors questioning safety training

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.

'If you'd just listen': Workers' safety ideas could've prevented fine

■ *Company cited after ignoring employee complaints*

Where do the best workplace safety ideas come from?

Answer: employees, because they know the hazards involved with tasks – and how to abate them.

This OSHA investigation proves it.

Started with complaint

An employee complaint led OSHA to inspect this business.

At this indoor gun range, an employee complained about potential lead exposure.

The range had only been open for three weeks before the complaint.

During the walkaround portion of

the inspection, the facility appeared pretty clean since it was so new.

But there were some problems.

Employees dry sweeping floors had full Tyvek suits, but one suit had a hole in it. Employees didn't have gloves – their hands were bare.

One table was covered with dust: It was lead. On the same table there was an employee's open soft drink bottle.

In the backstop area of the range, there was heavy dust accumulation.

Buckets used for debris weren't relabeled with their new contents.

One employee had acute lead exposure symptoms. A blood test

(Please see Safety ideas ... on Page 2)

CORONAVIRUS

Disease rulemaking revived in 2022 proposal

OSHA has revived its infectious disease rulemaking, according to information in the agency's spending proposal for FY 2022, which may be why the push for a COVID-19 emergency temporary standard (ETS) seems to have stalled out.

The agency justified the need for an infectious disease standard in 2014, claiming guidelines in existence at that time weren't consistently followed, but the rulemaking was placed on hold in 2017 – until now.

A top priority

OSHA's spending proposal, which was recently released along with the White House's fiscal 2022 budget request, mentions it's planning a draft rule of an infectious disease standard for FY 2022.

This rulemaking project is listed as

among the agency's highest priorities.

When the White House Office of Management and Budget delayed release of the proposed COVID-19 ETS, that led to speculation that OSHA would use the pandemic as a reason to justify reviving the broader infectious disease standard, rather than continuing to push for a COVID-19 ETS, according to law firm Cozen O'Connor.

Considering the infectious disease rulemaking is now listed on the 2022 spending proposal, that speculation seems to be proving true, but keep in mind there still has been no official word on the status of the COVID ETS.

The OSHA spending proposal can be found at [tinyurl.com/621infectiousdisease](https://www.tinyurl.com/621infectiousdisease)

MINORS & SAFETY

Child labor violation leads to teen's death

A Tennessee contractor involved in the fatal fall of a teenage worker violated child labor laws, according to the Department of Labor.

The contractor allowed the teen to perform roofing activities and ride on a power-driven hoisting apparatus, both of which are banned activities for minors.

A 16-year-old boy was doing roof construction on top of an 11-story hotel when he fell to his death after attempting to jump onto a power-driven hoisting device next to the building.

He missed the platform, slipped through a gap between the scaffolding and building and fell about 160 feet, according to a DOL news release.

No roofing activities for minors

An investigation by the Department of Labor Wage and Hour Division found Stover and Sons Contractors violated two hazardous occupation orders of the child labor provisions of

the Fair Labor Standards Act banning employers from allowing minors to perform roofing activities or operate or ride on power-driven hoists.

The contractor was assessed a civil penalty of \$122,364.

Tennessee OSHA also issued citations, and Stover and Sons is currently contesting the penalties.

Safety ideas ...

(continued from Page 1)

confirmed high lead levels.

Employees said the owner was reluctant to purchase additional PPE.

The workers, some of whom had experience with gun ranges, researched lead in the workplace and had given the information to the owner.

But the owner had said, since the business was a start-up, there was no money available for safety upgrades.

The owner relied on a contractor to build the range and set up business.

However, neither the contractor nor the day-to-day manager knew about employee safety at a facility where lead exposure is an issue.

This meant the employees' concerns and ideas weren't followed.

6-figure penalty

A follow-up inspection confirmed that if someone was shooting at the range, in 60 to 90 minutes they would be over-exposed to lead.

OSHA issued 4 willful and 15 serious violations to the range, for a total penalty of \$225,000.

Abatement included:

- a lead control plan
- hazard communication training
- a hearing protection plan, and
- purchase of PPE.

I'd say there are three takeaways:

- Listen to your employees about safety (or else they might call OSHA)
- Take action on their feedback, and
- Put safety before profits.

(Adapted from a presentation by Sean Tynes, Industrial Hygienist, OSHA, Austin, TX, at AIHce21)

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 FAILURE TO FOLLOW RULES CAUSE INJURY?

Company attorney John Jenkins was heading to Safety Manager Pete Travers' office to discuss a recently received OSHA citation.

As he approached the door to Pete's office, he heard a shout followed by two loud thumps.

Alarmed, John threw the office door open and rushed inside.

"Pete, are you OK?" John asked.

Pete looked up, disheveled, with one shoe in hand.

"It's all good," he said. "The spider is dead now."

Training on safe handling

"About the citation," Pete said, putting his shoe back on. "Mark Curtis was helping unload a trailer containing bundles of stone slabs.

"A forklift can't just go in and pull these bundles out," Pete continued. "They have to be dragged out with the lift while two people on foot help guide them.

"Mark was one of the guides," Pete explained. "Our training on safe handling of these bundles requires employees to stay out of a bundle's fall shadow – the danger zone where you could be struck if the bundle falls over.

"The bundle Mark was guiding fell over while he was in the fall shadow, pinning him and causing a broken leg," Pete said. "That wouldn't have happened if he'd have followed the rules."

"If that's the case, then we can fight this," 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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DRUG TESTING

Weed use continues to rise in workforce

■ REPORT SHOWS MARIJUANA USE RISING AMONG U.S. WORKERS

Drug-testing company Quest Diagnostics says the COVID-19 pandemic didn't cause a decrease in marijuana use in the general (non-safety-sensitive) U.S. workforce.

In its analysis of more than seven million urine tests in 2020, Quest says the overall positive rate for marijuana in the total U.S. workforce was down only slightly – 4.4% compared to 4.5% in 2019. The 2019 rate was the highest in 16 years.

For federally mandated, safety-sensitive workers, the rate declined to 2.2% from 2.4% in 2019. The decline among this group of workers is what contributed to the slight decline in the total workforce.

The 2.2% rate was 10% higher than the rate was just five years ago.

In the general U.S. workforce, the positive rate was 12% higher than five years ago.

Positive rates for most drug categories, other than marijuana, declined or remained flat in the total U.S. workforce over the past five years.

“Driven largely by surging rates of marijuana, general U.S. workforce positives and steady rates of amphetamines positives, the rate of drug positivity remained stubbornly high, despite seismic shifts to the workplace caused by the COVID-19 pandemic,” said Dr. Barry Sample, Quest’s senior director of science and technology.

“Our data suggest that marijuana positivity has increased sharply nationwide since states began to legalize marijuana in 2021,” Sample said. “However, it appears that states where medical marijuana use alone is legal are not experiencing much higher rates of increase than states where neither medical nor recreational use is legal.”

Rate decrease in safety-sensitive jobs

Urine drug test results for the federally mandated, safety-sensitive workforce declined in all categories except PCP, which remained flat.

Of note, positivity for marijuana declined 10.2%, cocaine declined 20%, semi-synthetic opiates declined 14.3%, and oxycodone declined 19.2%.

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Report: Lack of inspections hurt OSHA's COVID efforts

An ongoing Department of Labor Office of Inspector General (OIG) audit into the actions OSHA took during the pandemic reveals increased complaints, reduced inspections and an increase in remote inspections caused a reduction in employee protections at various worksites.

In its latest semiannual report to Congress, the OIG states that OSHA's efforts to protect the health and safety of inspectors during the pandemic led to fewer inspections in general and an increased number of remote inspections when compared with a similar period during 2019.

Compared with 2019 numbers, OSHA received 15% more complaints in 2020, but performed 50% fewer

inspections resulting in the agency's failure to provide an adequate level of protection for many workers.

Throughout the pandemic, federal OSHA issued 295 violations for 176 COVID-related inspection, while state plan agencies issued 1,679 violations for 756 COVID-related inspections.

COVID emergency standard

The OIG report points to the lack of an enforceable emergency temporary standard (ETS) as another failure to adequately protect employees at worksites across the U.S.

OSHA produced a COVID-19 ETS April 26, which is currently under review at the White House's Office of Management and Budget.

TRENDS TO WATCH

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

■ NEW LAWS PROTECT RECREATIONAL POT USERS

Montana Governor Greg Gianforte recently signed two bills to establish a framework for recreational cannabis and to begin to implement the legalized sale and possession of recreational marijuana.

The new laws will impact the workplace by protecting those who use marijuana outside of work from adverse employment action and address other workplace issues related to marijuana use, according to law firm Littler Mendelson.

While the new laws protect employers' rights to prohibit on-duty use or possession, they also make clear that an employer will not have the ability to act based purely on a positive marijuana drug test.

Testing isn't prohibited, but an applicant can't be rejected or an employee fired solely because they tested positive for marijuana.

■ OWNER ARRAIGNED FOR \$70M COMP FRAUD SCHEME

A California construction company owner was arraigned after being accused of underreporting his payroll by more than \$70 million to allegedly reduce his workers' compensation insurance premiums by more than \$25 million.

Nissim Vaknin was charged with felony insurance fraud after an investigation by the state Department of Insurance revealed he reported a total of \$4,083,483 in payroll to the State Compensation Insurance Fund (SCIF) while his actual payroll was \$74,741,381.

Vaknin allegedly underreported payroll by more than \$70 million, resulting in a premium loss to SCIF of \$25,129,032

He was arraigned at the Los Angeles Superior Court May 28.

Roundup of most recent OSHA citations

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

Worker in trench struck, killed by excavator

Indiana OSHA cited a construction contractor after an excavator operator struck and killed an employee working in a trench.

An investigation revealed that the employee struck by the excavator was not wearing high-visibility clothing or a hard hat, both of which could have protected him from struck-by hazards.

Fine: \$8,400

Company: Delta Foundation Specialists, Westfield, IN

Business: Site preparation contractor

Reasons for fine:

Four serious violations for failure to:

- provide employment free from recognized struck-by hazards likely to cause death or serious physical harm
- ensure competent person inspected worksite for hazards
- ensure high-visibility clothing was worn by employees working in excavations
- ensure employees wore hard hats in area where struck-by hazards were present

Employee run over by industrial truck: \$156K fine

OSHA cited a Chicago-based container shipping company after an employee was run over by a powered heavy-lift vehicle.

The employee was riding unsecured on the vehicle – which was used to move and stack steel containers – when he fell off and was run over, suffering a partial leg amputation and a crushed pelvis.

Inspectors found employees were allowed to ride unsecured on powered heavy-lift vehicles in the facility, in violation of company and OSHA safety procedures, according to a Department of Labor news release.

Fine: \$156,038

Company: ITS Technologies &

Logistics, doing business as ITS Conglobal, Chicago

Business: Support activities for rail transportation

Reasons for fine:

One willful violation for failure to:

- prevent employees from riding on powered industrial trucks

Two serious violations for failure:

- provide refresher training to powered industrial truck operators after an accident or near-miss incident
- evaluate performance of powered industrial truck operators at least once every three years

Manufacturing worker dies from COVID-19

OSHA cited a Missouri auto parts manufacturer for COVID-19-related violations following the death of a press operator who was exposed to the coronavirus.

Inspectors found two machine operators who worked close to one another and didn't consistently wear face coverings both tested positive for the coronavirus two days apart.

Ten days later, two more press operators who worked close together tested positive, and on Sept. 19 one of them died from COVID-19, according to a Department of Labor news release.

The OSHA investigation found that at least six employees at the plant tested positive for the coronavirus.

Fine: \$15,604

Company: Peterson Manufacturing doing business as Maxi-Seal Harness Systems, Grandview, MO

Business: Electrical equipment and component manufacturing

Reasons for fine:

One serious violation for failure to:

- provide employment free from recognized COVID-19 hazards likely to cause death or serious physical harm

One other-than serious violation for failure to:

- record COVID-19 illness on OSHA 300 log

WORKERS' COMP DECISIONS

Doctors can't decide if pain is work-related: Benefits?

Was the nurse's continued neck and back pain the result of a previous work-related injury?

What happened: A nurse injured her back and neck at work. A few months later, her doctors released her back to work, but she continued to have pain. Several doctors agreed that she had a degenerative disc condition, but they couldn't agree on whether or not it was work-related.

Company's reaction: Your condition isn't work-related.

Decision: She could collect. The court found the doctors who said the injury wasn't work-related offered no evidence to prove it.

Cite: *Regional Care Hospital Partners v. Marrs*, IA Court of Appeals, No. 19-2138, 2/17/21.

Ankle injury, heart attack related? Can he collect?

A worker injured his ankle on the job and received benefits for the injury. A short time later, he amended his claim to include a heart attack. Can he collect?

What happened: A worker injured his ankle walking down steps at work. One month later, he had a heart attack he claimed was caused by the ankle injury.

Company's reaction: Our doctor says you didn't technically have a heart attack, and that what you did suffer has nothing to do with work.

Decision: He could collect. Medical evidence revealed the ankle injury resulted in a blockage in the circulatory system which caused "several cardiac arrests, any of which could have been fatal."

Cite: *Matter of Maldonado v. Doria Inc.*, NY Court of Appeals, No. 531672, 3/4/21.

REAL PROBLEMS, REAL SOLUTIONS

Building safety culture through SHARP

Looking for a safety management program that will lead to a self-sustaining safety culture?

The Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program (SHARP) does just that.

SHARP is aimed at smaller companies that need more help with their safety programs.

It's offered through federal and state OSHAs (the requirements in each locale may be a bit different, so check with your state).

SHARP focuses on three components to build a successful safety and health management program:

- Operational (find and fix hazards in the field and the facility)
- Managerial (programs, policies and procedures), and
- Cultural (how we work).

SHARP process

To achieve SHARP status, an employer must go through a set process.

In the first step, the company drafts a SHARP commitment letter in which it agrees to:

- conduct a comprehensive survey of all operations
- involve employees
- correct hazards, and
- develop a written safety and health program.

The next step is a comprehensive consultation with a representative from federal or state SHARP.

The consultation includes:

- records review
- safety program review
- safety committee evaluation, and
- hazard assessment.

Next comes action planning and goal setting.

This is an outline of where you are in your safety program to where you'd like to be.

A company should set up a continual improvement process for its safety plan, using Deming's Plan-Do-Check-Act.

Follow-up consultations are also a part of the SHARP process.

After developing and implementing its action plan, the company requests a follow-up assessment.

If all the conditions are met, the company then qualifies for SHARP.

If some of the conditions aren't met yet, the company goes back to the action plan stage and works through it again.

Conditions to meet

In Oregon, a company must receive a sufficient rating on all 47 elements in the Safety and Health Assessment.

Also, all safety, health and ergonomic hazards identified in reports must be corrected or addressed.

The last requirement is that the company have an incident rate below industry average or on a downward trend.

Success stories

Oregon OSHA's SHARP program has produced many safety success stories.

Georgia Pacific went 10 years without a lost time injury. The

10 years without lost time injury

company's incident rate is 72% below its industry average.

Marvin Windows & Doors reduced its incidence rates and workers' compensation costs. The company also increased employee involvement in safety.

Duro-Last's (roofing company) successful completion of SHARP led it to the next safety step: qualifying for the Voluntary Protection Program (VPP). During a 15-year period, Duro-Last had only one recordable injury.

(Adapted from a presentation by Mark Hurliman, VPP/SHARP Program Coordinator, Oregon OSHA, at the VPPA's Next Level Safety 2021 conference)

TRAINING TIPS

Are your workers prepared for severe weather events?

Whether it's severe thunderstorms, hurricanes or tornadoes, extreme weather can be a major on-the-job hazard.

That's why it's important workers are trained in the company's severe weather emergency evacuation plan

According to OSHA, workers should know:

- conditions that will activate the plan
- chain of command
- emergency functions and who will perform them
- specific evacuation procedures, including routes and exits
- procedures for accounting for personnel, customers and visitors, and
- any emergency equipment personnel should have.

Employees should also be prepared to follow instructions from local authorities, should the need arise.

Following lockout/tagout = getting home in one piece

The Department of Labor recently cited a grocery store after a teen worker was injured cleaning a meat grinder.

The boy put his hand inside, got it stuck and almost turned the machine on as he struggled to get free.

Luckily, he got away with nothing more than a cut on his finger, but this could have resulted in a tragic, life-changing injury.

Same could be said for workers of any age who fail to follow lockout/tagout procedures.

Sometimes it takes a gentle reminder of what's at stake to help workers realize procedures are meant to help them get home in one piece.

RULE UPDATES

OSHA proposes clarifying Walking-Working Surface standard

OSHA is proposing updates to clarify its handrail (1910.28) and stair rail system (1910.29) for the general industry Walking-Working Surfaces standard after receiving numerous questions regarding the standard's requirements.

A final rule on walking-working surfaces was published in 2016 – the proposed rule doesn't reopen any discussion on decisions regarding that rulemaking – and OSHA wants to clarify some sections, including those covering when handrails are required and the height requirements for handrails on stairs.

Confusion over original rule

The standard was published Nov. 18, 2016, and since that time, OSHA states it has received “many questions and requests for interpretation of the requirements for handrails and stair rail systems,” according to the proposed rule's Federal Register entry.

These questions and requests led the agency to believe “there is confusion in the stakeholder community regarding when handrails are required on stairs as well as what the height requirements are for handrails on stairs and for stair rail systems, depending on date

of installation.”

With this rule, OSHA is proposing language it feels is clearer without changing the intent of the final rule.

Beryllium documents to change due to settlement

OSHA has agreed to revise language in several of its documents on beryllium dust following a settlement with multiple companies that filed lawsuits over the agency's Beryllium Standard in 2017.

The settlement agreement, which was filed May 26, will see changes to several of the agency's facts sheets, frequently asked questions (FAQ) documents and webpages on beryllium.

Some of the changes included in the beryllium settlement agreement involve revisions to certain sentences, removal of specific words or the addition of new sentences or paragraphs to the documents.

For example, OSHA agrees to revise the FAQ “What industries will be affected by the rule?” to remove the phrase “with slags” from the section “Construction and Shipyards (Abrasive blasting with slags).”

Another change, this time to the OSHA Fact Sheet “Protecting Workers from Exposure to Beryllium and Beryllium Compounds,” involves adding, “In construction and shipyards, exposure to beryllium primarily occurs when abrasive materials that contain trace amounts of beryllium (<1% by weight) are used in abrasive blasting operations.”

There are a total of 10 such changes to eight different documents.

Facility agrees to change anti-violence program

A Florida behavioral healthcare center has reached a settlement with OSHA, agreeing to revamp its violence prevention program following a series of incidents that occurred in 2020.

SalusCare Inc., a nonprofit mental health and substance abuse service provider, accepted OSHA's serious citation for failing to protect its workers from patients and has agreed to pay a \$6,747 fine, hire a qualified consultant to improve the violence prevention program and make multiple changes to safety and reporting protocols.

SHARPEN YOUR JUDGMENT – THE DECISION

(see case on Page 2)

No, Pete's company lost when an administrative law judge found the company had constructive knowledge that employees weren't following the rules.

The company presented evidence of its thorough, written safety program regarding safe handling of the bundles along with documentation of the injured employee's training.

However, testimony from supervisors and other employees, along with evidence OSHA provided, told a different story.

While the safety training discouraged workers from being in the fall shadow, supervisors often “instructed employees to act in direct contravention to that rule

and stand in the fall shadows of moving bundles while unloading them from their container.”

Further, there was no documentation of disciplinary action for those who didn't follow the fall shadow rules.

All of this led to the judge affirming the citation.

■ ANALYSIS: RULES NO GOOD IF NOT FOLLOWED

We've said it here before – and safety pros know this – but all the training and rules in the world aren't worth anything if they're not followed.

This is why having employee *and* supervisor buy-in is so important. If supervisors let employees slide on following safety rules, there may as well be no rules at all.

Cite: *Secretary of Labor v. P.M.I. International Stone Importers*, Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission, No. 19-0372, 4/19/21. 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 business was recently fined more than \$5,000 for allowing minors to perform hazardous work involving scooters and other motorized vehicles.

MOT Dead Sea, Inc., doing business as King of Scooters, allegedly allowed teen workers to operate or act as outside helpers on a variety of different motor vehicles.

The scooter rental company allowed two 16-year-old and two 17-year-old employees to regularly show customers how to operate scooters, sports bikes, scoot coupes, mopeds and golf carts on the employer's grounds, according to a Department of Labor (DOL) news release.

Other minors were employed to drive golf carts over state highways to manage vehicle inventory at the five King of Scooters locations.

Several other child labor violations of the Fair Labor Standards Act were allegedly violated, including allowing a 15-year-old to work more than three hours on a school day, more than eight hours on a non-school day and past 7 p.m. during the school year.

DOL's Wage and Hour Division assessed a \$5,233 fine for violating child labor requirements, and MOT Dead Sea paid \$514 in back wages to two workers to resolve overtime violations discovered during the investigation.

WHISTLEBLOWER

A Staten Island, NY, community health center and its CEO are being sued by the U.S. Department of Labor after an employee was allegedly suspended and later fired for reporting COVID-19-related safety

and health concerns.

The employee was allegedly disciplined and eventually terminated after expressing concerns over staff being exposed to the coronavirus and a lack of proper social distancing protocols.

Community Health Center of Richmond, Inc., and its CEO, Henry Thompson, are accused of firing the "six-year veteran employee" shortly after the employee reported COVID-19 hazards to Thompson, according to a DOL news release.

The employee was concerned that in-person attendance at a March 2020 staff meeting would lead to transmission of the coronavirus, so the worker attempted to reschedule the meeting by phone.

After the scheduling change was turned down by management, the employee refused to attend the meeting in person and was allegedly then suspended and eventually terminated.

The employee then filed an anti-retaliation complaint with OSHA, leading to the lawsuit.

VACCINES

OSHA has made an important update to the way it's enforcing regulations regarding COVID-19.

The agency says it doesn't want to have any appearance of discouraging workers from receiving the COVID-19 vaccination, and also doesn't want to "disincentivize" employers' vaccination efforts.

Therefore, OSHA won't enforce 29 CFR 1904's requirements that would have required any employers to record worker side effects from COVID-19 through May 2022.

OSHA says it will reevaluate its position next year to determine whether the exemption will continue.

The change was outlined in a new FAQ on OSHA's coronavirus page.

For more information on this and other COVID-19-related OSHA guidance, visit [osha.gov/coronavirus/faqs#vaccine](https://www.osha.gov/coronavirus/faqs#vaccine)

WHERE TO GET HELP

NEW VIDEO ON WORKPLACE OVERDOSES AND NALOXONE

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health published a new video meant to help employers decide whether to have naloxone, an effective drug for reversing opioid overdoses, available in their workplace.

On average, 115 Americans die every day from an opioid overdose, according to 2017 data from Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

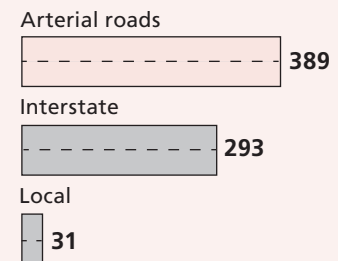
Further, overdoses are becoming increasingly common in the workplace.

Naloxone can reverse many of the potentially fatal side effects of an opioid overdose, so having it on hand can provide a tool that a workplace can use while waiting on first responders to arrive on the scene, according to the video.

Info: tinyurl.com/621overdoses

What safety pros say

Which kind of roadway had the most fatal work zone crashes in 2019?



Source: U.S. Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

Fatal workzone crashes are increasing in general with 2019's numbers jumping 11% over 2018's, and that's despite a 2% decrease in overall fatal crashes.

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?

Recent workplace shooting has supervisors questioning safety training

The Scenario

Manager Mike Kelly felt everyone's eyes on him as soon as he walked into the supervisor's meeting.

"Hello, guys," Mike said.

"What's going on?"

"Haven't you heard about the latest shooting?" Janet Costello asked.

"It's been all over the news," Jack Hall said.

"Some guy shot and killed nine of his co-workers at their jobsite," Ken Dawson added.

"I did hear about it," Mike said.

"It's a horrible tragedy."

Active shooter drills

"There are several guys out on the floor who are pretty worked up over it," Ken said.

"Some of my people pointed out that incident with the one vendor who got angry over having to wear

a mask," Jack said.

"I can understand the concern," Mike said. "We do have a really good workplace violence policy, and our emergency action plans were updated not that long ago to address things like this."

"When was the last time we had an active shooter drill?" Jack said.

"It has been a while," Mike replied. "But between COVID and all the other mandated safety training, an active shooter drill got pushed down the list."

"And this is always such a sensitive issue – some of our employees get really freaked out over these drills," he added.

"Mike, this is a safety concern you need to address," Jack said.

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

Reader Responses

1 Elise Allen, EHS Program Manager, Jergens Inc., Cleveland, OH

What Elise would do: We have not had an active shooter awareness session in over a year (darn COVID) but we have still kept the discussion going.

What do the emergency alarms mean here, think about what you will do if you hear something, what defensive mechanisms are near you (fire extinguishers), where can you hide (trash cans), how can you escape from the facility?

Reason: I would be hesitant to do an actual active shooter in the facility drill, but I have seen videotaped drills in facilities that were very realistic and more helpful with someone highlighting what was going on.

This is part of emergency

preparedness, and something we are trying to keep in the mental forefront.

2 From ready.dc.gov/activeshooter

What ready.dc suggests to do: Contact your local law enforcement to conduct training exercises.

Some components of training exercises include:

- recognizing the sounds of gunshots
- reacting quickly when gunshots are heard
- evacuating the area
- hiding
- acting against the shooter as a last resort
- calling 911
- reacting when law enforcement arrives
- adopting the survival mindset during times of crisis, and
- planning to run, hide or fight.

OUTSIDE THE LINES

■ WHY DIDN'T THE DEER CROSS THE ROAD? WOLVES

Anyone who has had to drive through areas where deer are in abundance knows the fear of hitting one of the graceful, but often oblivious animals.

There were 1.9 million animal-related collision claims – including deer, of course – in the US between July 2019 and the end of June 2020, so this fear is justified.

Well, fear no more, as researchers at Wesleyan University found the best deterrent for keeping deer off of roads, according to *Ars Technica*.

Wolves. The presence of these predators creates a "landscape of fear" that keeps deer off roadways, which caused a 24% reduction in deer-related crashes in the area studied.

The research is actually very interesting, and more info can be found at tinyurl.com/621wolves

Did you know ...

Label chemicals so workers know the identity and hazards



Chemicals must be properly labeled so workers know the identity and hazards they may be exposed to.

Source: OSHA

Workers have a right to know what chemicals they're working with and the hazards associated with them, so hazard communication, including proper labeling, is a must.

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