

Best-In-Class Thoughts

*"Let our advance worrying
become advance thinking and
planning."*

— Winston Churchill

"Failing to plan is planning to fail."

— Alan Lakein

*"Thinking well to be wise: plan-
ning well, wiser: doing well wisest
and best of all."*

— Malcolm Forbes



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Note from Leanne

Every day, every month, and every year we spend valuable time discussing and focusing on employee safety. We have daily tailgate meetings, job hazard analyses, safety training, our monthly Safety Brief and a plethora of other ways to communicate and exercise the value of safety.

As we celebrate National Safety Month, I think the message of this Safety Brief encompasses the true value of our Best-in-Class culture. Everything we do to ensure a safe working environment and teach the importance of working safely is to help provide our employees the opportunity to go home every night and enjoy our lives outside of work.

So as you read through this month's Safety Brief, recognize that though safety is always a priority at MER, we should take this opportunity to place special focus on our safe behaviors this month; that focus and attention will ultimately allow us to enjoy what's most important in our lives: all of the things we live for.

What Do You Live For?

Everyone has something they live to see or experience. No matter what your passion is, we engage in safe behaviors so we can live for what matters to us. National Safety Month, observed annually by the National Safety Council (NSC) in June, focuses on reducing leading causes of injury and death at work, on the road and in our homes and communities. This year, the NSC is celebrating individuals' passions with the theme of, "What I Live For." By sharing stories and resources, we can work together to keep each other safe wherever we are.

In support of the NSC's initiative to raise awareness, this month's Safety Brief features four important topics: Emergency Preparedness; Ergonomics; Slips, Trips and Falls; and Transportation Safety. We ask our employees to review one topic per week along with the NSC safety checklist associated with each topic. If you have did not receive the checklists or need additional information, ask your supervisor or contact the Health and Safety Team.

www.nsc.org/act/events/Pages/national-safety-month.aspx



Did You Know?

In the summer months, lightning is the leading cause of fires. In fact, lightning kills an average of 51 people in the U.S. each year.

If you hear thunder, lightning is nearby.

Inside: Avoid plumbing fixtures and stay away from windows, doors and porches.

Outside: Try to find indoor shelter if possible. If not, try to get off of elevated areas and away from bodies of water. Never lie flat on the ground.

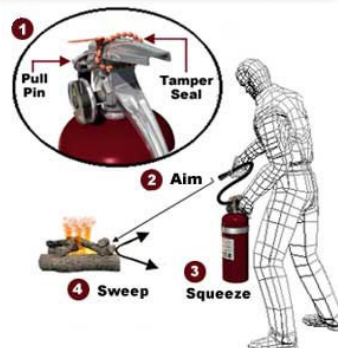


Emergency Preparedness: Taking Control Before Disaster

Be prepared for the unpredictable. Disasters come in all shapes and sizes – and often when you least expect them. By knowing what types of tragedies can occur, you can be better equipped to handle whatever comes your way.

Fires – In only a matter of minutes, a small fire can rage out of control, with temperatures reaching up to 1,500°F. Flames emit carbon monoxide, which is odorless, colorless and tasteless, and can cause immediate unconsciousness.

Take preventative action by ensuring that smoke alarms are installed and functional on every floor of the building. Employees should familiarize themselves with their escape plans, as well as know how to use fire extinguishers and where they are located. Additionally, at a Client's facility, employees should take note of the notification/ alarm systems used on-site and the evacuation route and designated meeting location closest to our work area.



Natural disasters – Mother Nature has her way of surprising us with earthquakes, hurricanes, tornadoes and floods. It's important to be prepared, as help may not be immediately available.

If you're faced with a weather-based emergency, determine the safest course of action and stay up-to-date on weather reports. Always have an emergency kit ready with at least 72 hours' worth of food and water, and know the proper drills for disasters most common in your geographic area.

Workplace violence – The threat of violence in the workplace is very real. According to OSHA, nearly 2 million American workers report having been victims of workplace violence each year, including verbal abuse, physical assault and even homicide. Every worker has a right to feel safe.

The MER Family of Companies has a zero tolerance policy when it comes to workplace violence. Our employees should assess their worksites for risk factors, especially when working late, alone, or in unsafe areas. Notify your supervisor immediately if you need assistance to correct an identified risk factor or unsafe conditions.

Hazardous materials – Gas leaks, chemical spills and strange odors can occur at any time, and can potentially be very dangerous. If you suspect a leak or spill of any kind and you're not trained to respond, remember the E.S.C.A.P.E. acronym: Exit the area, Secure the area, Call 911, Assess the situation, Pull the fire alarm, and Exit the building. It's always better to be safe than sorry.

Bring it home – Disasters aren't limited to the workplace. Though any of the above dangers can have devastating impact on your home, fires are by far the most common – and preventable. Take these tips home with you to keep your family safe:

- ▲ Identify fire risks in your home such as frayed wiring, candles, appliances and heating devices.
- ▲ Never leave food unattended on the stove, keep all matches and lighters out of the reach of children and don't place portable heaters near flammable materials.
- ▲ Plan and practice a family escape route, keeping everyone's physical abilities in mind.



There's an App for that!

Weather Underground



The new Weather Underground app provides the world's most accurate hyper-local weather forecasts in addition to interactive radar, satellite maps and severe weather alerts.

Powered by unique community of weather enthusiasts reporting live data from weather stations in their own backyards, this crowd-sourced data generates forecasts targeted to your precise location.

<http://tinyurl.com/p8uphto> (National Safety Council)

Ergonomics: Combining Comfort and Safety

Fit the job environment to you. You should never have to feel like you need to work through pain to get your job done. By following the principles of ergonomics - the science of designing a safe and efficient job environment to work in – you can reduce stress and eliminate injuries associated with poor posture, overexertion and repetitive motion. Whether you're lifting boxes in a warehouse, placing items in an assembly line or typing on a computer, ergonomic safety is important to everyone.

If gone undetected, ergonomics issues can lead to serious muscle and joint concerns. If you are experiencing pain, swelling or numbness, be sure to pay attention to the following risk factors on the job:

- ◆ Improper workstation setup
- ◆ Working in awkward positions
- ◆ Overexertion while lifting, lowering, pushing, pulling, reaching or stretching
- ◆ Sitting or standing too long in one position
- ◆ Repetitive motions
- ◆ Using excessive force

Fortunately, ergonomic issues can be prevented and improved with early intervention. Here are some simple tips you can follow to avoid discomfort:

- ◆ Take frequent breaks – get up and stretch, walk around or change your scenery.

- Did You Know?**
- ▲ Overexertion is the third leading cause of unintentional injuries in the United States, accounting for about 3.2 million emergency department visits.
 - ▲ Your eyes need a break, too. Every 20 minutes, look 20 feet away for 20 seconds.



Fitness Challenge

Stretching Exercises for Workplace Athletes

Stretching Guidelines:
 Pre-shift and post-lunch
 Warm-up before you begin
 Move slowly & smoothly
 Don't bounce
 Hold for 3-10 seconds
 It shouldn't hurt
 Stretch both sides

Stretching Benefits:
 Lubricates joints
 Increases blood flow
 Increases range of motion
 Reduces muscle stress
 Increases mobility
 Reduces risk of injury

- ◆ Vary the workday – if possible, try to space out different types of tasks.
- ◆ Report pain or discomfort immediately – don't wait until it becomes serious and always inform your supervisor.
- ◆ If you are a supervisor, be sure to monitor your employees and make sure they are taking necessary breaks.

Bring it Home – While ergonomics is most commonly thought of as a workplace safety concern, ergonomic injuries can also result from activities at home and in communities like playing video games, cooking, sewing or home repair. They can also impact your ability to engage in hobbies you enjoy off the job with your family and friends.

Bring your ergonomic safety knowledge home with you:

- ◆ Carry a backpack, purse or laptop case that distributes weight evenly with multiple compartments; if your bag has only one strap, rotate which shoulder you carry it on.
- ◆ Watch your posture at night – one-third of the day is spent in bed; make sure your mattress and pillows support good sleeping postures.
- ◆ Look for ergonomically designed tools – kitchen knives, gardening shovels, rakes – that have grooved handles for your hands.

Don't let an ergonomic injury prevent you from doing what you love. Keep these tips in mind for safe work and play.

<http://tinyurl.com/pxeq3xq> (National Safety Council)



Did You Know?

Nearly a third of all reported fall-from-height incidents in the workplace involve the misuse of ladders.

Make sure to wear clean, dry, slip-resistant shoes when using a ladder.

Every worker is entitled to a safe workplace, and that includes keeping it free of tripping hazards. Slips, trips and falls are the most common workplace incidents, but they're also some of the most preventable. Here are a few of the main dangers to look out for.

Level changes – Any kind of change in elevation, such as stairs, curbs, and ramps can cause a slip up. Make sure you're focused on the area around and ahead of you.

Cords, cables and hoses – Loose cords not only look unsightly, they're also a frequent cause of falls in both homes and workplaces. Keep cords out of the way and taped down.

Slippery surfaces – Slips are especially common in bathrooms, kitchens and near water fountains. Additionally, entrances/exits can be an issue if water and mud are tracked in from shoes. Clean up spills immediately; post a warning sign if the floor is wet.

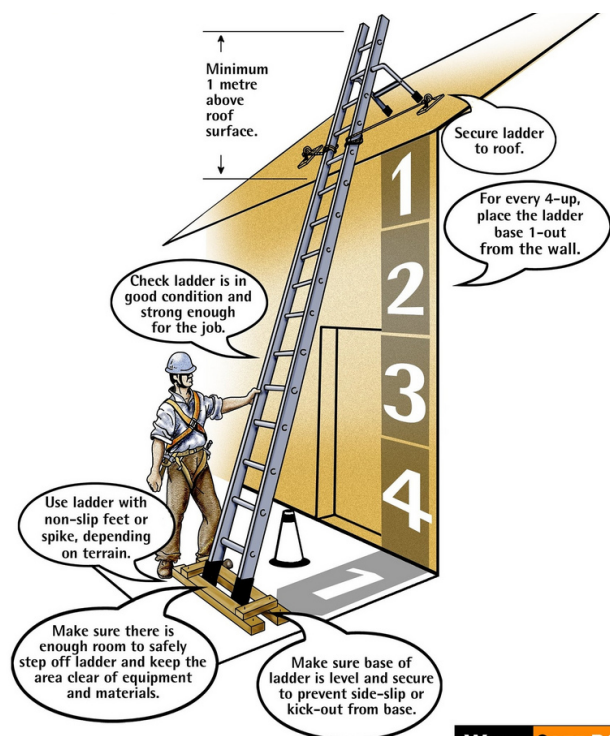
Shoes – Choosing appropriate footwear, such as shoes with proper ankle and heel support and non-skid strips on the bottom, can help reduce your risk of falling.

Damaged ground – A seemingly small crack in the sidewalk or broken tile can easily disrupt your day with a trip or fall. Keep management in the loop if any of these issues arise.

Bringing it home – Though less frequent, falls from a height are often more severe than falls on the same level. Ladders in particular are a tool that we use both at work and at home, so it's important to understand the safety concerns and how to use them correctly.

Think of these tips during your next home project:

- ▲ Choose the right ladder for the job. Make sure you have received training on how to use it properly.
- ▲ Inspect the ladder before and after a job; don't use a damaged or unsafe ladder.
- ▲ When you climb, always face the ladder and grip the rungs, not the siderails.



WORK SAFE BC

Slips, Trips and Falls: Be on the Lookout



There's an App for that!

Ladder Safety

Center for Disease Control and Prevention



The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) is intended to help ladder users, employers, and safety professionals with their extension ladder-related safety needs. The app features a multimodal indicator, which uses visual and sound signals to assist the user in positioning an extension ladder at an optimal angle. Furthermore, it provides graphic-oriented interactive reference materials, safety guidelines and checklists for extension ladder selection, inspection and use.

- ▲ Always keep at least three points of contact with the ladder (i.e., two hands and one foot or two feet and one hand).
- ▲ Do not climb with tools in hand; use a tool belt. Don't stand any higher than the third rung from the top of a ladder.
- ▲ Do not use ladders outdoors in windy or inclement weather; if the weather turns while you are on it, descend immediately.
- ▲ Place base of ladder on a firm, solid surface.
- ▲ Make sure the top of the ladder has firm support, too. Never lean a ladder against a window pane or other unstable surface.

When it comes to slips, trips and falls, knowing what to look out for can make all the difference in your safety.

<http://tinyurl.com/oeondcg> (National Safety Council)



Car Crashes: A Leading Cause of Preventable Death

Nearly 100 people die every day on our roadways in preventable car crashes. Alcohol, speeding, fatigue and distraction are the most common crash factors.



Values

Professionalism

Integrity

Mutual Respect

Discipline

Drunk driving – Every two minutes, a person is injured in a drunk driving crash, and about two in three people will be involved in a drunk driving accident in their lifetime. The .08 national BAC average is not necessarily a true indicator of impairment. Impairment begins at the first drink.

Speeding – Drivers who are speeding need significantly more time to stop or slow down. Also, because crash energy increases along with speed, speeding crashes are more lethal. Although speeding is not confined to one generation, it is prevalent among teens; in fact, more than half of teens killed in crashes were speeding.

Fatigue – Researchers believe fatigue is involved in more crashes than reported. People who sleep six to seven hours a night are twice as likely to be involved in an accident as those sleeping eight hours or more, while people sleeping less than five hours increase crash risk four to five times.

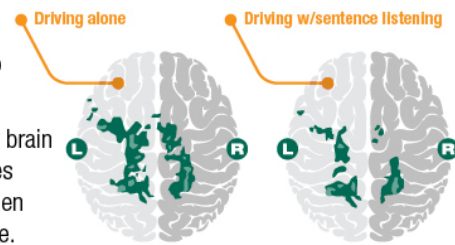
Distracted driving – Drivers talking on cell phones, handheld or hands-free, are four times as likely to crash. Hands-free is not risk-free because the mind is distracted by the conversation and unable to adequately focus on the task of driving.

Teen driving – Half of all teens will be involved in a collision before graduating from high school. Teens crash because they are inexperienced and have trouble merging, making safe turns, judging gaps in traffic and driving the right speed for conditions.

MULTI-TASKING: THE BIG FAT MYTH

The brain quickly toggles between tasks – but can't do two things at the same time.

The activity in the area of the brain that processes moving images **decreases by up to 1/3** when listening to talking on a phone.



Did You Know?

– Every 14 minutes, someone is killed on our roadways.

– Every 8 seconds, someone is injured.

Try going 30 days without using your cell phone while driving, including hands-free. You'll find you're more relaxed when you get to your destination.

Bring it home – You can help save lives on the roads.

- ▲ If you are planning to drink, designate a sober driver or make other transportation arrangements.
- ▲ Drive the appropriate speed for conditions. It's more important to arrive safely than five minutes early.
- ▲ Get plenty of sleep before you drive, and schedule regular breaks to avoid becoming fatigued.
- ▲ Turn off your cell phone and put it in a purse or glove compartment so you're not tempted to use it.
- ▲ Practice with your teen, even after he or she is licensed. Parental involvement significantly reduces teens' crash risk.

<http://tinyurl.com/pvf5g5t> (National Safety Council)

What to Do After a Traffic Accident



*Employees involved in accidents with a MER Family of Companies' vehicle must follow MER's vehicle accident procedures.

MORAN ENVIRONMENTAL
RECOVERY LLC

Safety Brief

PHONE
(251) 284-1525

FAX
(866) 311-4762

EMAIL
safety@
moranenvironmental.com

To receive the Monthly Safety Brief via email, send request to the address above.

