

Best-in-Class Thoughts

“PSE’s customers depend on us to provide safe and reliable electric and natural gas service to them every day. Their safety and the safety of our employees is our foundation – it drives everything we do.”

– Kinberly J. Harris,
President and CEO
Puget Sound Energy

“Safety is a core value at S&ME because we have learned that it is fundamentally important in everything we do. We owe our employees the training, tools and support that enable them to safely perform their work. We owe it to our clients to provide trained employees with the proper tools and equipment to complete their projects safely. And finally, we owe it to our employees’ families to do everything in our power to return them home safely each day.”

– Randall A. Neuhaus, PE
President and CEO
S&ME Inc.



Newtown, CT

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Note from Leanne

Every so often, the discussion of “Want vs. Need” or “Gotta Have vs. Nice to Have” with regards to Safety rears its ugly head. Usually, it’s a conversation about what’s “really needed” to get the job done: How many people do we really need for a Confined Space Rescue Team? Do the employees really need that safety training? It comes from all sources and directions: clients, vendors, competitors and sometimes, it even comes from within the MER Family of Companies.

It’s true: at first blush, Safety can sometimes look like a “Nice to Have” feature of an organization or something that ultimately will end up costing someone more money or time. But more often than not, you’ll find that Safety is a necessity of doing business; it’s a “Gotta Have.” And though the value of Safety may often be hidden, it shows itself when it’s most needed: in a Good Catch that could’ve resulted a bad injury; a contract that’s won because of our safety program and injury record; and most importantly, it’s found each night when we return home safely after a hard day at work.

NRC Safety Award

In January, MER attended the annual National Railroad Construction and Maintenance Association (NRC) Conference and accepted the Gold Award in the 2014 NRC/RT&S Safe Railroad Contractor of the Year Contest. This marks the fourth consecutive year that MER has earned an award in the contest, and second consecutive year of winning the Gold Award.

“Each of these companies should be commended for their extensive efforts to promote and improve safety in the rail contracting industry, and for subjecting their full safety program and range of practices to an exhaustive outside review. These companies represent the very best of the NRC and the entire railroad construction and maintenance industry.” – NRC Board of Directors

On behalf of the MER Family of Companies and MER Safety Team, we’d like to thank each and every employee for your commitment to a Best-in-Class safety culture and program; our success in this contest is a direct reflection of your commitment and efforts.

Did You Know?

According to Liberty Mutual (2012), 65% of workers comp costs were made up these five workplace injury causes:

1. *Overexertion (25.3%) - lifting, pushing, pulling, holding, carrying, or throwing*
2. *Falls on Same Level (15.4%)*
3. *Struck By Object or Equipment (8.9%)*
4. *Falls to Lower Level (8.6%)*
5. *Bodily Reaction (7.2%) - bending, crawling, reaching, twisting, climbing, stepping, kneeling, sitting, standing, walking*

<http://tinyurl.com/2014WIS>

Reduced costs from injuries — For example, an amputation might easily cost \$60,000 in direct medical costs and an additional \$60,000 in indirect costs. To recover the total cost of \$120,000, a business with a 3 percent bottom-line profit would have to immediately generate an additional \$4 million in sales to cover the cost of the accident.

Reduced workers' compensation insurance costs — Workers' compensation insurance is a policy that pays the wages and medical costs of an employee who has been injured on the job. The cost of worker's compensation premiums is directly related to the number of claims that have been paid. Companies that take steps to increase the safety of the workplace can significantly reduce their insurance premiums.

Reduced costs associated with vehicles — Drivers that don't have vehicle accidents equates to reduced insurance premiums for the company. What's more, when they have clean driving records, you zero out the risk of legal costs.

Reduced OSHA fines and complaints — The Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 was created to provide employers with guidance in providing workplace safety. Failure to abide by OSHA regulations can cost employers in fines and mandated closures. Safety policies and procedures help companies stay OSHA compliant and prepared for periodic inspections. Staying OSHA compliant also adds protection in the event of a lawsuit by an injured employee or customer. A company's compliance is proof of due diligence to protect people against injury.

Boost productivity — Workers who are healthy and safe feel more motivated and have higher productivity. Additionally, lost

The VALUE of Safety and Health

Companies have a moral obligation to protect their employees and communities as a whole from potential dangers, such as chemical spills, dangerous working conditions and toxicity. Even minor accidents, such as a sprained ankle on unsafe equipment, can have a long-term effect on an employee's earnings potential and their family's financial security. Each day, millions of Americans work hard so they can build a better life for their families, and each day, their employers' goal is to ensure that they return to their families in the same condition they began their day. Every injury prevented is a person kept whole; every life saved is a family preserved intact.

Beyond the moral obligation, how does H&S add value to the business?

Businesses spend \$170 billion a year on costs associated with occupational injuries and illnesses -- expenditures that come straight out of company profits. But workplaces that establish safety and health management systems can reduce their injury and illness costs by 20 to 40 percent. In today's business environment, these costs can be the difference between operating in the black and running in the red.



productivity from injuries and illnesses costs companies \$60 billion each year. Money spent on safety programs goes directly to the bottom line.

In fact, the Liberty Mutual Research Institute for Safety cites an average payback of more than \$4 for every \$1 spent on safety programs. Good luck finding any other investment that generates that kind of return.

Improved reputation — A good reputation takes years to build, but it can be destroyed in a heartbeat. In high-hazard industries, a good safety reputation can make the difference in being awarded a large project or not.

Safe workplaces provide the consistency and reliability needed to build a community and grow a business. Workplaces with active safety and health leadership have fewer injuries, are often rated "better places to work," and have more satisfied and more productive employees.

- <http://tinyurl.com/workchro>
- <http://tinyurl.com/OSHAaddvalue>
- <http://www.entrepreneur.com/article/226990>

There's an App for that!

Run Keeper
Fitness Keeper Inc.



Track your pace, measure workout distance, chart weight loss, crush training goals and more with LifeHacker's 2012 Best Running App! Run-Keeper is the simplest way to improve fitness, whether you're just deciding to get off the couch for a 5k, biking every day, or deep into marathon training.

Lose Weight with a Crazy, Busy Schedule

Is your schedule is totally insane? Between a full-time job, getting the kids to soccer practice and squeezing in time to see friends, it may seem like there's not enough hours in the day to hit the gym or cook a healthy meal, let alone lose weight. But if you want to trim down, there's absolutely no reason your jam-packed life should stand in the way. No matter what the roadblocks may be, there are ways for you to work around them and meet your weight loss goals.

9. Try Snaxercise:

Between unexpected late-night ER calls and a laundry list of errands, making time for weeknight workout sessions may seem nearly impossible. The solution: snaxercise. According to research, multiple, brief, snack-sized portions of exercise may be more effective than a single, continuous workout. Why? Breaking up a workout can help control blood sugar, keeping ravenous hunger at bay. Even super busy people can spare 12 minutes in the morning and 12 minutes in the evening to break a sweat.

8. Break Up With The Vending Machine:

Instead of hitting up the vending machine or office candy bowl when your tummy starts to rumble, keep your desk stocked with healthy snacks. Suggestion: apples, pears and a Larabar® because they don't spoil easily and are loaded with nutrients like fiber and protein that will help crush your 3pm munchies.

7. Change Your Commute:

If a formal exercise program doesn't sound appealing to you, that's not a problem! Instead, burn extra calories each day by making some tiny tweaks to your commute. If you take the bus or subway, get off one stop early and walk the rest of the way. Travel by car? Park at the far end of the parking lot to get in some extra steps. Meeting in a highrise? Take the elevator half the way up and then switch to the stairs.

6. Give Your Kitchen a Makeover:

Swapping bad-for-you fare like sugary cereals and juices for healthier picks will ensure you always have food on hand that will help you reach your goals. Set aside time this weekend to dive into this makeover project. The effort will be well worth your while and won't require much time to maintain moving forward.



5. Rethink Your Drink:

Switching up your beverage is one of the easiest, least time-consuming ways to lose weight. If you drink a 12-ounce, 140-calorie cola each day, you could easily shed a pound in just 25 days by replacing your daily beverage with a no-calorie option like unsweetened iced tea, water or seltzer. Calories also lurk in juices, sports drinks, and fancy coffees.



4. Plan Workout Dates:

Instead of getting together with friends for drinks, meet up for a sweat session. If you like to run, hit the track; if you prefer group fitness, sign up for a strength training or yoga class. Not only will you be less apt to back out of a workout when a buddy is counting on you, working out with friends ensures you won't sacrifice quality time with them. You're much more likely to stick to your new routine if you're not giving up something in the process. Take your significant other with you! A recent JAMA Internal Medicine study of nearly 4,000 couples found that people are more likely to stick to healthy habits like exercise when they team up with their partner.

3. Always Keep Food With You:

When you're trying to lose weight, you need to be prepared with healthy foods whenever hunger strikes. If you aren't, you're more apt to scarf down the first thing in sight—despite its terrible nutritional profile. Mixed nuts or low-cal, portable protein-packed options will chase hunger away.

2. Prepare Make-Ahead Meals:

If you can set aside just two hours over the weekend to cook, you can easily prepare enough healthy food to mix, match and eat throughout the week. Make oats for breakfast, a big pot of brown rice, roast a tray of your favorite veggies, grill up some chicken and chop some fresh produce. Store everything in the refrigerator and mix and match the prepared components throughout the week.

1. Don't Try to Change Everything:

Make healthier choices at fast-food joints and restaurants you're already frequenting. While it may not always be obvious, there are tons of delicious ways to cut hundreds—even thousands—of calories from your daily diet without going hungry or giving up your favorite foods by making smart choices.

<http://tinyurl.com/9waystolose>



MER Commercial Training

MER provides comprehensive health and safety training to all employees within the MER Family of Companies. We believe in providing true education, not just training for compliance. Understanding

Values

Professionalism

Integrity

Mutual Respect

Discipline

Some available courses:

- 40-Hour, 24-Hour, and 8-Hour HAZWOPER
- 8-Hour HAZWOPER Refresher
- Confined Space Entry
- Basic Confined Space Rescue
- OSHA 10/30 Hour in Construction & Maritime
- American Red Cross CPR/First Aid/AED
- Boom Deployment Training
- Emergency Spill Response
- GHS/ Hazard Communications

that not all individuals learn in the same manner, MER's Health and Safety (H&S) Team works to maintain a strong Employee Development Program that provides several types of instruction for maximum comprehension. In our industry, the value of this type of training cannot be understated, and MER's clients agree. In fact, several of MER's clients have requested MER's assistance with improving their health and safety programs and providing training to their employees. We recognize that not every business is the same; each industry requires a different focus for training to be meaningful. As such, the MER H&S Team provides custom tailored classes to meet our clients' exact needs in lieu of the typical "canned" classes. Providing high-quality training both internally and externally is another small part of MER's "Best-In-Class" Health and Safety program.

4th Quarter Driver Awards

We are pleased to announce the 4th quarter winners of the MER Driver Recognition Program (winners listed to the right). Just a reminder the criteria used to help select our quarterly winners is:

- No motor vehicle accidents in 12 months
- No driver log issues in 6 months (if applicable)
- Timely submittal of completed driver vehicle inspection reports
- No moving motor vehicle violations in 12 months
- Maintains vehicle to Moran Standards

Will Register

Savannah, GA

Jeff Magyar

Randolph, MA

Michael Steele

WRI (Jacksonville, FL)

Sam Gabriele

Newark, DE

Employee Development Corner

Because MER is an emergency services provider, we must ensure our Resource Centers, equipment and employees are ready to respond to an emergency response (ER) call, such as a chemical spill or plant shutdown, at any time. In addition to stocking certain material/PPE and ensuring our equipment is fueled/maintained regularly, being prepared for an ER means that MER employees' certifications and training must stay current. In our industry, this can serve as a challenge due to the vast regulatory requirements we must adhere to and our fluid schedules. MER, however, takes pride in providing training in several forms to ensure we accommodate not only the varying schedules and locations, but most importantly, our employees' learning styles.

Additionally, MER is not the only entity within the Family of Companies that regularly completes training. In fact, all of the subsidiaries complete extensive training in order to maintain compliance, service our clients, and ensure our employees are being safe and effective on the job.



As the MER Family of Companies continues to grow, meeting our training needs will remain a challenge; however, MER is committed to providing Best-in-Class training whether it's training on-the-job or in a classroom, hands-on or via webinar, or simply by providing educational resources such as this Safety Brief.

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Safety Brief

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