

TOOLBOX TALK #4

SAFETY BEST PRACTICES THAT CAN HELP

It has been said, “We are what we repeatedly do.” Workers do not purposely disregard safety rules and warnings, but it is easy to get distracted, to become complacent, even with training. Technology aids are great, and engineers work hard to design out hazards, but safety awareness is the greatest protection against accidents. Making safety a habit, every day, requires self-discipline. Know the hazards involved. Be disciplined about using your equipment correctly, and understanding and following all safety requirements, all the time. Following good safety practices not only you, but also everyone who works around you, so we can all go home safely after the job is done.

While worker safety is paramount, a safe jobsite is also a more efficient and productive one. Less downtime from accidents and fewer material, equipment and repair casts are other results of working safely. Here are five safety guidelines that will help you in your daily quest to stay safe on any construction site:

- 1. Follow your company’s safety program.** Never come to work or operate any tool or equipment under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Be aware and alert to any potential hazards in your specific work area. Participate in all required training.
- 2. Know important safety alerts and signal words posted in your work area or on any equipment you operate.** The following words have significant differences in their meaning for safety: DANGER, WARNING, and CAUTION. If you’re not sure what a certain safety alert or signal means, ask your supervisor or safety professional.
- 3. Protect yourself.** Wear all necessary personal protective equipment. Hard hats, gloves, safety glasses and boots may be required in order to work safely on the jobsite.
- 4. Know the rules.** Most employers have rules governing work including that of equipment use and maintenance. Before you start work, check with your supervisor or safety professional to be sure about the rules you are expected to follow.
- 5. Know your equipment.** Make sure you understand the capabilities and hazards of the tools and equipment that you operate. Read the owner’s manuals, safety literature and any other resources made available to you.