

Sitting better than standing on the job

(www.blr.com)

A recent study from the American Journal of Epidemiology revealed that sitting at work might not be as bad for you as was once thought. The study found that people who stand on the job are twice as likely as those who primarily sit to have a heart attack or congestive heart failure. The research study was led by the Canada-based Institute for Work & Health (IWH).

The sample included 7,320 Canadian workers who were initially free of heart disease and worked at least 15 hours per week. Within the group, 9 percent were estimated to predominantly stand, and 37 percent mostly sat. These workers were followed for 12 years from 2003 to 2015.

During the period, 3.4 percent of the study group developed heart disease. Without taking other factors into account, the risk of heart disease was higher among those whose jobs kept them mostly standing. After adjusting for personal factors like age, gender, and education; health conditions like diabetes, hypertension, and anxiety disorders; physical demands of the job; and health behaviors like smoking and drinking, the risk of heart disease was still twice as high among those who stood.

Peter Smith, PhD, concluded, "A combination of sitting, standing, and moving on the job is likely to have the greatest benefits for heart health."



OSHA's Top Ten (www.safetyandhealthmagazine.com)

The preliminary list of OSHA's Top 10 violations for Fiscal Year 2017 remained largely unchanged from FY 2016, except for one new addition: Fall Protection – Training Requirements (1926.503) entered the list at No. 9 with 1,523 violations, just ahead of Electrical – Wiring Methods (1,405 violations). The entire list was revealed during the 2017 National Safety Council's Congress & Expo. The top five remained identical to the FY 2016 list, with Fall Protection – General Requirements at No. 1 by a wide margin with 6,072 violations. In a distant second was Hazard Communication with 4,176.

Patrick Kapust, deputy director of OSHA's Directorate of Enforcement Programs, and Kevin Druley, associate editor for Safety+Health, presented the preliminary data for FY 2017,

which ended Sept. 30. "One thing I've said before in the past on this is, this list doesn't change too much from year to year. These things are readily fixable," Kapust said during the presentation. "I encourage folks to use this list and look at your own workplace."

- The full list:
- Fall Protection – General Requirements (1926.501): 6,072 violations
 - Hazard Communication (1910.1200): 4,176
 - Scaffolding (1926.451): 3,288
 - Respiratory Protection (1910.134): 3,097
 - Lockout/Tagout (1910.147): 2,877
 - Ladders (1926.1053): 2,241

- Powered Industrial Trucks (1910.178): 2,162
 - Machine Guarding (1910.212): 1,933
 - Fall Protection – Training Requirements: 1,523
 - Electrical – Wiring Methods (1910.305): 1,405
- "The OSHA Top 10 is more than just a list, it is a blueprint for keeping workers safe," NSC President and CEO Deborah A.P. Hersman said in a Sept. 26 press release. "When we all work together to address hazards, we can do the best job possible to ensure employees go home safely each day."



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OSHA Inspections: Part 1 of 2 Steps of the Inspection (www.ciras.iastate.edu)

Just like a traffic stop, OSHA inspections can cause high levels of anxiety for all involved. However, most of that anxiety can be attributed to not knowing what an inspection entails or how to prepare for one. In this two part article we will look at, first the steps that all inspections have to follow, and then how to prepare for a surprise inspection that shows up at your door. The second part of the article will follow in the next issue of our newsletter.

All OSHA inspections have prescribed steps, and you should be aware of all of them. You have a basic right as an employer to expect that the inspection is conducted at a reasonable time and in a reasonable manner. The following steps are mandatory for the inspectors:

Entry: The first thing an inspector should do is ask for an official of the employer and present official credentials identifying himself or herself as an inspector.

Opening interview: The inspector will begin talking about the facility or visiting with the employer's representative. At this time, all employers should be freely given the following information about the inspection:

- The extent of the inspection or of the limits of the inspection
- The reason for the inspection
- Approximately how long the inspection will take

SafetyFestMT (safetyfestmt.dli.mt.gov)

SafetyFestMT provides free quality training to employers and their workers throughout Montana. Just as the needs of each community in Montana are diverse and unique so is each SafetyFest. Every event is geared towards the community hosting it. Along with a core curriculum consisting of classes such as OSHA 10-Hour General Industry, OSHA 10-Hour Construction,

Work Comp 101, Stay at Work/Return to Work, and others, SafetyFest provides classes that are geared towards specific needs of the region. Whether you're a seasoned safety professional, or just getting started; you can pick and choose the classes you need. SafetyFest has tools to help you create a culture of safety in your workplace. To date thousands of Montanans from a variety of industries have attended SafetyFest. Business owners,

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- How the inspector will conduct the inspection

Review of records: The inspector will review the past five years of OSHA 300 log records and all of the employer's written programs. Copies may be requested so that the inspector may return to the home office and review the written materials in greater detail. You are required to make copies of written programs and OSHA records available to the inspector if they are requested.

Employee interviews: The inspector may interview a prescribed number of employees. These are usually confidential interviews unless the employee would like to have you present, and some do. An employee may also request to have a union representative present or refuse to talk to an inspector all together.

The inspection/Walkaround: The inspector will walk through the facility, or work site, note alleged violations, and photograph and document those conditions believed to represent a violation. If the inspection has come about as the result of a reported complaint then the inspector is obliged to focus on the area of the complaint and not make a complete general inspection of the entire operation.

Closing conference: After the walkaround, the inspector holds a closing conference with the employer and an employee representative(s) to discuss the findings. The inspector also discusses possible courses of action an employer may take following the inspection, which could include an informal conference with OSHA or contesting citations and proposed penalties. The inspector will also discuss consultation services and employee rights.



front line managers, employees, safety professionals, job seekers and average citizens have attended SafetyFest. The variety of classes offered allows for a more diverse audience. We encourage you, whether you work in the trades, on a farm or in an office to attend an upcoming event in your area.

Kalispell-January 8-12, 2018
Miles City-May 15-17, 2018

Outdoor Holiday Light Safety

(Dave Burtner, www.topbulb.com)

It's that time of year for hanging lights around the house to celebrate the season. Whether you regard this ritual as a chore or a challenge to create an show stopping display, the lighting industry now gives you a multitude of new lighting options and control systems to tempt your imagination.

Before you grab the ladder and drag the boxes of Christmas lights from the attic or stock up on new string lights, icicle lights and net lights, take some time to consider set-up and installation safety.

- Make sure your ladder is sturdy. Secure it, if necessary, with insulated holders. Select, Inspect, Erect.
- If you must use a metal ladder, keep well away from overhead power lines.
- When installing lights along gutters, work from the ladder, not from on the roof.
- Use plastic gutter clips that secure the light strings safely over the front edge of the gutter.
- Do not install lights on trees that come in contact with power lines.
- Use a ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) outlet as your power source. If you don't have one, you can purchase a portable one (about \$20) from your home improvement store. Unless these portable GFCI units are covered for outdoor use, they must be installed in a garage or otherwise out of the weather.
- Only use extension cords with three-pronged plugs.



- Only use extension cords marked "For Outdoor Use".
- Organize and secure extension cords so they are out of the way. If they need to cross sidewalks or paths make sure they are either covered with a dedicated cord protector (preferred) or taped to the sidewalk with strong, waterproof tape. This is to avoid slip, trip, and fall hazards.
- Never connect together more than the recommended number of light strings. Consult owners manual.
- Make sure the light strings are rated for outdoor use.

Portable Heater Safety (www.blr.com)

During the cold winter months, heating-related safety is of utmost concern, especially if you want to use a portable electric heater to keep your work area safe. First, check with your supervisor regarding your company's policy regarding these heaters.

If portable electric heaters are allowed, follow these general safety guidelines from the North Dakota Fire Marshal

Division to help keep you, your home, and your workplace safe:

- Check that electric heaters have the Underwriters Lab® (UL) approval label and an automatic safety switch that turns off the appliance if it is tipped over.
- Examine cords before plugging in the heater, and if the cords are frayed, worn, or broken, do not use the heater. Either replace the heater or have an electrician replace the cord. Just putting tape on the cord is not enough to prevent overheating and fire.
- Never use extension cords with portable heaters. Using a small, ordinary utility extension cord with a portable heater will cause the cord to overheat and burn.
- Keep all materials that can burn at least 36 inches away from the unit.

Interesting Claims (Fast Food Edition) (www.claimcrazy.com)

- You just know this is going to be a laughable workers' compensation claim! From the headlines... A man in Florida has been accused of throwing a live alligator into a Wendy's restaurant. Apparently after the employee handed the suspect his drink and turned around the customer tossed a living alligator into the drive through window! No one was injured, but you know that there could be a workers' compensation claim or two coming from this incident! For those that are interested, the alligator survived.
- We received a claim from a fast food restaurant. An employee filed a stress claim after an attempted robbery. That sounds reasonable and acceptable. What was odd was the way the "robbery" ended... A man walked into the restaurant at 6:30am and pulled out a gun and demanded all the cash in the register. The employee/claimant turned him down because he said he couldn't open the cash register without a food order. When the man ordered onion rings, the clerk said they weren't available for breakfast... The gunman simply walked away!



Don't Forget Your Winter PPE (www.dxb-safe.com)

Cold weather can endanger the lives of workers whose jobs put them in the midst of frigid temperatures and extreme weather conditions. According to OSHA, protective clothing is recommended for work at or below 4 degrees Celsius or below 39.2 degrees Fahrenheit.

If outdoor workers are outfitted with proper PPE, their risks of getting hypothermia, frostbite, or catching a cold are greatly diminished. Bad weather and storms often limit visibility, so if the PPE has high-visibility features, such as reflective tape, the risk of being struck by a vehicle is also decreased. A side benefit of wearing proper PPE in harsh elements is that workers are more

comfortable, which helps to improve performance and productivity.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) says that hypothermia results when body temperature is below 95 degrees and often occurs from prolonged exposure to cold temperatures. Warning signs include confusion, memory loss, slurred speech, shivering, and drowsiness. According to the CDC, hypothermia "requires emergency medical assistance."

Frostbite most often affects fingers, toes, the nose, ears, chin, and cheeks. Amputation can result from extreme cases. An initial warning sign of frost-

bite is pain and redness in the skin. If the skin is not protected, the skin area becomes a grayish-yellow or white. Or, the skin may become waxy and unusually firm or numb. Like hypothermia, frostbite requires medical care.

The risk of becoming a victim to hypothermia, frostbite, and other cold injuries can be greatly reduced by wearing proper PPE.



Tips to Stay Safe in a Natural Disaster (www.travelers.com)

No one expects to be caught in a potentially dangerous and extreme situation such as a natural disaster. If the unthinkable does occur, having a plan and knowing what to do could make all the difference for you and your loved ones. These four tips can help you stay safe during a disaster.

- If you have not been ordered to evacuate, stay in a safe area or shelter during a natural disaster. In your home, a safe area may be a ground floor interior room, closet or bathroom. Be sure you have

access to your survival kit in case you are in an emergency event that lasts several days.

- Listen to your portable radio for important updates and instructions from local authorities. Remember to have a battery-powered radio in your survival kit. Some radios are now equipped with multiple power sources, such as batteries, solar panels and a hand crank.
- If power is lost, use a generator with caution. Make sure conditions are safe before operating a portable

generator. Only operate it outside — away from windows, doors or vents to avoid harmful exhaust fumes. Follow all manufacturer's instructions.

- Stay in your safe area and do not drive until the danger has passed. Resist the temptation to check on your property until you are sure it is safe to do so



Reduce Your Chance of Heart Disease (www.safetyandhealthmagazine.com)

Engaging in 30 minutes of moderate activity including household chores and walking to work most days could decrease the risk of cardiovascular disease and early death, according to a new study.

Researchers analyzed physical activity survey responses from about 130,000 adults ages 35 to 70 in 17 countries from the Prospective Urban and Rural Epidemiological Study. Respondents were followed for almost seven years. The researchers found that fulfilling World Health Organization recommendations of exercising moderately for at

least 150 minutes a week prevented 1 in 20 cases of cardiovascular disease and 1 in 12 early deaths. Longer activity produced greater benefits: Exercising for more than 750 minutes a week was found to reduce 13 percent of early deaths and 10 percent of cardiovascular disease cases.

"Meeting physical activity guidelines by walking for as little as 30 minutes most days of the week has a substantial benefit, and higher physical activity is associated with even lower risks," lead study author Scott Lear, Simon Fraser University professor in the faculty of

health sciences, said in a Sept. 22 press release.

