

Safety Topic

Safety News

State Compensation Insurance Fund

Issue Four, 2008



Eye Protection

If you work in around areas that pose eye hazard, you should wear eye protection. Nothing can replace the loss of an eye and a minute is all it takes to destroy your eyesight. That's the same time it takes to make sure that your eyes are properly protected.

Most workers who've suffered an eye injury wore no eye protection and of those who did, most wore the wrong kind. Once you've been given the proper eye protection equipment for your job, follow all safety instructions. Protective eyewear is only effective when it's cared for and worn correctly. Clean and store the protective eyewear properly. Scratched, broken, bent or ill-fitting eyewear should be replaced. It's also important to wash your hands often during the day, keep your hands away from your eyes, and get regular eye health checkups.

There are several common causes for eye injury and in all cases consult an eye care professional to make sure you're treated correctly for the injury.

- Foreign particles such as dust, dirt, wood chips, or even an eyelash can get into your eye and cause damage or painful eye irritation.

- Bumps and blows to the eyes can cause minor to severe eye injury.
- Cuts in or around the eyes (especially while pruning) can be serious and jeopardize vision.
- Chemicals, fumes or steam can cause severe damage to the eye.
- Light burns or sparks can cause injury that may not be felt until hours later.



Know the proper first aid response for an eye injury so that you don't cause further damage. In an emergency, know whom to call, where to locate emergency phone numbers, and where to find first aid equipment.

To prevent safety glasses or other eye protection equipment from fogging while you're working, wear a sweat band on your forehead or a cool rag in your hard hat, keep the lenses clean and unscratched, use an anti-fog solution on the lenses or buy/use safety glasses that have anti-fog coatings.

If you wear your recommended eye protection equipment and take proper safety precautions, you can prevent or reduced the severity of an accidental eye injury. □

TOPIC REVIEW

Instructor _____

Date _____

Location _____

Attended By

Safety Recommendations





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Loss Control Services

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Please forward to the person responsible for your safety program

News about Occupational Safety and Health in Agriculture

Issue Four, 2008

Employer Education Series

State Fund continues to promote community educational outreach by increasing the quantity and frequency of employer seminars. These seminars are produced and sponsored by State Fund and are open to State Fund policyholders. The seminar topics cover all aspects of worker's compensation and are offered statewide.

As part of State Fund's Employer Education Series, the local State Fund Loss Control departments offer safety seminars dedicated to loss prevention. They feature safety training targeted to specific industries and safety topics of interest to California employers. Various programs in the series are developed in conjunction with State Fund insured Group Programs and external affiliates and partners. Some of these partners are occupational safety and health providers such as Cal/ OSHA Consultation Service, the Department of Health Services, and the University of California.

The goal of State Fund's Employer Education Series is to present valuable information from recognized safety and health experts to enable employers to reduce the frequency and severity of workplace injuries, facilitate regulatory compliance, and increase business profits.

The program venues provide the opportunity for attendees to have their workplace safety questions immediately and personally answered by industry experts. The typically half-day seminars are usually held at regional State Fund offices. To learn what programs are scheduled in your area, visit www.scif.com and click on Seminars. □

Reporting Work-Related Injuries

State Fund's Claims Reporting Center (1-888-222-3211) is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for policyholders to report injuries as soon as they occur. Agents will do the necessary paperwork to get the claim started and refer the injured to the designated physician or provider.

Within 8 hours of any serious illness or injury (requiring hospitalization over 24 hours, other than for medical observation or where there is permanent employee disfigurement) or death occurring in the workplace or in connection with employment, employers must report the incident to the Division of Occupational Safety and Health. □

This Agricultural Safety News is produced by the Safety and Health Services Department of State Fund to assist clients in their loss control efforts. Information or recommendations contained in this publication were obtained from sources believed to be reliable at the date of publication. Information is only advisory and does not presume to be exhaustive or inclusive of all workplace hazards or situations. Permission to reprint articles subject to approval by State Compensation Insurance Fund.

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Safety News

STATE COMPENSATION INSURANCE FUND

December Is National 3D Month

Statistics show that drug- and alcohol-impaired drivers kill or injure themselves and innocent victims every hour of the day, every day of the year. Despite the continued efforts of public and private organizations, businesses, and individuals to curb these troubling statistics, impaired-driver accidents continue to occur. For its part, State Fund turns its attention each December to the serious consequences of impaired-drivers by observing National Drunk and Drugged Driving (3D) Prevention Month. In support of the 3D Month campaign, State Fund encourages its insured employers and their employees to avoid driving while under the influence of alcohol or drugs, to stop others from driving impaired, and to increase community awareness about impaired-driver issues.



lose their job as a result of their actions.

Employers can play an important role in preventing their workers from driving drunk and drugged. To further the decrease in drug or alcohol-related vehicle accidents, businesses and communities must implement and enforce strategies that are known to be effective – such as ongoing substance abuse education programs, drug testing programs, and adopting “zero tolerance” policies.

State Fund urges its insured employers to support 3D Month by educating their employees about the dangers of driving under the influence of controlled substances, training them to stop

others from getting behind the wheel when impaired, and encouraging employees to report impaired drivers to the proper authority.

Every person has a responsibility to drive free of drugs and alcohol and to insist that co-workers, friends, and family members do the same. State Fund offers a selection of products and materials to assist its insured employers in their safe driving education efforts. Call your local State Fund office for details or visit the website of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration at <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov> for information and materials relating to 3D Month. □

For many Californians, December is a month of seasonal celebrations, but it is also a month when impaired-driver incidents increase. State Fund knows that drug- and alcohol-related vehicle incidents cost employers in many ways – from the loss of an employee as a result of an injury or death, to an increase in medical and or/workers’ compensation costs, and the disruption of work or the work process. Impaired drivers hurt not only themselves but also their families, if they are injured, injure others or



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In This Issue

Feature Articles

December Is National 3D Month

The Expert’s Corner – Everything In Its Place

No Fooling When Refueling

Remember To Lockout/Blockout

Products For You On scif.com

Safety Topic – Eye Protection

In Each Issue

Employer Education Series Reporting Injuries

STATE
COMPENSATION
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FUND

The Expert's Corner

Everything In Its Place

One of the first things to be sacrificed to increased production is good housekeeping – clear aiseways, orderly workstations, and efficient disposal of waste. While it is not uncommon to see these priorities fall by the wayside as a business grows, it is important that they be re-implemented for safety, efficiency, and productivity.

Unclutter the Aisleways

Keeping aisleways clear and clean reduces the risk of injury due to slips, trips, falls, and overexertion. Production waste – such as grease, fibers, sawdust, and other particulates – contributes to the occurrence of slip and fall injuries. Reduced friction between the employee's shoes and walking surface also increases the physical demand of material handling tasks. A regular schedule for cleaning up production waste should be established and monitored.

Larger obstructions – such as boxes and tools – contribute to the occurrence of trip and fall injuries. Such obstructions can cause an employee to take a longer route to

place a load. This increases the duration of the push, pull, or carry exertion, reducing efficiency and productivity and increasing the risk of physical injury. Obstructions closer to the beginning or end of the task may cause the employee to complete it by using an awkward posture – bending forward or twisting at the waist. Handling a load in



these awkward postures increases the risk of low back injury. Make sure that adequate space is provided for storage of inventory and tools and have a supervisor periodically check for obstructed aisleways.

Keep Workstations Clear

Individual workstations should be kept clear and clean to reduce the risk of injury due to extended reaches and other awkward postures. Extended reaches create additional loads on the shoulder and low back. Shadow boards contain outlines of designated tools to show where they should be stored and can be used to maintain efficient placement of tools and equipment within desired reaching zones. Frequently used items should be within 16" and other items within 27".

Reduce Demands of Waste Disposal

Solid garbage cans can create a suction force between the bag and the can. Lifting a bag out of a solid can often causes the worker to handle the load with hands above shoulder height. An open frame receptacle can be used to hold the bag, eliminating the suction force and allowing the bag to be slid out of the side rather than lifted overhead.

Ryan Horton is an Ergonomics Consultant with State Fund. □

No Fooling When Refueling

If you work in an agricultural operation you probably use all sorts of powered vehicles, equipment, and tools that require periodic refueling. When refueling them is necessary, it's important to be aware of the associated hazards and to know and follow the safety precautions to prevent accidents and injuries.

When you're refueling, you're dealing with a flammable liquid that forms vapors, which

can easily catch fire or explode. Never smoke around flammable fuels or refuel near an open flame. Refuel only in well-ventilated areas. Shut off the motor before filling a fuel tank or tool. If the fuel tank is near the engine or other hot area such as the manifold or muffler, let the engine cool down before attempting to fill it. A hot engine in contact with a flammable fuel can cause a flash fire or explosion.

Use only approved containers for fueling or fuel storage – never plastic jugs or glass bottles. When filling portable containers avoid latch-open devices; make sure the container has a self-closing lid and a label describing the contents. Never fill a container while it's inside a vehicle, a vehicle's trunk, a truck's bed or on any surface other than the ground. Refuel the container at a safe distance from

Continued on next page

Remember To Lockout/Blockout

What should lockout/blockout mean to workers? Lockout/blockout should mean that any energy source – whether electrical, hydraulic, mechanical, or compressed air – which might cause unexpected movement, must be disengaged or blocked, de-energized and locked or positively sealed in the “off” position during work or repair to secure worker safety.

Why is lockout and block-out so important? Failure to lockout and blockout machinery has caused devastating injury and death to workers in agriculture. Workers have suffered severe crushing injuries, been electrocuted, and lost fingers, hands or arms because machinery was left on or inadvertently turned on while it was being maintained, repaired or adjusted.



Not only must the machine be turned off but so must the power source that goes to it. Remember that potential energy can be stored in springs or blades or come from suspended parts subject to gravity. If not blocked, they can still be activated even when the machine is “off.”

The first step in preventing these kinds of injuries is to have a good lockout/blockout program.

Continued from previous page

the vehicle and others. Don't overfill the tank or container – spilled fuel can accidentally ignite; leave enough space to allow for expansion or for tilting. When finished, replace the cap tightly.

Fires can result when filling metal portable gasoline cans in the back of pickup trucks with plastic bed liners or in cars with carpeted surfaces. The insulating effect of the plastic surface can generate a static charge that can then create a spark between the gas can and the fuel nozzle. As fuel is poured, it can generate static electricity and if a spark occurs

What are some elements of a good program?

- Identify all jobs and equipment that require lockout/blockout of power sources
- Post warning signs wherever possible to indicate that lockout/blockout is required
- Develop written procedures explaining how lockout/blockout is to be done
 - Train all personnel in the lockout/blockout procedures for their particular job and offer periodic refresher training
 - Allow no deviation from the written policies and procedures
 - Use engineering and administrative controls as much as possible to eliminate the need for lockout/blockout
 - Perform regular maintenance to prevent malfunctioning equipment

Anyone who operates, cleans, services, adjusts, and repairs machinery or equipment should be aware of the hazards associated with that machinery. Any powered machinery or electrical equipment that can move in a way which could put workers in danger, is a hazard that can be prevented when lockout and blockout procedures are followed. □

near the fuel vapor it could result in ignition. So, when transferring fuel from a can, mobile tank or fuel truck, touch the container or can with the gas dispenser nozzle before removing the can lid. Then keep the spout or nozzle in contact with the can inlet when filling.

Follow all safety procedures when refueling. When finished, be sure all fuel has been drained from the hose or nozzle and that any spill is cleaned up immediately. Know where to find and how to use appropriate fire extinguishers. □

Products For You On scif.com

If you are a State Fund insured, you can visit our website at www.scif.com (under “Safety”) and access a wide range of loss control products and services including:

Seminars – Find a schedule of State Fund-sponsored seminars on safety or health issues and regulations that pertain to your business operation.

Programs and forms – Download items such as the employer-required Injury and Illness Prevention Program (IIPP), a Sample Ergonomics Program, the New Employee's Guide to Workers' Compensation brochure, the Notice to Employees posting notice, the Cal/OSHA Injury Summary (Log 300), and a copy of the Employer's Report of Occupational Injury or Illness (form 3067).

Safety Meeting Topics and Loss Control Bulletins – Choose from over 225 downloadable safety topics in English with Spanish translations including attached sign-in sheet for recordkeeping.

ErgoMatters® – Check out articles by State Fund's ergonomics experts that provide technical or background information on ergonomics issues in the workplace.

Safety Newsletters – View or print any of the six State Fund quarterly, industry-specific loss control newsletters created for client safety and health training and instruction.

For more products and services that may be available to you as a State Fund insured, visit www.scif.com today. □

