



# FASC Safety Council News

*Florida Association of Safety Councils -*

July ~ August, 2004 ~ *Take care! Safety is no accident!*

FASC provides a forum for Florida Safety Councils to examine and act on issues impacting driving, occupational and public safety. FASC develops safety education programs available to member Councils individually or collectively.

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**Contact A Safety Council Near You!**

## Create a Safe Environment at Work



*What's wrong with this picture!*

According to OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration), efforts on behalf of health and safety are good for business. The establishment of good health and safety practices can significantly reduce costs stemming from retraining, absenteeism, lawsuits, product defects, workers' compensation and direct health care costs. In a nutshell, prevention increases productivity, morale, good will and the bottom line. Occupational health and safety makes good business sense.

Workplace injury and illness can frequently exact a large cost on a business. Small businesses often do not have the in-house resources to eliminate or minimize risks.

Because of limited staffing a small business may designate a current staff person as responsible for the health and safety of employees. This person may be someone with limited background who is already overloaded with responsibilities. However, keeping up with regulatory requirements and implementing necessary programs can be overwhelming.

It is not just manufacturing and construction firms that face occupational health and safety hazards. Offices, too, have their own set of concerns, such as indoor air quality, ergonomic hazards of computer work and emergency procedures in case of fire, among others.

Technical expertise is available from many sources. Training for employees and supervisors is available from your local Safety Councils. The Web sites of OSHA ([www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov)) and the

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# July - Eye Injury Prevention Month

July has been officially recognized as Eye Injury Prevention Month. For this reason, a focus is placed on protecting your eyes in various environments, namely the workplace.



Eye injuries of all types occur at a rate of more than 2,000 per day. In particular, an estimated 1,000 eye injuries occur in American workplaces alone. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) found that almost 70% of the eye injuries studied occur from falling or flying objects, or sparks striking the eye.

The best way to prevent injury to the eye is to always wear the appropriate eye protection. Surprisingly, the BLS reports that approximately three out of every five workers injured were either not wearing eye protection at the time of the accident or wearing the wrong kind of eye protection for the job. To be effective, eyewear must fit properly and be designed to effectively protect workers while they work. It is estimated that over 90% of eye injuries are preventable with the use of proper safety eyewear. The Occupational Safety Health Administration, OSHA, has standards that require employers to provide their workers with the appropriate eye protection.

In addition to the proper safety eyewear, early detection and treatment of eye conditions and diseases are essential to maintaining good vision at every stage of life. According to the American Academy of Ophthalmology, AAO, children with a family history of childhood vision problems should be screened for common childhood eye problems before the age of 5. Although most young adults have healthy vision, if eye problems such as visual changes, pain, flashes of light, seeing spots, excessive tearing, and excessive dryness occur, they should see an eye doctor. Adults between the ages of 40 to 65 should have an eye exam every two to four years. Adults over the age of 65 should have an eye exam at least every one to two years. Ultimately, the key to preventing eye injuries is to take a more proactive approach to sustaining healthy vision. <<

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National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health ([www.cdc.gov/niosh](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh)) cover a large range of topics. Of particular value is the "OSHA Handbook for Small Business." Also very useful are self-inspection checklists that help focus health and safety efforts at the operating level.

It takes commitment from top management to reduce risks and promote safety. While the leadership cannot be expected to master the technical details, they can signal to the rest of the organization what their priorities are.

Employees and their supervisors take their cues from top management. If that management pays serious attention to safety, the rest of the organization will get the message. Together, they can establish an environment that is safer for everyone. <<

## Before Operating an Aerial Lift

Check operating and emergency controls, safety devices (such as, outriggers and guardrails), personal fall-protection gear, wheels and tires, and other items specified by the manufacturer. Look for possible leaks (air, hydraulic fluid, and fuel-system) and loose or missing parts.

Check where the lift will be used. Look for a level surface that won't shift. Check the slope of the ground or floor; do not work on steep slopes that exceed slope limits listed by the manufacturer. Look for hazards, such as, holes, drop-offs, bumps, and debris, and overhead power lines and other obstructions. Set outriggers, brakes, and wheel chocks – even if you're working on a level area.

Your employer should:

- Provide required manuals to operators and maintenance mechanics.
- Be sure operators and mechanics are trained by a qualified person experienced with the model of aerial lift. <<

## Late Day Driving

Deaths due to vehicle collisions take place three times more often in night-driving situations. So pay special attention while driving in the late afternoon, early evening,



and early morning hours, times when many of us commute to and from home. When driving long distances, particularly at night, stay alert by turning on the radio or stopping every hour or two to stretch, drink coffee, or eat a light snack. If you feel drowsy, pull over to a well-lit public area and take a break or short nap.

### Some of the dangers associated with night driving are:

- visibility may be reduced.
- peripheral vision is not as sharp.
- darkness impairs your ability to judge distances, movements, and colors.
- early morning and late afternoon are prime times for drowsiness.

### Use the following precautions to prevent yourself from becoming a statistic:

- use the visors in the vehicle and wear sunglasses to fight glare at sunrise and sunset. Don't wear your sunglasses when driving in low light conditions.
- turn on your headlights at twilight (better yet, drive with them at all hours to be more visible).
- give your eyes a few extra minutes to adjust to the darkness before driving at night.
- slow down and leave more distance between you and the vehicle ahead of you (minimum of 300 feet is recommended).
- don't look directly at the lights of an approaching vehicle, instead look forward and slightly to the right. The bold shoulder stripe is a good guide.
- change the rearview mirror to the night position to minimize glare from vehicles behind you. <<

## Are You an Aggressive Driver?

### Do you...

- Speed up when someone tries to pass you?
- Tailgate people who are going slower than you?
- Weave in and out of traffic?
- Pass cars on the right?
- Flash your headlights at vehicles?
- Overuse your horn?
- Make obscene gestures?
- Yell out your window at people?
- Race for a position on the highway?

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration considers these behaviors aggressive. So next time, think twice before doing any of these things. <<

## eLCOSH

### A Resource on Construction Safety and Health

Starting in August 2000, a new web site, the Electronic Library of Construction Safety and Health, eLCOSH (<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/elcosh.html>), started providing a wide range of materials on construction safety and health. The goal of this website is to improve safety and health for construction workers by making such information easy to obtain. Information is downloadable from a broad range of sources—in English, Spanish, and other languages. Some of the materials available are:

- Pocket cards
- Brochures
- How-to manuals
- Chart Books
- Newsletters
- Research reports
- Training manuals and overheads
- Data sets
- Bibliographies
- Regulations...and more! <<



# Fireworks Safety

Fireworks, often the centerpiece of many celebrations, especially July 4, can actually be very dangerous.



According to Prevent Blindness America, from 1980-1994, fireworks accounted for 29 fires, 65 explosions, and 114 deaths. And, almost half of the injured were young people 19 years old and under.

Sparklers are perhaps even more dangerous because many people think of them as harmless fireworks that children can use. But, sparklers are the second highest cause of fireworks-related injuries requiring trips to the emergency room. Sparklers can potentially catch clothes or hair on fire, and they can heat up to 1800 degrees Fahrenheit (hot enough to melt gold).

## Following are some fireworks safety tips:

- Take your family to see a professional fireworks display rather than do it yourself.
- Don't let children play with fireworks.
- Avoid sparklers.
- Never attempt to make your own fireworks.
- Stay away from other people who are using sparklers.
- Have water on hand if you are around fireworks (water hose and bucket).
- Know where the closest phone is located or better yet carry a cell phone just in case an emergency occurs.

**Stay safe.** Enjoy the holiday—**this year and next!** <<

The *Safety Council News* is published six times a year to keep business and industry informed of the Florida Association of Safety Council's activities and safety and health news and developments. NOTE: The information herein was obtained from sources believed reliable and the Association has exercised reasonable care to assure its accuracy. However, the Florida Association of Safety Councils does not guarantee that the contents of the *Safety Council News* are correct and statements from other sources do not necessarily reflect the opinion or position of the Association.