

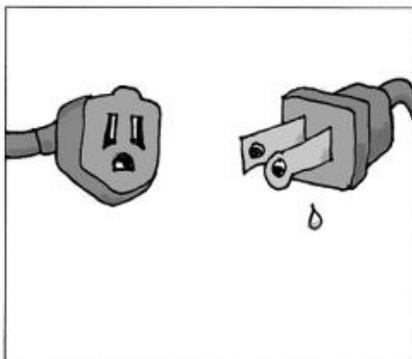
## Fatalities in the workplace

A recent report released from the Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research finds that older people are dying on the job at a higher rate than workers overall, despite a general decrease in the number of workplace fatalities.

According to the report, 35 percent of fatal workplace accidents in 2015 involved an employee who was aged 55 or above. That's about 1,700 out of a total of just over 4,800 fatalities reported nationally. The overall rate of workplace fatalities was down 22 percent between 2006 and 2015. But for older workers, the fatality rate was more than 50 percent higher than for all workers. During that period, there was an increase of about 37 percent in older people in the workplace, compared with a 6 percent rise in the overall working population.

Whether you are older or younger, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) recommends the same following tips for keeping you safe at work:

- Make sure your tasks match your abilities.
- Consider the hazards around your workplace.
- Work with others in teams to learn from one another.
- Consider ergonomics at your workstation.
- Talk to your supervisor about return-to-work practices or other concerns.



**"Don't take it so hard. I just need to be with someone a little more grounded."**

September 2017

## Safety attitude adjustment

### *Take a refresher course this September*

You know your job and do it well. But do you have the attitude required to do the job both well and safely? Do you need an attitude adjustment regarding safety?

If you have a poor attitude about safety, it will show up in everything you say and do. Sometimes, workers develop the attitude that safety rules were made to be broken—especially when no one is looking.

Even those who are hardworking and conscientious about every other aspect of their jobs can have a poor safety attitude. They may take shortcuts not because they are lazy but because they want to get the work done more quickly. Ignoring safety procedures, however, can cause accidents and injuries that slow down production more than working safely in the first place.

Most people don't intend to work with a bad safety attitude or even realize they have one. They think their last couple of accidents were just that—accidents that couldn't have been prevented. Here's how you can develop a good attitude concerning safety:

- Keep your mind focused on the job at hand. Put aside any personal problems that have been bothering you so that you can watch for hazards and accomplish what you have set out to do.
- Tell yourself that you will not let nearby noises or conversations interrupt your concentration or prevent you from doing the job safely.
- Don't give in to pressure from your coworkers to be unsafe. You don't have to join in with horseplay, take shortcuts, or participate in cover-ups. Instead, take the lead in behaving in an adult and responsible manner. If coworkers are behaving in an unsafe manner, tell a supervisor.
- Report all accidents and near misses, even if they seem unimportant at the time.
- Try to understand why an accident occurred to avoid making the same mistake twice.
- Always follow safe work practices and wear any personal protective equipment (PPE) that you are required to wear.
- Practice good housekeeping. Keep your work area free of clutter, and clean up spills promptly.
- Be considerate of your coworkers. Don't do anything that would endanger them. In fact, go a step farther and remind coworkers about safety. Say something when they forget to put on PPE or when they ignore the rules.

By following these suggestions, you can develop a positive safety attitude, one that others will respect and look up to as an example. But even better than that, you'll be able to do productive work and stay safe at the same time.

## Reaching an alliance

The OSHA Alliance Program works with groups committed to worker safety and health to prevent workplace fatalities, injuries, and illnesses. OSHA and these groups work together to develop compliance assistance tools and resources, share information with workers and employers, and educate workers and employers about their rights and responsibilities.

The Erie Institute of Technology, a college in Erie County, Pennsylvania, recently renewed a 5-year agreement to help reduce the exposure of young workers to occupational safety and health hazards.

The San Antonio Chapter of Associated General Contractors, a school in San Antonio, Texas, renewed a 2-year agreement to provide members and others with guidance and training resources intended to protect the health and safety of workers, particularly by reducing and preventing exposure to falls, electrocution, struck-by, caught-in or between, and addressing general industry and construction issues.

In order to reach these goals, the Erie Institute of Technology and the San Antonio Chapter of Associated General Contractors agreed to work with OSHA to develop training and education, raise awareness of OSHA's rulemaking and enforcement initiatives, and achieve outreach and communication.

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## Electrical protective equipment quiz

1. Electrical injuries happen because of safe electrical equipment or installation. **True or False**
2. All electrically protective equipment will typically come marked for maximum voltage. **True or False**
3. Insulators are composed of \_\_\_\_\_, glass, or plastic.
  - A. Wood
  - B. Rubber
  - C. Paper
4. You should inspect electrical protective devices once a month. **True or False**
5. Damaged or worn devices must be taken out of service. **True or False**

### ANSWERS

**1. False.** Electrical injuries, such as shocks, burns, or electrocutions happen because of unsafe equipment or installations. **2. True.** All electrically protective blankets, matting, covers, line hoses, gloves, and sleeves are clearly marked with the electrical class and type of equipment to help you determine the maximum use voltage. **3. B. Rubber.** Insulators are used to coat metals and other conductors and help confine the flow of electrical current along wires or through equipment. **4. False.** Inspect electrical protective devices before use and inspect again after any incident that damaged or could have damaged the electrical equipment. **5. True.** If you are qualified to do so, you must remove any damaged or worn devices from service.

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## Too tired at work?

According to a survey of 2,000 working adults, 43 percent of U.S. workers believe they are too tired to function safely at work. The findings were revealed in the National Safety Council (NSC) Report, *Fatigue in the Workplace: Causes and Consequences of Employee Fatigue*. The study found that 97 percent of workers have at least one risk factor for fatigue, such as working at night or in the early morning, working long shifts without regular breaks, working more than 50 hours each week, and having long commutes.

Workplace fatigue can be caused by a variety of factors, such as work schedules, environmental conditions, and job demands. The report points to three levels of fatigue: decreased cognitive performance, microsleeps or nodding off, and increased risk for workplace injuries.

What are some ways that you can help yourself stay awake and safely function at work?

- Take steps to get more and better sleep. Set a sleep schedule for yourself, and stick to it.
- Adjust your eating habits to include a healthy, balanced diet. Avoid eating anything close to bedtime.
- Exercise and stretch regularly. Try going for walks with other coworkers on breaks.
- Increase interaction with friends and family.
- Develop strategies for staying alert at work, such as stretching at your desk, drinking caffeine beverages moderately, or listening to music.