

## Best-In-Class Thoughts

*“Every job is a self-portrait of the person who does it. Autograph your work with excellence.”*

— Author Unknown.



Water Cutting Training – Savannah, GA

## this issue

- Local Management (HOS) **P.1**
- Water Blasting Safety **P.2**
- Lyme Disease and Ticks **P.3**
- Stop Work Authority **P.4**

## Note from Leanne

The MER Family of Companies has a Best-in-Class culture that is anchored in our company’s Core Values: Integrity, Mutual Respect, Professionalism and Discipline. These values help shape the way our organization is run and guide our company towards our Goals, the most important Goal being Safety. Independently, each of these four Values is important for a company to hold in high regard; when placed in combination with each other and applied daily, these Values characterize an organization that strives for excellence and one that will ultimately find success with every Goal established.

With regards to Safety, these Values can be expressed with the following examples:

**Integrity** – Ethical reporting of incidents and injuries. We understand the potential impact on our business, but we choose to report incidents regardless and use a lessons-learned approach to better our organization.

**Mutual Respect** – Looking out for one another and never letting another employee work unsafely or be placed in a situation where they could be harmed. This includes ensuring our employees are fully trained and proficient in whatever tasks we ask them to perform.

**Professionalism** – Following the Hierarchy of Safety to most effectively and efficiently address safety concerns.

**Discipline** – Following our safety policies and procedures everyday, from start to finish. Never taking for granted a seemingly nonthreatening situation and understanding that complacency is the greatest hazard our employees will ever encounter.

## Local Management (Hierarchy of Employee Safety continued)

In June’s Safety Brief, we explained the second level of safety responsibility in The Hierarchy of Employee Safety: Site Supervision. This month, we will review the third level of the hierarchy: Local Management.

There are times when the solution to address an identified safety concern requires more authority than the average employee or Site Supervisor owns. If/when this type of concern presents itself, the next step in addressing the issue is to approach local management with the problem along with at least one solution. An example of this process is when an employee who completes an equipment inspection discovers a safety sensitive function to be defective (e.g. brakes). That employee will be able to place an “Out Of Service” tag on that piece of equipment and replace it with a piece of equipment that is operating safely (that’s coming to the table with a solution). The employee may/may not tell his/her Supervisor about the issue, but to actually address it (repair the brakes), it’s probable that a local manager will have to manage the repair or replacement of that equipment and approve any costs associated with the chosen solution.





## Water Blasting Safety

Water blasting, also known as hydro-blasting or water jetting, is one of the more inherently dangerous industrial services MER provides. While some people think of water blasting as a version of the pressure washer at home, where pressures can reach as high as 4,200 psi, industrial versions operate at pressures up to 40,000 psi. The pressures arising from this equipment are powerful enough to cut through steel, so one can imagine what the stream could do to human flesh.

To properly understand the potential hazards associated with water blasting, it is first necessary to gain a basic understanding of the type of work being performed and the terminology used. Water blasting is a process whereby a stream of pressurized water is aimed at undesirable materials adhering to a substrate, such as the inside of a metal tank or paint on steel, concrete, or other material. The water stream is set at the minimum pressure to remove the unwanted material while at the same time prohibit damage to the substrate material.

There are two options to water jetting. The first is to use a high volume of water at lower pressures, and the second is to use a low volume of water at higher pressures. Both have their particular functions and benefits. Then, the water jet stream is directed through the use of nozzles with various orifice sizes attached to a "shotgun" or "lance."

"Shotgunning" is a hand-held application with an assembly of a lance and a nozzle that can be manually manipulated in virtually all planes of operation.

"Lancing" is used in two forms: flexible and rigid.

- "Rigid Lancing" is an application where a lance or jetting gun extension is fitted with a nozzle, nozzle assembly, or nozzle manifold. The lance is inserted into and retracted from the interior of a tube, tank, or vessel.
- "Flexible Lancing" is using a flexible hose section that carries water to the nozzle, which is normally located between the trigger or control valve and the nozzle. Under normal conditions, flexible lancing presents additional hazards, which includes the flexible hose turning back toward the operator while inside the tube being cleaned. It is extremely important that the lance portion (a rigid section of the hose) be at least as long as the diameter of the tube being cleaned. This will prevent "turning back" of the water blasting hose.



**Water Blasting Injuries** – Water blasting operations involve streams of water under pressure. It is the high pressures that can cause injuries similar to gunshot wounds but have the added health hazard of involving contaminated water. The WaterJet Technology Association has developed a wallet card that provides information to physicians on how to treat water-jetting injuries; all MER employees performing water-blasting operations are required to carry this card.

**Water Blasting Injury Prevention** – As with any new or growing industry, specific standards and regulations regarding water blasting are relatively non-existent. MER, however, strives to take every precaution necessary to protect our employees, and therefore, requires all employees involved in water blasting activities to complete necessary training on equipment operation and cleaning methods. Additionally, MER requires the use of engineering and administrative controls, such as anti-withdrawl devices and whip checks, in addition to proper personal protective equipment (PPE), such as metatarsal boots or Kevlar-plated protective suits. With proper employee education, thorough JHAs, equipment inspections, and our Best-in-Class Safety Culture, these hazards can be mitigated, and water blasting activities can be completed safely.

[ohsonline.com/Articles/2007/10/Prevention-of-Water-Jetting-Injuries.aspx?Page=1](http://ohsonline.com/Articles/2007/10/Prevention-of-Water-Jetting-Injuries.aspx?Page=1)

There's an App for that!

**Guardly**  
Guardly Corp.

*The fastest way to contact family, friends & 911 when you're in danger, and help them to reach and locate you.*

*One-tap quickly connects you with up to 15 safety contacts by conference call and/or private instant messaging.*

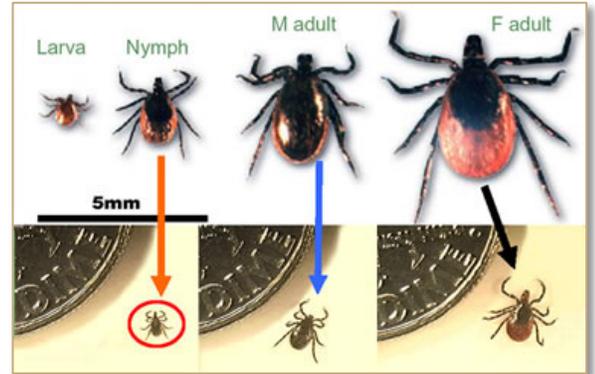
*Advanced GPS location accuracy and more!*

## Lyme Disease and Ticks

Lyme disease is caused by the bacterium *Borrelia burgdorferi* and is transmitted to humans through the bite of infected blacklegged ticks. Ticks are small, insect-like creatures that can attach to you as you brush past bushes, plants, and grass. Once on you, ticks often move to a warm, moist location, like the armpits, groin, and hair. At that point, they typically attach firmly to your skin and begin to draw blood. In most cases in the U.S., a tick must be attached to your body for 24 - 36 hours to spread the bacteria to your blood.

### Tick Bite Prevention – Working Outdoors

- Use insect repellent that contains 20 - 30% DEET.
- Wear clothing that has been treated with permethrin.
- Take a shower as soon as you can after working outdoors.
- Check for ticks, especially in armpits, behind knees, in hair and groin.
- Put clothes in the dryer on high heat for 60 minutes to kill any remaining ticks.



### Fitness Challenge

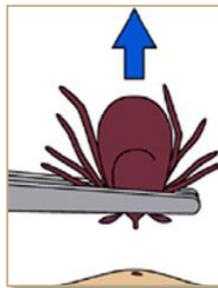
Test 2 (cont. from June)

#### Plank Test

Hold a perfect plank for two minutes. Two minutes might not sound that long, but it'll be tough for many people. Plus, you'll be amazed at how many people drop out when I yell, "Half way!" at 60 seconds. A person needs to prepare mentally for this test, too. If you can't complete the test after a few attempts, there are two reasons: You aren't training your core correctly or you're obese, says Stuart McGill, Ph.D., a professor of spine biomechanics at the University of Waterloo in Ontario. Both of those verdicts mean you have some important work to do, whether it's changing your diet, or spending more time on basic core movements and less time on "tough" workouts that make you puke.

[www.menshealth.com/fitness/3-simple-fitness-tests](http://www.menshealth.com/fitness/3-simple-fitness-tests)

### Removing a Tick



1. Use fine-tipped tweezers to grasp the tick as close to the skin's surface as possible.
2. Pull upward with steady, even pressure. Don't twist or jerk the tick; this can cause the mouth-parts to break off and remain in the skin. If this happens, remove the mouth-parts with tweezers. If you are unable to remove the mouth easily with clean tweezers, leave it alone and let the skin heal.
3. After removing the tick, thoroughly clean the bite area and your hands with rubbing alcohol, an iodine scrub, or soap and water.
4. Dispose of a live tick by submersing it in alcohol, placing it in a sealed bag/container, wrapping it tightly in tape, or flushing it down the toilet. Never crush a tick with your fingers.

### Signs and Symptoms of Lyme Disease - Early Localized Stage (3-30 days post-tick bite)

- Red, expanding rash called erythema migrans (EM) or "bull's eye"
- Fatigue, chills, fever, headache, muscle and joint aches, and swollen lymph nodes

Some people may get these general symptoms in addition to an EM rash, but in others, these general symptoms may be the only evidence of infection.

Some people get a small bump or redness at the site of a tick bite that goes away in 1-2 days, like a mosquito bite. This is not a sign that you have Lyme disease. However, ticks can spread other diseases that may cause a different type of rash.



### When to See a Doctor

See a doctor if you develop a fever, a rash, severe fatigue, facial paralysis, or joint pain within 30 days of being bitten by a tick. Be sure to tell your doctor about your tick bite. If you have these symptoms and work where Lyme disease is common, it is important to get treatment right away. If you do not get treatment, you may later experience severe arthritis and problems with your nerves, spinal cord, brain, or heart.

[www.cdc.gov/lyme](http://www.cdc.gov/lyme)

[www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/002856.htm](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/002856.htm)



## Values

Professionalism

Integrity

Mutual Respect

Discipline

# Stop Work Authority

Stop Work Authority (SWA) is the responsibility and duty of all personnel to stop work when an unsafe condition or act is observed that could affect the safety of personnel and/or the environment. All MER employees have this authority and are encouraged to exercise it when necessary.

A prime example of SWA was demonstrated at a Client's facility while a MER crew was onsite to vacuum material that spilled from a conveyor. Prior to beginning work, MER reviewed and implemented the controls listed in our JHA, including completing LOTO procedures with the Client. Once the original scope of work was complete, however, the Client contact instructed our crew to work in a different area near a running conveyor. MER's supervisor stated that the crew could not work in that area because the conveyor wasn't locked out, but the contact said to proceed with the work. MER's supervisor stopped and contacted the Client's safety representative to verify the procedures necessary to perform work in the new area. As a result, additional LOTO was required, and the Client commended MER for issuing SWA.

## Employee Development Corner

### Anger: Just One Letter Short of DANGER

A recent study by the Annals of Family Medicine found that high levels of anger increase the risk of injury. Angry people are more likely to sustain injuries serious enough to require emergency medical care, and the risk is higher for men than women, says lead author Daniel Vinson of the University of Missouri.

The study found that nearly 32% of all the patients reported being irritable just before they were injured, 18% reported being angry and 13% reported being hostile. Anger more than quadrupled a person's odds of being injured, while being hostile increased those odds sixfold, especially for men. Another study that followed 100 drivers for two weeks linked episodes of anger with "near accidents".

There is little doubt that anger can be a contributing factor in workplace injuries, but what do you do about it?

- Consciously determine to be calm. Don't react, think! Remember your goals and respond appropriately.
- Communicate. When someone upsets you, calmly talk to them about how you feel about their words or actions.
- Remove yourself. Get away from the scene until you can respond without anger. Your success will not happen overnight. Take it one step at a time, one day at a time. Remember to relax. Relaxation exercises or music can be helpful. Keep in mind you can reach out to someone you trust for help.
- Look for the positives. Don't dwell on the negatives. "Don't sweat the small stuff." Don't worry about things that are out of your control. This is difficult, but it's an attitude and behavior that can be learned!

[safetytoolboxtopics.com/Behavioral-Safety/anger-just-one-letter-short-of-danger.html](http://safetytoolboxtopics.com/Behavioral-Safety/anger-just-one-letter-short-of-danger.html)

### Forklift Training

- MER's upcoming Forklift Training will consist of:
  - Formal instruction – **July 16 Webinar**
  - Practical training – Local offices will conduct practical sessions and sign-off trainees
  - Operator Evaluation – Local managers will evaluate performance in the workplace
- Trained operators must be evaluated at least once every three years.
- Refresher training is needed whenever an operator demonstrates a deficiency in the safe operation of the truck.



MORAN ENVIRONMENTAL  
RECOVERY LLC  
Safety Brief

PHONE  
(251) 284-1525

FAX  
(866) 311-4762

EMAIL  
safety@  
moranenvironmental.com

