

## **news & notes**

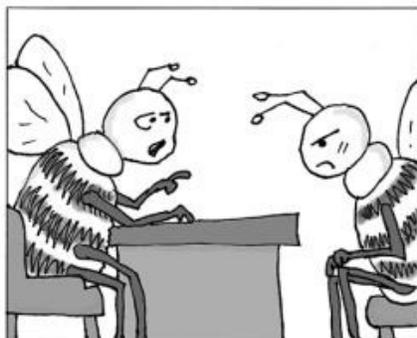
### **WORKPLACE VIOLENCE STATS**

Workplace violence is a growing problem in the United States. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, roughly 2 million workers report being victims every year, and more than 700 die as a result of workplace violence. This has a devastating effect on the productivity of a business and on employees' quality of life.

Estimates of the costs from lost work time and wages, reduced productivity, medical costs, workers' compensation payments, and legal and security expenses are even less exact but clearly run into billions of dollars. The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health has estimated the annual cost of workplace violence on employers at \$121 billion.

Check out this infographic:

<http://safety.blr.com/workplace-safety-news/emergency-planning-and-response/violence-in-workplace/Infographic-Workplace-violenceAre-you-prepared/>.



**"Next time, file a complaint.  
You can't just sting your supervisor."**



***March 2016***

## **Violence in the workplace**

### ***What you need to know***

Although dramatic multiple homicide incidents are highly publicized, they represent a very small number of workplace violence incidents. The majority of incidents that employers and employees deal with on a daily basis are cases of assaults, domestic violence, stalking, threats, harassment (to include sexual harassment), and physical and/or emotional abuse that make no headlines. And, many of these are not even reported to management. So, data on the exact extent of workplace violence are sketchy.

Like all violent crime, workplace violence creates ripples that go beyond what is done to a particular victim. It damages trust, community, and the sense of security every worker has a right to feel while on the job. In that sense, everyone loses when a violent act takes place, and everyone has a stake in efforts to stop violence from happening.

Employers have an obligation under the General Duty Clause of the Occupational Safety and Health Act to provide a work environment free from threats and violence. This can be accomplished when employers commit to the following:

- Adopt a workplace violence policy and prevention program, and communicate the policy and program to employees.
- Provide regular training in preventive measures for all new/current employees, supervisors, and managers.
- Support, don't punish, victims of workplace or domestic violence.
- Adopt and practice fair and consistent disciplinary procedures.
- Foster a climate of trust and respect among workers and between employees and management.
- When necessary, seek advice and assistance from outside resources, including threat-assessment professionals, social service agencies, and law enforcement.

Employees play a role in workplace violence prevention as well. They should:

- Accept and adhere to the employer's preventive policies and practices.
- Become aware of and report violent or threatening behavior by coworkers.
- Follow procedures established by the workplace violence prevention program, including those for reporting incidents.

As attention to the issue grows, safety pros agree that responding to workplace violence requires attention to more than just an actual physical attack. So, a workplace violence prevention program will be ineffective if it does not consider harassment, threats, and abuse of all kinds. A successful workplace violence prevention program must include training in violence prevention, threat detection, threat assessment, and threat management. And, in fact, this training should become part of the workplace culture.

## **news & notes**

### **OSHA and IEC**

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) renewed its alliance with the Independent Electrical Contractors, Inc (IEC). During the 5-year agreement, the alliance will focus on providing agency staff with 70E and arc-flash training and preventing worker exposures to electric shock and arc flash hazards.

The alliance will also promote awareness of OSHA campaigns on preventing falls and heat illness, as well as promote a culture of safety through outreach, particularly to small businesses and workers with limited- and non-English speaking skills.

"For more than a decade, OSHA and IEC have had a productive partnership developing resources to protect thousands of workers in the electrical industry," said Assistant Secretary of Labor for Occupational Safety and Health David Michaels, PhD.

The alliance has developed fact sheets, toolbox talks, and guidance documents on OSHA electrical standards; hazards involved in working on or near energized electrical conductors and circuit parts; safety guidance to prevent fall-related injuries; and precautions when using ladders.



## **Violence in the workplace quiz**

### *Test what you know*

Choose the correct response to the following statements.

1. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, roughly 8 million workers are injured every year. **True False**
2. The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health has estimated the annual cost of workplace violence on employers at \$121 billion. **True False**
3. Dramatic multiple homicide incidents represent a very large number of workplace violence incidents. **True False**
4. Employees don't play much of a role in workplace violence prevention. **True False**
5. A successful workplace violence prevention program must include training in violence prevention, threat detection, threat assessment, and threat management. **True False**

### **ANSWERS**

1. False. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, roughly 2 million workers are injured every year. 2. True 3. False. Although dramatic multiple homicide incidents are highly publicized, they represent a very small number of workplace violence incidents. 4. False. Employees play an important role in workplace violence prevention. 5. True
- .....

## **Poison prevention primer**

### *Take these precautions*

Toxic chemicals are used as ingredients in many industrial products, and most workplaces contain some poisonous substances. There are lots of ways to have accidents with poisons. For example, you might swallow poison in contaminated food or beverages if you keep or consume these in work areas in which hazardous chemicals are present. Or you might forget about chemicals on your hands and rub your nose, or put a contaminated hand over your mouth when coughing or sneezing. Poison can also get into your body through inhalation of toxic vapors or be absorbed through your skin.

Prevent poisoning by taking these precautions:

- **Read labels and safety data sheets** for chemicals before using them.
- **Talk to a supervisor** about anything you don't understand about a chemical's hazards or precautions.
- **Always wear assigned personal protective equipment (PPE)**, and ensure it is in good condition before each use.
- **Follow required work procedures** when handling, using, or storing chemicals.
- **Be careful when removing contaminated work clothes and PPE**, e.g., remove gloves last by peeling them off, touching only the inside of the glove as its rolled down.
- **Wash carefully after handling toxic chemicals**— and always before eating, drinking, smoking, using the toilet, applying cosmetics, or going home.