



News & Notes

Crash Course

Learn the statistics about vehicle crashes:

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) says more than 2.5 million people went to emergency departments, and about 200,000 were hospitalized due to vehicle crashes in 2018. Crashes remain the leading cause of employee fatalities.

According to the new government data, the cost of lifetime work lost due to crashes in 2018 was an estimated \$33 billion. The good news is that there were almost 400,000 fewer emergency department visits and 5,700 fewer hospitalizations from crash injuries in 2018 than in 2012.

“Motor vehicle crashes and related injuries are preventable,” said Gwen Bergen of the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control.

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Shocking solutions

Take precautions to prevent electric shock

Electric shock occurs when you touch a live wire or a tool or machine part with poor insulation and the ground. You are, in effect, becoming a conductor; the shock you feel is the electrical current running through your body. Shock can cause symptoms that range from mild to severe, up to and including death.

So, how can you help to prevent electric shock?

- **If your machine malfunctions, report it to your supervisor immediately.** Do not take unsafe steps to repair your equipment—especially if you are required to reach into an electrical panel to make the repair.
- **Never open a “live” electrical panel.** Keep all doors and access panels closed. If you discover an open panel, report it to your supervisor.
- **Never reach into an electrical panel.** Only trained maintenance workers or electricians may do this.
- **If your employer has trained and authorized you to perform lockout/tagout on your machine as well as maintenance work, then make sure all sources of electrical energy are controlled** per your employer’s lockout/tagout program before doing any type of maintenance work.
- **Re-evaluate your job practices.** Are you in the habit of working unsafely around electrical equipment? Do you open electrical control panels to “reset” equipment or make other adjustments during production? If so, you may need to be retrained on working safely around electricity.

Where the Weather Meets the Road

Drive Safely in Winter Weather

Vehicle safety experts note that while much has been done to keep people safe on the road, no state has fully implemented all the interventions proven to increase use of seat belts and crash-prevention measures. The federal government recommends that states take steps like increasing seat belt use through primary enforcement. That means a driver can be stopped and cited for a seat belt violation. Without primary enforcement, a seat belt citation can only be issued if the driver is pulled over for another citable violation.

So those are the actions governments can do. What about drivers themselves?

Driver’s education

With winter weather in full swing, it’s a good time to review safe-driving basics. Take these precautions:

- **Use a seat belt at all times.** That goes for passengers, too.
- **Avoid taking medications that could make you drowsy** while behind the wheel.
- **Avoid distractions** such as talking or texting on cell phones, adjusting the radio or other controls, and eating or drinking while driving.
- **Continually search the roadway** to be alert to situations requiring quick action.
- **Keep your cool in traffic;** be patient and courteous to other drivers. Do not take other drivers’ actions personally.
- **Reduce stress by planning your route ahead of time,** allowing plenty of travel time, and avoiding crowded roadways and busy driving times if possible.
- **Prepare your car and yourself for inclement weather.** Carry jumper cables, a shovel, an inflated spare tire, and a bag of salt or kitty litter. You also need a personal survival kit with a blanket, drinking water, a flashlight, and nonperishable snacks.



Step Up to Ladder Safety

Work safely above ground level

Take these steps to work safely on ladders:

- **CHOOSE** a ladder tall and strong enough for the job.
- **CHECK** that ladders have all parts in good condition, including:
 - Slip-resistant steps or rungs
 - Braces, bolts, screws, and spreaders
 - Rope
 - Safety feet
- **WORK** cautiously on a ladder to prevent falls. Remember to:
 - Allow one person only on a ladder, wearing shoes with clean, nonskid soles.
 - Face the ladder and hold both rails while climbing.
 - Carry tools on a belt or rope or hoist.
 - Stay below the top two stepladder steps or four top ladder rungs.
 - Work with body centered, one hand on rail, and tools in hanger or holder.
- **POSITION** the ladder for steadiness with:
 - Ground surface level
 - Feet parallel to the wall at a distance that is equal to one-fourth the ladder length
 - At least 3 feet above top support with top anchored, and bottom tied or held

WARNING: Don't use a metal ladder around electricity!

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SHOCKING STATISTICS

Each workday, an employee is hurt from electricity every 30 minutes—severely enough that it requires time off the job. According to the Electrical Safety Foundation International (www.esfi.org), more than 30,000 workers have been injured in workplace electrical accidents over the past 10 years.

Furthermore, electrical violations are perennially on the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) list of most frequently cited standards.

While the number of fatalities associated with electrical work has dramatically declined in recent years, the risk remains significant.

OSHA electrical safety requirements are found in Part 1910, Subpart S (general industry, electrical) and in Part 1926, Subpart K (electrical standards for construction). The OSHA standards reference and cite more detailed consensus standards, including the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 70E.

Some experts describe OSHA as the "shall" of electrical safety compliance, while the NFPA provides the "how."

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BURN STATISTICS

Here's why knowing first aid for burns is important:

- Every year in the United States, 1.1 million burn injuries require medical care.
- Around 50,000 people require hospitalization.
- Almost 10,000 people die of burn-related infections.

BURN HAZARDS

Learn how to recognize burn hazards, such as the following:

- **Flammable liquids**, such as oil, solvents, and many chemicals, often have invisible vapors that move quickly through the air; put them together with an ignition source—even a spark—and you could have a fire.
- **Smoking** is a hazard because lit cigarettes or matches can be an ignition source for paper, flammable liquids, or almost anything that's capable of burning.
- **Welding and cutting operations** create flames and sparks, so they're a potential cause of burns and of fires.
- **Hot machines and processes** are a burn hazard.
- **Space heaters** can, if not used properly, cause fires and burns.
- **Very hot water** is a burn hazard.

(Don't) Feel the Burn

First aid for burns

February 4 to 10 is **National Burn Awareness Week**, a good time to acknowledge that burns are a common workplace injury. How bad a burn is depends on how many layers it affects. First-degree burns affect only the first layer of skin, which gets red right away. Second-degree burns involve both reddened skin and some blistering. Third-degree burns look charred, and you might even be able to see tissues that appear to be white underneath the destroyed skin. Protect yourself from burn pain—and possibly serious infection—by knowing first aid for burns.

For first- and second-degree burns:

- Treat with cold water for several minutes to cool the burn and relieve pain.
- After soaking, cover the burn with a clean dry dressing, e.g., sterile gauze or a bandage from the first-aid kit, to prevent infection.
- **Don't** use ice, lotion, or ointment on a burn.
- **Don't** break blisters that form on a second-degree burn.
- See a doctor if the burn covers a large area or gets infected.

For third-degree burns:

- Call for emergency medical assistance immediately.
- Lay the victim down and elevate severely burned limbs.
- Cut away clothing if necessary, but don't try to remove clothing that is stuck to a burn.

For chemical burns:

- Call for emergency medical assistance if the burn covers a large area of the body or affects the eyes or face.
- Flush burned areas with water until emergency medical help arrives.
- Remove contaminated clothing, if possible.

For critical burns that can kill, the Red Cross says to get immediate medical attention. Critical burns include those that:

- Make it difficult for a victim to breathe.
- Cover a significant portion of the body.
- Involve the head, neck, hands, feet, or genitals.
- Are caused by chemicals, electricity, or explosions.