

1. Change behaviors.
2. Challenge ourselves to re-think how we work.
3. Certify the results on a daily basis.



Tool Box Talk

Week of April 19th, 2010

OSHA's Focus Four Inspections

April's safety topic is "OSHA's Focus Four Inspections." We will continue to discuss examples the Focus Four hazards - falls, struck-by, caught between, electrical hazards and provide insight on prevention at JJ White work sites. This week focus is "struck-by and caught between" hazards.

Struck-by hazards come in a variety of sources and sizes, from a large vehicle to small object traveling at very high speed. The hazard could be directly in front of you, on either side of you, behind you, over your head, or underneath you. The hazardous source can be mechanical, pneumatic, hydraulic, gravity, chemical (contact or reaction), failure of a vessel, pipe, fitting, relief device or even a safety device. It could be a tool, a blade, a grinding wheel or a load released overhead. All of these hazards usually happen unexpectedly and quickly.

Examples of overhead hazards include falling objects such as a brick, a section of pipe that was not properly secured during installation or removal, a scaffold plank during assembly, a block wall that was not braced adequately, or a hoisting equipment failure. All represent overhead struck-by hazards. In these instances was the best technology used in a safe manner and was there a controlled access zone?

From your front, side and behind you, charged lines could fail due to worn hoses or a fitting that was not secured or a valve left open. Motorized equipment traveling at excessive speed or an unreported defective back-up alarm, an unguarded swing radius of a crane, the improper stacking of materials that when bumped slightly collapse and strike a worker.

Underneath our workers lie numerous hard objects on the ground that first may serve as a tripping hazard and then strike or impale workers such as unprotected rebar. Walking too close to a trench could lead to a fall into the trench with a cave in, resulting in several cubic feet of earth striking a worker each weighing 150 pounds.

Caught between hazards also come in a variety of sources and sizes. They range from large objects coming together with no or minimal clearance between them, to a worker being caught in an operating machine. The unguarded blades, gears, chains, sprockets, shafts, belts and pulleys of machinery have no conscience entangling workers clothing in a split second.

Hazards need to be anticipated and discussed during review of the JSA. Look around in a 360 degree circle; each area has its own type of hazards. Recognizing them ahead of time is the key to preventing accidents. Participate in the JSA process. What you don't see - hazards not recognized and communicated - can hurt. Inspect all machine guards prior; ensure barricades must be in place, and controlled access zones established. Take a minute to stop, think, and then ask yourself, "what can that hurt me or my fellow workers"?