



Tailgate Safety Talk

Information You Can Use to Prevent Accidents & Injuries

Here are some actual examples of what went wrong in the workplace. You can decide if your work unit needs some refresher training or if there's a better way to do the job.

1. Proper use of an extension ladder? An employee was uncovering a "Watch for Ice on Bridge" for the upcoming winter season. An extension ladder is propped up against the sign. The employee climbs the ladder, but it begins to slip. He grabs the edges of the sign with his bare hands. The sheet metal slices through his hands and down to the muscle and cartilage.

2. Replacing snow plow blades during a storm. Injuries occur every winter season when blades are carried from the stockroom to the truck to replace a worn blade. Trips and falls in the garage or the blade drops out of a hand onto a foot. Shoulder or groin pull from installing the blade or attempting to stack new blades in the storage area.

3. Changing standard dump truck tailgate to spreader gate. Finger amputation due to a crush or catch between the gate and the bed of the truck. Fingers become twisted in chains, or caught because of mis-communication or no communication with the helper. Shoulder and upper arm strains when the cat hole is not kept lubricated so that it opens and closes easily.

4. Climbing off a dump truck or heavy equipment. A foot slips off the step and the employee falls to the ground on his back and hits his head. Another employee manages to catch self by a hand hold and strains a shoulder. Employee catches wedding ring on the equipment and skin is de-gloved. Employee is washing a truck and slips and falls off the dump bed or rear duals. There has even been a case of an employee falling off a rolling ladder supplied for the purpose of washing down equipment.

5. Tree & brush trimming. Employees are injured in unpredictable situations. A tree falls the wrong way and hits an employee on the head, but the injury is minimized by the fact that he is wearing a hard hat. The ER physician says the hard hat probably saved his life. Several injury cases on file when clearing storm damage and not realizing a utility wire is under tension beneath the fallen tree or limbs. When employees start to cut through the tree, tension is suddenly released and someone is hit in the head by either a limb or the wire.

Users of this tailgate talk are advised to determine the suitability of the information as it applies to local situations and work practices and its conformance with applicable laws and regulations.