

John Meola's
Safety First!
Safety Meeting Topics
for WSA Members



December Safety Info

- Holiday Safety & Health
- OSHA Top Ten List
- Cold Weather Dress & PPE
- Slip & Fall Avoidance
- Vehicle & Driving During the Cold Season

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!



- Seasonal change & Holidays cause general increase in stress levels: The antidote is understanding, patience and empathy.
- Remember: Everyone handles stress differently. Always avoid internalizing any issues because extreme cases may induce self-destructive behaviors, substance abuse, etc.
- Recognize and prioritize family and friends, faith, social and recreational activities, and leisure and hobbies during this time of year.
- Because of all else that's going on, at work there really needs to be a focus on safety. Then, carry that over to family and any domestic issues.

OSHA'S TOP TEN LIST



- Annual publication list of Top Ten no-no's and uh-oh's include:
- Haz Com; MachineGuarding ;PPE; Fall Protection; LOTO; BBP; Ladders & Scaffolds, defective electric cords and a few others.
- Remember: OSHA has NO defensive driving or fleet safety requirement and @ 40% of all occupational fatalities are transportation-related. (•Another 10% are homicide, suicide, overdose while at work.)
- Covid doesn't help, since it creates stress. Do whatever is possible to reduce workplace stress!

COLD WEATHER DRESS TIPS & REMINDERS

- Dress in layers. Warm air is trapped between layers & insulates. This also allows easy adjustment when temps rise during the day.
- New engineered garments offer enhanced properties. These include gloves, socks & footwear, head & neck covering; helmet liners; Bibs; oversize High Viz vests
- Avoid standing directly on cold hard surfaces; be mindful of wet boots; foot care = dry.
- No hoodies while driving. Avoid bulky outer garment when driving.
- Hand & skin cream and moisturizer can help.
- Wear eye protection & masks to minimize direct cold air exposure.

SLIP & FALL AVOIDANCE

- Walking is largely a subconscious reflex, so add FOCUS in any compromising situations: uneven surface conditions, changes in elevation, transition areas, ditch lines, fences, bridges and abutments, etc.
- Use correct footwear, body posture, weight transfer, stabilizer elements, etc. Use some kind of 'crutch' or brace as needed.
- Plan, protect, anticipate and provide for the unexpected.

DEFENSIVE DRIVING IN WINTER

- Don't 'push it'. Allow sufficient time for the journey or task. You cannot make up time with an accelerator.
- Early morning transit: YOU should be an expert on this by now. Geography, dewpoint, infrastructure, etc. create a complex equation of freeze/thaw.
- Highway drainage characteristics may vary with age of roadway and other factors. Snow & slush pile runoff may create ice sheet. Moderate your speed given the road conditions!
- Carry spare washer fluid. It may become scarce if weather turns.
- Weight in vehicle – suited to season & route; remember: an 'empty' vehicle is less stable
- Everything else: glare conditions; deer & animal hazards; high vis apparel; defensive parking & positioning; backing safety; having a spotter when needed, etc., etc., and etc.!
- Take what you've learned home with you. Protect your families, teach your children in order to keep your loved ones safe.

SLIP AND FALL AVOIDANCE

- **Check your footwear. Worn edges – soles & heels – have less ‘grip’. On compromised surfaces, this can lead to SLIP, loss of balance.**
- **Use the proper type of boot for site & weather conditions. High top lace-up for best lower leg and foot stability.**
- **Be aware of upper body weight, positioning, balance, equilibrium, on uneven surface, slope, crossing ditch line, etc.**
- **Use appropriate caution when carrying heavy or awkward loads on uneven terrain.**
- **When possible, break a load down to smaller units. Or get some help. Or reconfigure the activity. DO NOT PUSH IT!**
- **Soft tissue injury – i.e., strain, sprain, pinched nerve, etc. is avoidable.**