



Safety News

ISSUE TWO, 2008

STATE COMPENSATION INSURANCE FUND

Chemical Storage Safety

Chemicals are routinely relied upon to get the work done. But just as important as the safe handling of these chemicals is their safe storage. If not stored properly, chemicals can cause a fire, explosion or personal injury. There are some real and common sense safe storage procedures that should be followed to keep workers and the workplace free of chemical-related accidents.

The most important factor in chemical storage safety is keeping chemicals in their original containers. Next, check that each chemical container has a label. The label is a quick way of determining whether the material is a fire, health or reactivity hazard. Read the chemical's Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS).

The MSDS describes the chemical's properties, hazards, and what to do if there's an accidental spill or exposure. Use the MSDS as a guide for making storage decisions.

Store chemicals in well-ventilated areas away from direct sunlight or other heat source, and away from sparks, flames, static electricity or other sources of ignition. Make sure the storage shelving material is acid resistant, secured to a permanent structure, and strong enough to support the weight of the containers. Shelving should be fitted with a raised lip or tilted slightly

backward so containers won't slip off the edge. You may choose to color code the containers to correspond to the color on the shelf where it should be stored for quick access and proper storage return. Never store chemicals higher than eye level. If the chemical is accidentally knocked over you could risk being showered with the chemical substance resulting in a burn or possible blindness. For added safety, make sure

first aid kits, shower and eye wash stations, and materials for cleaning spilled chemicals are readily accessible.

Chemicals should be placed so that incompatible substances are stored apart. Chemical containers should not be stored on top of each

other or on the floor where they could accidentally be knocked over. Take the time to return containers to their proper storage place.

Maintenance is another important factor in safe chemical storage. Someone should be assigned to periodically inventory the chemicals not only to check for proper storage but to also check for damaged or corroded containers, and for signs of leakage or container pressure buildup. Make sure empty or damaged chemicals are disposed of properly. □



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STATE
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The Expert's Corner

Grip Force And Gloves

People wear gloves for many different reasons and occasions. Whether people are making fashion statements, participating in their favorite pastime, or simply working, properly fitting gloves can be an important accessory for completing tasks comfortably, efficiently, and safely. Gloves improve grip when handling tools and slippery objects, and they protect the hands from extreme temperatures, sharp or abrasive materials, and guard against the effects of toxic and corrosive substances.

While gloves provide excellent protection against many hazards, they can be hazardous if they do not fit properly. When gloves are too loose, extra force needs to be applied in order to get a good firm grip. Because of this, there is a loss of grip strength, in comparison to not wearing any gloves at all. This, in effect, causes double work: performing the job at hand and overcoming any movement or slippage from the glove. On the other hand, when gloves are too tight, they interfere with grasping, dexterity, and finger movement. Additional force is needed in order to flex the tight

gloves, especially if they are thick.

Wearing ill-fitting gloves requires the wearer to apply additional grip force that would not be required if the gloves fit correctly. Over time, greater grip forces applied can lead to fatigue, discomfort, and eventual injury to the hands and arms.



The following points should be considered when selecting the right glove for the job:

- Gloves with rubber dots on the surface increase grip stability on surfaces that are slippery (e.g., wet items or items

without handles).

- For slippery surfaces, workers use greater grip force when wearing cotton gloves than with rubber gloves. Cotton gloves perform better with non-slippery surfaces.
- Rubber gloves allow employees to maintain relatively low grip force levels for both slippery and non-slippery surfaces.
- Studies by the University of Osaka suggest that rubber gloves help reduce force and provide more efficient control than cotton gloves in tasks requiring precision handling of small objects.
- Performance time for cotton gloves tends to be longer than that for rubber gloves.
- In addition to carefully selecting the type of glove provided to workers, gloves of different sizes should also be provided.

Information above refers to a research study conducted at the School of Health and Sport Sciences at the University of Osaka, Japan. □

Lou Vicario is one of State Fund's Certified Associate Ergonomists based in Southern California.

Check Out State Fund's Online IIPP Builder

Since 1991, the California Code of Regulations has required employers to establish, implement, and maintain an effective Injury and Illness Prevention Program (IIPP) to ensure that all California employers meet their legal obligation to provide and maintain a safe and healthy workplace for their employees.

An IIPP is a written plan that details the required steps employers must take to protect their employees from workplace hazards. If a

Cal/OSHA inspector visits a workplace, one of the first things he/she will ask is to see the company's IIPP. The benefits of having an effective IIPP include: reducing work-related injuries and illnesses, decreasing financial losses resulting from work-related injuries, and avoiding costly Cal/OSHA fines.

As a service to our policyholders, State Fund has developed an online tool called the IIPP Builder. This interactive tool enables you to create an Injury and Illness Prevention

Program specific to your business operation and allows you to download various forms and checklists to use when implementing your IIPP. The IIPP Builder contains tutorials that will guide you through the steps necessary to compose your customized safety program. The IIPP Builder will not only enable you to create and update your IIPP, it's also designed to help you understand IIPP requirements and to determine if your

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Pre-Train For Every Job

First experiences leave lasting impressions. That's why it's so important for workers to get pre-job training for any new work assignment.

Pre-job training is different from new employee training which is general safety instruction given to all new workers. Pre-job safety training is the instruction given to a worker performing a job for the first time or performing a job done infrequently and to workers assigned to a job with particular hazards. And, if a worker is re-assigned to a different job, pre-job training should be given for that new job.

Employers shouldn't assume that the safe way to perform a job is obvious, even to experienced workers. And, they shouldn't accept comments that workers "know how to do the job" or "don't need training." Once training is given, the worker should be observed to see that the job is being performed correctly and that training was understood.

Pre-job training is especially important for jobs that



have a potential for serious accidents. Pre-job training should be given when the work assignment requires special protective equipment. Instruction should include what equipment is required, how to inspect it to insure it will provide the maximum protection, how to correctly use the equipment, and how to care for it. And, the pre-job training should include the precautions to be taken to safeguard

other workers in the area. Employers should also make sure that workers choose and use proper tools and insure that they are in good condition.

Even after training is given, instructors should make periodic inspections of job performance to spot unsafe actions. For example, where workers are in a hurry and take unsafe shortcuts, when they use the wrong tool or use makeshift or substitute tools

and equipment, and when they bypass a guard or a lockout procedure for that "quick fix." Part of any pre-training should be to emphasize that no matter what the work schedule dictates, there's always time to do the job safely. □

Call Before You Dig

Excavations are performed daily throughout California and most are done safely and responsibly by companies that are aware of the vast underground network of pipes and cables that provide customers with natural gas, electricity, water, sewage, telecommunications, crude oil, and other vital products and services. A critical step in preventing damage to that network and injury to individuals is the one-call Underground Service Alert (USA) system.

A call to USA triggers notification of its members who have underground facilities at the excavation site and provides the excavator with an "inquiry identification number". Digging without an inquiry identification number is illegal in California (Government Code Section 4216) and can result in fines and the cost of all damages, not only to the owner and operator of the underground facility, but also to any third party. An emergency situation does not relieve the excavator of damage-ensuing financial responsibilities.

Don't risk incurring a fine or an injury by simply calling 811 before you dig. In northern and central California, visit USA at their website www.usanorth.org. In southern California, visit Dig Alert at their website www.digalert.org. □

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IIPP meets Cal/OSHA requirements.

The IIPP Builder – which requires either Internet Explorer 5.5 or higher or Adobe Acrobat 5.0 or higher – is available exclusively to our policyholders through State Fund Online (a free online resource tool that allows you to quickly and easily manage your policy round-the-clock). If you're not currently a State Fund Online user, register now at www.scif.com and begin building your IIPP today.

State Fund recognizes that an employer's loss control efforts help to decrease the frequency and severity of illnesses and injuries in the work environment. We are committed to the belief that a safe

workplace can increase productivity and lower workers' compensation costs and are proud of our role in helping you develop and enhance your safety programs.

For questions about the IIPP Builder, contact your State Fund Loss Control Consultant, call State Fund Online Support at 1-866-721-3498, or email us at iipp@scif.com. The IIPP Builder is just one of many products State Fund has developed to help you control costs as well as lower employee work-related injuries and illnesses. To find out about additional products and services available to State Fund policyholders, visit www.scif.com. □

Safety Topic

Safety News

State Compensation Insurance Fund

Issue Two, 2008



Protect Your Eyes Against UV Radiation

If you work outdoors, you are at risk for UV radiation exposure. Because you can't actually see or feel UV radiation, you may not even know you're being injured until it's too late. But, if you're aware of the UV risk factors and take appropriate safety precautions, you can protect your eyes and your vision from UV radiation damage.

There are different conditions that can affect the amount of UV radiation exposure. For example, UV radiation levels vary with the time of day, the time of year, the altitude, the working surface, and how close you are to the equator. As the sun rises higher in the sky during the day, the UV radiation level also increases. Levels are usually greatest between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. UV radiation levels are generally highest under sunny skies, but even if it's cloudy or overcast, UV radiation levels can be high. Radiation levels increase as you go up in altitude or get closer to the equator. UV radiation can also be increased by its reflection off of certain surfaces (water, light or shiny surfaces, snow, etc.).

How can you protect your eyes from UV



radiation? Wear UV-absorbent sunglasses or other UV protective eyewear. The sunglasses do not have to be expensive, but they should block out 99 or 100% of all ultraviolet light. Check the label to make sure they do. Look for the words

“blockage” and “absorption” rather than just “protection” on the label. Darker glasses are not necessarily the best. UV protection comes from an invisible chemical applied to the lenses and not from the color or darkness of the lenses. Take good care of your glasses so that

they will provide maximum protection. Clean and store them properly and replace scratched, broken, bent or ill-fitting eyewear.

When you're working outdoors and you have to squint your eyes, it's a sign that you should be wearing UV protective sunglasses or other UV protective eyewear. Get in the habit of wearing UV protective eyewear and seeing your optometrist for regular eye-health exams. □

TOPIC REVIEW

Instructor _____

Date _____

Location _____

Attended By

Safety Recommendations



Safety News

News about Occupational Safety and Health in
State Contract Agencies

STATE COMPENSATION INSURANCE FUND

Loss Control Services

P.O. BOX 420807
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94142-0807



PRSR STD
US POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT 740
ZIP CODE 92801

Please forward to the person responsible for your safety program

News about Occupational Safety and Health in State Contract Agencies

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How to Order State Fund Safety Materials and Audio Visuals

To order **safety materials** from State Fund's Safety Materials Catalog, State Contract Agencies must complete the *Safety & Health Services Materials Order Form* and include the listed catalog item number and quantity. The cost of each item for State Contract Agencies is \$1.00 with a required \$50.00 minimum order per order form. Prior to shipping, all orders must be prepaid by check payable to State Compensation Insurance Fund and sent along with the order form to:

State Compensation Insurance Fund
Safety and Health Services Dept.
1275 Market Street, Room 630
San Francisco, CA 94103
Attn: Safety Materials Coordinator

OR

State Compensation Insurance Fund
Safety and Health Services Dept.
P.O. Box 420807
San Francisco, CA 94120-7264
Attn: Safety Materials Coordinator

To request a copy of the Safety Material Catalog or for questions about safety materials, contact the Safety and Health Services department at 415-975-2400 and ask for the Safety Materials Coordinator.

Audio videos are available to State Contract Agencies free of charge by State Fund. To request a video, Agencies must complete the *State Contract Audio Visual Request Form* and submit it directly to the Safety and Health Services Audio Visual Library. Videos are mailed at least one week prior to the viewing date and must be returned within seven days of the viewing date. Audio visuals must be returned in bubble-wrap, padded envelope or secure box to prevent damage. They must be shipped UPS Ground

or by "PRIORITY" U.S. mail and be insured for \$400.00 each. The borrowing Agency assumes responsibility for replacements costs for all lost videos and will be billed for replacement by State Fund.

All audio visual requests must include: the name of the requesting State Contract Agency Department; the name and phone number of the Agency contact person responsible; and the desired viewing date. No more than three audio visuals may be held by an Agency location at any one time. Additional requests for audio visuals will not be sent out until all outstanding videos have been returned. Agencies may mail audio visual requests to:

State Compensation Insurance Fund
Safety and Health Services A/V Library
1275 Market Street, Room 630
San Francisco, CA 94103
Attn: Safety Materials Coordinator

OR
State Compensation Insurance Fund
Safety and Health Services A/V Library
P.O. Box 420807
San Francisco, CA 94120-7264
Attn: Safety Materials Coordinator

Audiovisuals may also be requested by:
FAX – (415) 975-2444
Phone – (415)-975-2415
E-mail – avlibrary@scif.com

To request a free copy of the **Audio Visual Catalog**, contact the Safety and Health Services A/V Library as listed above. ☐

This State Contract Agencies Safety News is produced by the Safety and Health Services Department of State Fund to assist clients in their loss control efforts. Information or recommendations contained in this publication were obtained from sources believed to be reliable at the date of publication. Information is only advisory and does not presume to be exhaustive or inclusive of all workplace hazards or situations. Permission to reprint articles subject to approval by State Compensation Insurance Fund.

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