



# The Safety Zone

The Newsletter of the AHA Workers' Compensation Self-Insured Trust

## Don't miss out!

*Avoid accidents by investigating near misses*

When was the last time you felt a surge of adrenaline - only to shake it off a few minutes later? Was there a time recently when you said to a coworker, "Boy! We dodged a bullet there"? Have there been any incidents when you looked at what happened and thought, "That could have been a lot worse than it was"?

If so, you've likely suffered or seen a "near miss." If we identify and investigate these incidents, we may be able to prevent others that cause large-scale property damage, catastrophic environmental damage, or serious injury or death to workers or members of the community.

Here's what to be aware of:

- **Incidents that slow the job down.** If something unplanned and undesired occurs that makes it more difficult for you to do your job, ask yourself whether something more serious is going on. Does the corrosion that slowed down your maintenance work, for example, indicate a larger problem?
- **Near misses.** Even if no one was hurt and nothing was damaged, could the incident have been more serious? Could someone have been injured, or could major damage have occurred? If you'd been standing in a different place, or passed through a moment later, would you be in the hospital now? Could the incident happen again?

Report minor incidents or near misses to your supervisor and describe what happened.



"Hey, this fell off the wall and it could have hurt somebody!"

- Who was involved?
- Where and when did the Incident take place?
- What exactly happened?
- How did it happen? *And perhaps most important,*
- Why did it happen? This last piece of information may be critical to preventing the incident from happening again.

Don't stop once you have identified one cause of an incident; most accidents have more than one cause, and it's important to address them all.

### news & notes

#### NEAR-MISS NUMBERS

According to the National Safety Council (NSC), a near-miss is an unplanned event that did not result in an injury, illness, or damage. But it could have.

"Only a fortunate break in the chain of events prevented an injury, fatality, or damage; in other words, a miss that was nonetheless very near."

Much like a slight tremor that precedes an earthquake, near-misses often occur in advance of more serious incidents. But when there's no harm or damage, they are easy to overlook. At prevention-oriented workplaces, employees are encouraged to share their near-miss experiences without fear of reprisal.

Some experts estimate that for every worker fatality, as many as 10,000 unsafe acts are committed. When reporting occurs, the data gets discussed and changes can be made, reducing the chance for an actual injury or loss.



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**AHAWCSIT**



# Electronic device do's and don'ts

## *Use technology safely*

Our cell phones, tablets, and laptops have become essential parts of our jobs. We use them to store safety data sheets (SDS) and safety procedures, measure sound levels, and perform many other work-related functions. But if we're not careful how and when we use them, these devices might create a hazard by distracting us from work at critical moments. Take these precautions:

- DO NOT use electronic devices while operating motor vehicles or while performing tasks designated as safety-critical.
- DO NOT use electronic devices in areas of the facility where inattention could lead to accidents.
- DO use devices from a safe location. For example, if you need to access information (such as an SDS) on an electronic device or if you need to accept incoming phone calls or respond to work-related text messages, do so from a safe location and not while performing other job tasks.
- DO NOT use electronic devices for non-work-related tasks when doing so would create a dangerous distraction, prevent you from hearing and responding to work-related communication or situations, or cause you to miss important information, as in a training session.



- DO use portable electronic devices to immediately report emergency situations, summon emergency personnel, or otherwise effectively respond to an emergency in the workplace if absolutely necessary. But it's better to make such reports from a safe location whenever possible.

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### Got News?

**Do you have news that needs to be circulated or have a subject you would like for us to address? Let us know by emailing the newsletter editor at [tcreel@arkhospitals.org](mailto:tcreel@arkhospitals.org).**

AHA Workers' Compensation Self-Insured Trust Program is administered by Risk Management Resources (RMR), a division of BancorpSouth Insurance Services, Inc. [www.bxsi.com](http://www.bxsi.com). In March 2003 the AHA Workers' Compensation Self-Insured Trust was established. The program provides workers' compensation coverage to AHA members.

Risk Management Resources, the administrator for the program, assists members in the areas of claims management, safety and loss control. Tina Creel, Vice President of AHA Services, Inc., is the Group Manager of the Trust and provides oversight of the day-to-day operation of the Trust.

The Board of Trustees provides oversight of the overall operation of the Group Trust.

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