



The Basics of Safety

Through several years of investigating accidents and research in the field of accident reconstruction, leaders in the field of occupational accident prevention have concluded that there are specific reasons why accidents occur. They found that worker safety is dependent on worker behavior and human factors. They developed ten safety rules and while some of you may have heard them before, they are worth repeating:

1. **STAY ALERT** – and stay alive. The more awake a worker is, the less likely he or she is to get hurt. If you are unsure how to operate equipment or perform a task, ask your supervisor. Don't guess and muddle through. Make sure you know in advance the correct and safe way to do it.
2. **WEAR THE RIGHT CLOTHES** – work clothes should fit properly. Anything that can catch in machinery or trip you up is hazardous. Wear protective clothing and equipment as required.
3. **USE THE RIGHT TOOLS**—if you need a hammer, get a hammer. It may be handier to use a pair of pliers, wrench, screwdriver or even your fist. But you will have only yourself to blame if you break your fingers.
4. **LEARN HOW TO LIFT** – Lifting takes more than muscle; it is an art. Don't try to show how strong you are; you may seriously injure yourself. Get help to handle anything that is too heavy or cumbersome for you.
5. **DON'T BE A PRANKSTER** – practical jokes and horseplay can be dangerous around machinery. If you feel the urge to play, resist it until after work.
6. **BE TIDY** – Good housekeeping reduces hazards in the workplace or your home. Always put away tools when they are not in use. Keep the floors clean, pick up scraps, and wipe up spills. A slip or trip can be fatal.
7. **REPORTING IS IMPORTANT** – Never fail to report accidents, defective equipment and unsafe conditions.
8. **GET FIRST AID IMMEDIATELY** – if you're hurt, even if it is just a scratch. Neglect of the injury may lead to serious infection, weeks of lost time and even permanent injury.
9. **BACK YOUR SAFETY PROGRAM** – If you have an idea you believe will reduce accidents, tell your supervisor about it. Set an example by obeying safety rules. Cooperate with your safety committee.
10. **NEVER TAKE A CHANCE** – Next to sheer carelessness, the short cut is probably the biggest killer of all. To save a minute or two, you may lose a lifetime. Whatever you are doing, if you are not doing it safely, you are not doing it right!