



2021 Toolbox Talks Program Topics

Week 1 (February 1 – 5, 2021) - Achieving Safety Goals

Achieving Safety Goals Safety Talk

Any company that focuses on improving workplace safety aims to **get their employees home in the same health they came into work or better every single day**. For many companies there is often a larger expressed goal attached to this effort. Often the goal for many worksites or companies as a whole is to make it an entire year without any injuries. For other companies it may just be no lost time injuries in a year. Despite what the goal is or the duration set, one thing is for certain- **it takes focused effort every single day to achieve it.**

Safety Goals Set by Companies

Safety records are tracked, days since last injury counters loom over employees' heads, and safety lunches are held quarterly to celebrate employee efforts in working safely. While these tools may be good reminders for a workforce that there is a goal set and there is progress being made, the honest truth is that it takes dedication by every single person on that team over a long period of time to achieve the larger goal. The enormity of these safety related goals can overwhelm even the most optimistic employee.

The Only Way to Achieve a Big Safety Goal is One Task at a Time

After huge goals are set by companies regarding workplace safety, it is up everyone's willingness to embrace that it is possible and take action towards meeting the goal. The thought alone of making it a whole year without injury automatically shuts down many individuals from even wanting to put a care towards attempting to achieve it. To reduce the enormity of the goal, **concrete actions need to be lined out every day to focus on preventing injuries one task at a time.**

The best way to achieve a huge goal is to **take small steps towards it every single day**. For safety goals it means **doing one step, one work task, one safeguard, the right way each time it needs completed**. Effort cannot be applied directly to the overall abstract goal that may be a year or two away. Effort can be applied by each individual to take action in the task they are doing that minute to complete it in the safe and correct manner.

Summary

Goals are good. Goals for safety in a workplace should be embraced by employees. After all, it is ultimately about making sure everyone goes home in the same health they arrived in or better when they return home. More important than the goal itself is the action needed in a given moment to make your work task or workplace safe. While it takes a lot of effort by every single member of a workforce to achieve what seems to be a hard to reach safety goal, it is truly possible when you focus your efforts on the task at hand.



2021 Toolbox Talks Program Topics

Week 2 (February 8 – 12, 2021) – Alcohol Use

Alcohol Use Safety Talk

There is widespread use of alcohol in the United States. According to the 2014 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 87% of Americans over the age of 18 reported they have had some kind of alcoholic drink in their life. The study also reported that 70% of Americans over the age of 18 have had a drink within the last year. While drinking alcohol occasionally in moderation does not have major effects on your health and life, excessive drinking can.

Excessive Drinking

Excessive drinking includes binge drinking and heavy drinking. According to the CDC:

- Binge drinking is the most common type of alcohol abuse and is defined as consuming 4 or more drinks for women during a single occasion and for men, 5 or more drinks during a single occasion.
- Heavy drinking is defined as consuming: 8 or more drinks per week for women and for men, 15 or more drinks per week.

Many people fall into these categories. While it may not seem like drinking this amount of alcohol may be an issue it certainly can lead to problems.

Long Term Health Issues Related to Excessive Alcohol Consumption

- High blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, liver disease, and digestive problems
- Cancer of the breast, mouth, throat, esophagus, liver, and colon
- Learning and memory problems- including dementia
- Mental health problems, including depression and anxiety
- Alcohol dependence or alcoholism

Short Term Issues

There are many other problems drinking affects in the short-term. Alcohol affects our decision making abilities as well as our motor skills. This leads to things such as risky sexual behavior, physical injuries due to falls, assault situations with other people, and motor vehicle crashes. When you drink too much, you do not make the best choices. Poor choices while being under the influence of alcohol leave many people injured, put into jail, or killed every single year.

Summary

If you are going to drink, it is important to do so responsibly. A split second decision under the influence of alcohol can change your entire life. Over the long term, alcohol abuse will negatively affect your health. Think about your health, your life, and your family before you drink the drink that puts you over the edge.

Discussion point:

- How can excessive use of alcohol outside of work effect your job or our company?
- Presenter: Discuss your company's drug / alcohol policy.



2021 Toolbox Talks Program Topics

Week 3 (February 15 – 19, 2021) – Amputations

Amputations in the Workplace Safety Talk

Amputations are a very serious health and safety concern in the workplace. OSHA reports there is an average of seven amputations that occur in US workplaces every single day. This reported number has resulted from OSHA requiring employers to report serious injuries starting in 2015. This average does not include 28 states and territories that have their own health and safety programs. The number could be even higher due to employers not knowing about the new reporting rule or those who purposely avoid reporting these types of injuries to OSHA.

More than 90 percent of the amputations involved fingers, but there were also amputations of the hands, toes, feet, and other body parts. **There are many hazards in the workplace that can result in amputations.**

Common Locations Where Amputations Occur

- **Point of operation**- Is where a machine is performing work on a material. Some examples of points of operation include: a razor cutting fabric, a mechanical press bending metal, or a drill bit cutting holes in metal sheeting.
- **Power transmission apparatuses**- Includes machine components that transmit energy. Some examples include: pulleys, belts, chains, flywheels, cams, gears, and connecting rods.
- **Other machinery parts**- Any machinery part that moves with enough force to cut flesh and bone is a hazard that can result in an amputation. This would include any parts that reciprocate, rotate, or traverse moving parts.

Safeguards Against Amputations

- **Elimination**- Eliminate any hazards that can cause an amputation injury to avoid the possibility of the injury occurring to any individual.
- **Substitution** – Replace the hazards.
- **Engineering controls**- Where there are moving parts, ensure there is proper guarding around the hazard. Use barriers or fences to keep individuals out of areas where there is many moving parts or machinery. Use safety devices that shutoff the machine if a person enters a dangerous area. Other safety devices such as ones that will not allow a machine to function unless the operator's hands are in a safe position can also be effective in preventing amputation injuries.
- **Administrative controls**- Employees should be trained on recognizing the hazards in their workplace that cause amputations. A lock out/tag out program is another example of an administrative control to prevent injury when servicing equipment that has moving parts.
- **Personal precautions**- Do not stick your hands where you cannot see them. Do not bypass guards or work on live equipment. Also avoid wearing loose clothing or jewelry that could pull your fingers or other body parts into moving equipment.

Summary

Be aware of the different hazards that can cause amputation injuries in the workplace. Focus on eliminating as many of these hazards as possible then look to use effective engineering controls to protect yourself and coworkers from amputation injuries. Not every single hazard may be eliminated in your workplace so always be aware of your surroundings and never put yourself in a situation where injury is more likely to occur.

Discussion Points

- What are tasks we complete here that an amputation injury is a risk?
- How can we eliminate or mitigate these risks?

Source: <https://www.safetytalkideas.com/safety-talks/>



2021 Toolbox Talks Program Topics

Week 4 (February 22 – 26, 2021) – Annual Check-Up

Importance of an Annual Checkup (Safety Talk)

It is human nature to be reactive instead of being proactive in many aspects of life. Our health is one area where many people do not take steps to improve it until after a problem occurs. This is a reactive approach. It is important to have a proactive approach in protecting your health. Going to your doctor for an annual checkup is an important part of a proactive approach towards maintaining good health.

Why People Don't Go to the Doctor

- They use the excuse I feel healthy, nothing is wrong
- Money issues or no insurance
- They say they do not have time
- They rather wait until they get sick or hurt

The reasons listed above represent only a few of a large number of reasons why people do not go to the doctors annually. None of the reasons listed above should serve as an excuse to avoid going to the doctor. Time and money especially should not hold us back from going to the doctor. If a small problem develops into a large problem so will the time and money needed to address it.

Why We Should Go to the Doctors Every Year

There are many benefits of going for an annual checkup. The most obvious benefit is catching problems before they start or very early before they develop into something major. As we get older it is important to get screened for certain diseases. A few examples of things that could be screened for is skin cancer, breast cancer, cholesterol levels, high blood pressure, and prostate cancer. There are many more ailments and diseases that should be looked at depending on your family history and risk factors.

At the Doctor's Office

It is important to help the doctor treat you as well as he or she can. It takes effort on your end to make sure they have the information they need. Fill out health questionnaires as accurately and honestly as possible. Have a plan and write down key things you want to talk about with the doctor when you get to the appointment. Be open with the doctor. Do not be shy or embarrassed to talk about any problems or concerns you may have. They need the right information from you to be able to do the best job they can.

Summary

Our health is everything. Without it we have nothing. Everything you do in your life right now depends on your good health. Make it a point to get to the doctor every year, whether you feel good or not. Catching a small problem before it grows into something major may make all the difference between a premature death and living strong for a few more decades.

Discussion Points

- Discuss the Annual Physical Exam provided by the Company.