

OFF-THE-JOB SAFETY

OBJECTIVES

- Staff will learn current off-the-job safety practices
- Staff will understand how off-the-job injuries affect the workplace

Most employees have been trained to work safely on the job, but these same workers will think nothing of taking shortcuts when working at home. Safety practices learned at work are meant for your protection and the protection of anyone around you. But these same practices should be followed at home or anytime you are working. It really doesn't matter where you lost your hearing, a finger, or an eye. The fact is you lost it, and it will affect your quality of life, and your ability to work and provide for your family. Safe work practices are just exactly that, "safe work practices," and should be followed at all times.

According to the Nation Safety Council, in 2004, the nation experienced 49,052 worker deaths, while 10.5 million workers suffered disabling injuries on and off the job. Ninety percent of all worker deaths and about two thirds of all disabling injuries suffered by workers in 2004 occurred off-the-job.

Production time lost due to off-the-job injuries totaled about 165 million days in 2004, compared with 80 million days lost by workers injured on the job. Production time lost in future years due to off-the-job injuries in 2004 is estimated at 420 million days, more than six times the 65 million days lost in future years from 2004's on-the-job injuries.

Worker injuries off-the-job will cost the nation at least \$193.6 billion in 2004 compared to \$142.2 billion for on-the-job injuries.

COMMON OFF THE JOB INJURY TYPES & PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

- **Motor Vehicle Accidents:** It doesn't matter if you're in a company car, on or off the job, follow safe driving practices at all times. If you're operating or riding a bicycle, ATV, or boat for pleasure follow safe practices. The time you don't could have catastrophic consequences.
 - Practice defensive driving
 - Do not speed
 - Keep vehicle in good/safe condition
 - Use caution in bad weather conditions

- Use seat belts
- Follow all laws or practices applicable for the vehicle being operated
- Slips, Trips, & Falls: Make sure that all passageways and walking surfaces are safe and free of hazards. When working on a ladder or stairs follow all safe work practices.
 - Use ladders properly
 - Clean up spills
 - Maintain proper lighting
 - Use hand rails when going up or down stairs
 - Do not stand on desks, chairs, etc., when reaching
 - Practice good housekeeping
- Machinery/Tools: When using machinery or tools follow the same safety practices that are required at work, including appropriate PPE. The machinery and tools you use at home are no safer at home than at work.
- Fire: Your house should be as free of fire hazards as your workplace. Ensure that flammables are stored in appropriate containers.
 - Install smoke detectors
 - Have a fire extinguisher on hand and know how to use it
 - Inspect residence for fire hazards
 - Inspect electrical wiring
 - Have an escape plan and practice
- Hazardous Chemicals: Use, store, and dispose hazardous chemicals appropriately. Most employees have read and understand the material safety data sheets (MSDS) for the hazardous chemicals in the workplace, but how often have you read them for the products you have at home. You would be surprised at the level of danger in your shop or storage closet.
 - Keep household cleaners, disinfectants, insecticides, drain openers, and medications in their original containers and separate from foods
 - Know how to contact the poison control center
 - Keep all poisons and hazardous chemicals away from children
- Lifting: Remember safe lifting procedures at home. Most of us lift much heavier weight at home than we do at work. Remember to lift with our legs, while keeping the load close to the body. When lifting heavy or cumbersome loads use a lifting device or get help.
- Firearms: If you have firearms at home follow all safe use, handling, and storage procedures.
 - Keep firearms locked and ammunition stored separately from firearms
 - If you have children at home use gun locks or a safe

- Electric shock: To avoid electrical shock inspect appliances/lamps/cords/ outlets on a regular basis.
 - Avoid wet areas when working with electrical tools
 - Use ground fault circuit interrupters (GFIs) whenever possible

POLICY

If applicable, discuss all policies that relate to off-the-job safety.

CLOSING

- *Encourage discussion about the presentation, company policies, and current practices to avoid off-the-job injuries.*
- *Remind employees that their safety and health is important to the organization, and it doesn't matter where they get injured, off-the-job injuries will affect their quality of life, and their ability to work and provide for their family.*