

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



# March Safety Info

- March Madness – Get Ready For It
- Defensive Driving During March Madness
- Safety Committee Ideas
- Hydration
- Behavior and Accident Causation
- General Ergonomic Reminders

# “MARCH MADNESS”? NOT ON OUR WATCH!

- This phenomenon did not earn its name out of idleness – it’s a real problem. And it’s not about basketball.
- March is famous for weird stuff happening. Keep a close eye on it.
- Daylight hours becoming longer – more to do- schedules bulk up – activity – drama, etc.
- DO NOT BE DISTRACTED! There are already enough distractions to go around.
- In light of the unusually warm winter, we should be prepared for freaky Spring weather.
- STAY FOCUSED! March is a long month.



# DEFENSIVE DRIVING DURING MARCH MADNESS



- Distractions are real. Texting while driving is real.
- DUI; inexperience; fatigue; drug use; NIGHT driving & work zones; other impairments; 'crazy' drivers come out of the woodwork in MARCH!
- Our preaching today is aimed at Defense & PREVENTION
- In most areas traffic crashes going UP; fatalities going UP; work zones, UP
- Think. Plan. Ask yourself ahead of time: What could go wrong?
- Avoid the exposure; minimize your exposure.
- Park – walk – stand in PROTECTED AREAS when possible

# SAFETY COMMITTEE IDEAS



- Consider adding a reflective band to your hard hats
- When the heat starts, get protectors for the neck nape
- Watch out you don't hydroplane on wet roads – moderate your speed. Even a film of water on the road can cause loss of traction.
- Check your tread wear pattern and tire inflation. Spring rains may be torrential. Keep weight in the truck bed.
- Practice “Continuous Improvements” — name them to keep track and add value!
- Are your vehicles equipped with tailgate warning tape

# HYDRATION – CIRCULATORY SYSTEM STRESS

- Blood will start to THIN OUT for warmer temperatures
- Assist this process with proper hydration. Stay out of the soda aisle; avoid ‘Big Gulp’; junk food & drinks
- WATER is preferred with 50% Gator Ade or Squincher; fruit juice; other natural beverage
- Salad, fresh fruit, etc. Skip the fried stuff.
- Best Thing Ever: refillable water bottle!



# ACCIDENT CAUSATION – BEHAVIOR IS KEY

- Human Behavior is the key element in accident prevention. It is also highly resistant to change. We're all geniuses, right?
- Hardware rarely fails. Ladders rarely break. Vehicles do not over-speed by themselves. Phones do not force you to look at them while driving.
- In other words, prevention is a control issue. YOUR behavior control.
- Personal Risk management = Do not create an exposure where none needs to exist.
- Do not prolong an exposure for a millisecond longer than it needs to be.
- Take every reasonable precaution to protect yourself. That is a question that will be asked during any investigation.
- Our insurance company will ask the same questions when making a decision on disability or survivors' benefits.

# ERGONOMICS – *IT'S WHAT KEEPS YOU GOIN'!*

- 3 Basic Elements: Force - Repetition – Posture
- Good POSTURE is the most important.
- Knees higher than hips when seated, driving.
- Avoid slouch; proper footwear; PPE – grip gloves, knee pads, etc.
- THINK before handling heavy objects. Poor lifting habits will lead to chronic back problems.
- Get help with heavy stuff. Avoid over the shoulder reaching. Raise a heavy load with leverage, not brute force. Use tools, hand truck, etc.
- Examples of good ergo: use 3-Point Stance when climbing; use walking stick on uneven ground; take shades off when not needed for glare; eat right; stay hydrated; dress right; good boots; sleep right; don't text and drive...(ok, not really, but it can hurt you in other ways!)

