

# TIPS FOR PROFESSIONAL DRIVERS

## *Working Safely When You Drive*

Every time you step into a vehicle, you face a potential driving hazard. Professional drivers, who spend the majority of their workday behind the wheel, are at an even greater risk. Take a few minutes to review these basic tips for driving safely when you work. Be a safe driver, not a statistic.

### **Your Vehicle Is Your Tool**

All workers use tools, from office equipment to industrial machinery. Your tool is your vehicle. Treat your vehicle like you would any tool—use it with respect and keep it in good condition. Check your vehicle frequently—at least once a week—to be sure that brakes, accelerator, belts, radiator, oil, battery, tires, head lamps, wipers, and brake lights are all in good working condition. If you notice anything abnormal in the way your vehicle sounds or operates, have it repaired immediately by a qualified mechanic.

### **Drive Defensively**

You can't assume that everyone on the road is as good a driver as you


are. Steer clear of drivers who swerve in and out of lanes, respond slowly to traffic signals, or appear to be driving erratically. Pay special attention at intersections. Wait before accelerating when a red light turns green, never accelerate through a yellow signal, and always yield the right of way. Pass only in designated passing zones, and only after you've checked blind spots for clearance. Use the four-second rule for establishing safe following distance. (When the vehicle in front of you passes a fixed object—like a signpost—begin counting “one Mississippi, two Mississippi,” etc. until your vehicle reaches the same object.) If you can't count to four before passing the same object, you're too close.

### **Tune Into The Weather**

Before you begin any trip, check for weather conditions along your route. If roads are in poor condition or slick from rain or ice, reduce your speed and proceed cautiously. Use low-gear on steep grades or slippery surfaces. If you should skid, *do not brake*. Instead, take

your foot off the accelerator and turn your front wheels in the direction that the rear of the car is sliding. In dense fog or heavy rain where visibility is bad, pull to the side of the road, if possible, and wait until conditions improve. (Put your emergency flashers on so that oncoming drivers can see you.) When you start to drive again, use low-beams until fog clears.

### **Stay Alert**

The best defense you have against potential accidents is your own ability to remain alert and aware while driving. That's why alcohol, drugs, or other medications can be lethal when you drive. They affect your ability to concentrate and impair your reaction time which can lead to injury, disability, and all too often, death—not only of the driver, but of innocent victims as well. If you're angry, distracted, or tired, don't get behind the wheel—you'll be less able to react to potentially dangerous situations. Be alert, be aware, and be safe—that's the professional way to drive. 



Use the four-second rule for establishing safe following distance.



Alcohol, drugs or other medications can impair your driving skills.

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**ACCIDENT &  
INJURY PREVENTION**

# PREVENTING HEAT STRESS

## *Keeping Cool In The Heat*

Excess heat can place an abnormal stress on your body. When your body temperature rises even a few degrees above normal (which is about 98.6°F), you can experience muscle cramps, become weak, disoriented, and dangerously ill unless you can help your body to cool down. If your body temperature rises above 105°F, your condition can be fatal. Persons who work in hot environments—foundries, kitchens, laundries, and the like—must take special care against heat stress. The following guidelines can help you keep your cool in the heat and avoid the dangerous consequences of heat stress.

### **Adapt To The Heat**

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) suggests that all workers exposed to extreme heat gradually get used to their environment over a one-week period. This means that on your first day in a hot environment, you may only be able to do half the work that a fully-adapted worker would do. Each day, your workload increases slightly until you are able to operate at “full steam.”

### **Drink Water Frequently**

Sweating is one of the ways your body cools itself down. Sweating results in water loss, and the only way to replace the loss (and help your body continue to cool itself) is to drink water frequently. Ideally, you should drink at least 8 ounces of water every 20-30 minutes while

working in hot environments.

### **Wear Personal Protective Equipment**


Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for hot environments can range from ordinary work clothes made from “breathable” fabrics to specially designed suits that are cooled by air, ice, and even portable air-conditioners. Check with your supervisor about the appropriate PPE for your specific task.

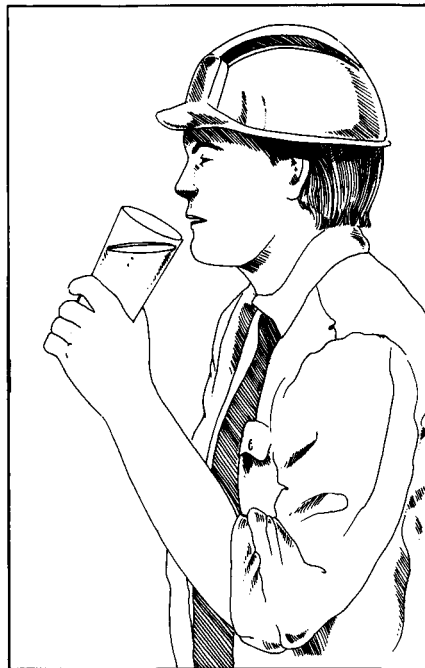
### **Use Engineering Controls**

Your employer may also provide engineering controls such as fans, ventilators, exhaust systems, and

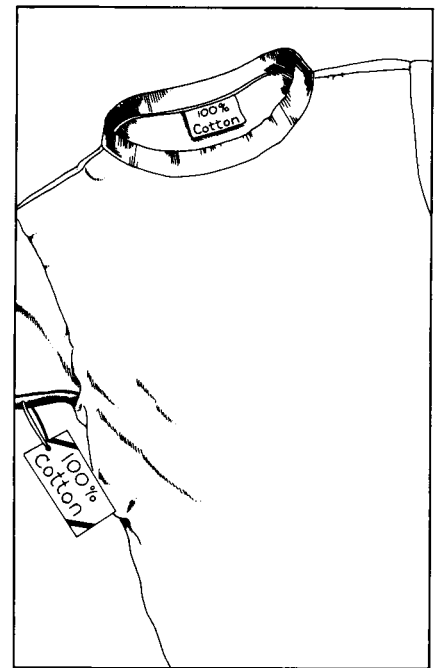
air-coolant or conditioning systems. These controls can help reduce worksite temperatures to more adaptable levels. Other controls such as using heat shields and insulating heat-producing machinery can also help lower the environmental temperature.

### **Keep Cool**

Persons who work in hot environments should become familiar with first aid techniques for heat stress. If you or someone you know suffers from heat exhaustion, cramps, or other signs of heat stress, get medical attention immediately. Keep your cool—heat stress is dangerous, but it's also preventable. 



**Drink at least 8 ounces of water every 20-30 minutes while working in hot environments.**

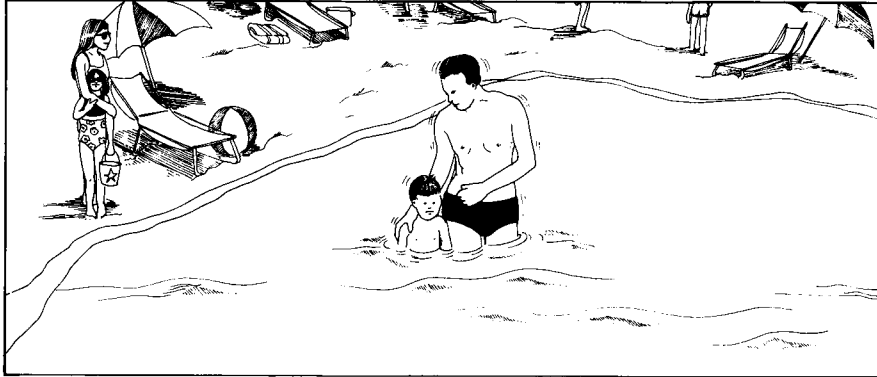


**PPE can range from work clothes made from “breathable” fabrics to specially designed “coolant” suits.**

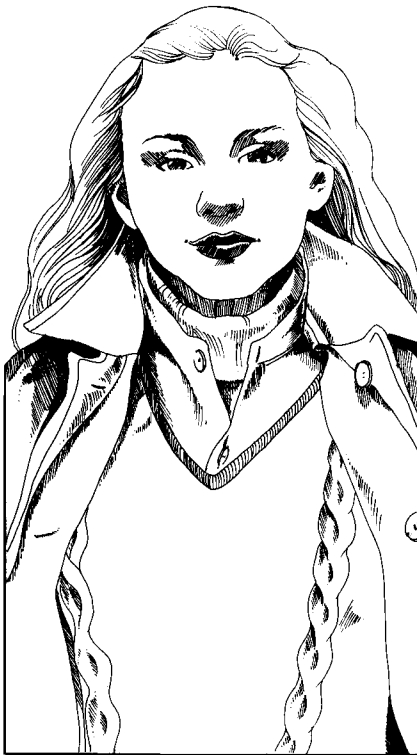
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# PREVENTING "COLD STRESS"

## *Protecting Against Hypothermia*



Even in warm weather, overexposure to cold water can cause hypothermia.



Layering your clothes allows you to adjust what you're wearing to suit the temperature conditions.

When your body temperature drops even a few degrees below normal (which is about 98.6°F), you can begin to shiver uncontrollably, become weak, drowsy, disoriented, unconscious, even fatally ill. This loss of body heat is known as "cold stress" or hypothermia. Persons who work outdoors, or who enjoy outdoor activities should learn about how to protect against loss of body heat. The following guidelines can help you keep your body warm and avoid the dangerous consequences of hypothermia.

### **Dress In Layers**

Outdoors, indoors, in mild weather or in cold, it pays to dress in layers. Layering your clothes allows you to adjust what you're wearing to suit the temperature conditions. In cold weather, wear cotton, polypropylene, or lightweight wool next to the skin, and wool layers over your undergarments. In warm weather, stick to loose-fitting cotton clothing. For outdoor activities, choose outer garments made of waterproof, wind resistant fabrics such as nylon. And, since a great deal of body heat

is lost through the head, always wear a hat for added protection.

### **Keep Dry**

Water chills your body far more rapidly than air or wind. Even in the heat of summer, falling into a 40° lake can be fatal in a matter of minutes. Always take along a dry set of clothing whenever you are working (or playing) outdoors. Wear waterproof boots in damp or snowy weather, and always pack raingear (even if the forecast calls for sunny skies.)

### **Take A Companion**

The effects of hypothermia can be gradual, and often go unnoticed until it's too late. If you know you'll be outdoors for an extended period of time, take along a companion. (At the very least, let someone know where you'll be and at what time you expect to return.) Ask your companion to check you frequently for overexposure to the cold—do the same for your companion. Check for shivering, slurred speech, mental confusion, drowsiness, and weakness. If either of you shows any of the above signs, get indoors as soon as possible and warm up.

### **Warmth and Understanding**

The key ingredients to preventing loss of body heat are staying warm, and understanding what you can do to protect against conditions that can cause hypothermia. Hypothermia can be fatal, but it can also be prevented.

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# ACCIDENTS COST EVERYONE

## *It's Not Only Money...*

When anyone you work with gets into an accident, it costs everyone. It's almost as if you could take an extra deduction from your paycheck. The costs are always greater than money alone.

### **Lower Productivity=Layoffs**

The more accidents there are, the less productive the company can be as a whole. The less productive it is, the less able it is to compete. Other more efficient, safety-minded companies begin to take business away. If they take some business, it can mean you don't get the raise or bonus you'd hoped for. If they take away enough business, your company may have to lay people off. Accidents do cost.

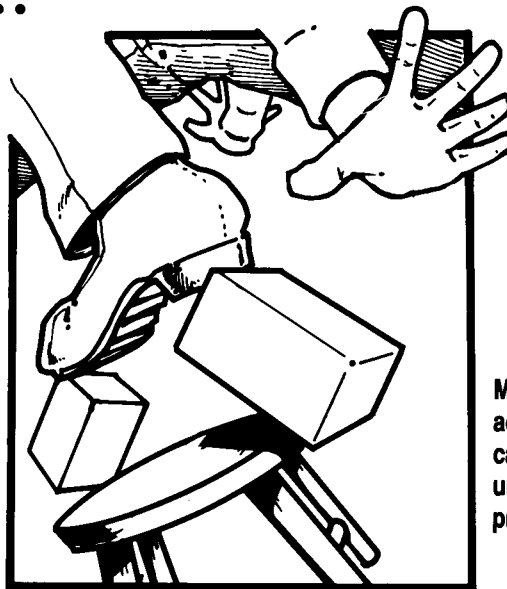
### **Accidents=Medical Expenses**

It's obvious that accidents cost money. Each time you go to a doctor, someone has to pay the bill. It may seem to you that it doesn't matter, since your company carries Workers Compensation insurance anyway. But, it does matter. Even insured accidents can end up costing *you* money. Your company's insurance premiums depend on how often workers make claims. The more accidents, the higher the cost of insurance. Those increased costs have to come from somewhere. The higher your company's expenses, the less that's available for the important things—like your paycheck.

### **Not Just Money**

Accidents cost money, but other costs are high, too. A good example is what happens after a serious fire. Most or all of the workforce may avoid serious injury. But, 40% of factories with serious fires never open again. That means lost jobs. Many people who lose their jobs lose their homes as well. For them, being out of work can make it impossible to pay their mortgages.

In situations like these, stress and tension are high. A lot of marriages break up when one of the spouses loses a job. People often turn to alcohol to try to escape. Everyone in the family suffers. So you see, the costs of an accident such as a fire can be pretty serious—and not just in terms of money.



Many accidents are caused by unsafe practices.


### **Hopes And Dreams**

One tragic cost of accidents is the cost of losing your hopes and dreams. Losing a hand or a life may set a family back for years as savings go up in smoke. Instead of college the kids may have to get jobs to help out. Instead of the home you've dreamed of owning, it's years more of the crowded apartment. Even if an accident isn't so serious, it still can hurt your hopes. You may not be promoted when you had hoped to be—accidents are bad for business. So what looked like a good shot at a good future may be hurt by a careless accident.

### **Carelessness=Pain**

Careless attitudes can lead to two kinds of pain, and it's difficult to say which one is worse. Physical pain after losing a hand, an eye, or good health can be terrible. Emotional pain following the death of a spouse or parent, or the amputation of a limb can be horrifying in a different way.

### **Why Pay The Cost?**

Luckily, many accidents can be avoided by just taking extra time and care, by wearing and using the right equipment, and by following safe practices. There's no reason to pay the high cost of accidents. 

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# HOW THEY GOT HURT

## *The Leading Causes of On The Job Injuries*



The number one cause of on the job injuries is physical overload—making our bodies go in ways that they're not designed to go!

Let's face it. No one wants to get hurt on the job or elsewhere. Yet, each year, millions of workers suffer worksite injuries that were largely preventable. Knowing the leading *causes* of these injuries is the first step in learning how to protect against them.

### **Physical Overload**

The number one cause of on the job injuries is physical overload—lifting too much (or improperly), straining, overreaching, bending, twisting, and otherwise making our bodies go in ways that they're not designed to go! To avoid physical overload, learn and use proper lifting tech-

niques, never bend or twist while lifting or carrying, and whenever possible, use mechanical help.

### **Impact Accidents**

The second most common cause of worksite injury is impact accidents—being hit by, or hitting an object. The best ways to avoid impact accidents are to be *alert* to potential hazards (for example, never walk under scaffolding or cranes), to *use the appropriate personal protective equipment* necessary for the hazards you face (such as hard hats, eye protection, etc.), and to follow your company's established safety guidelines.

### **Falls**

Next in line, are injuries resulting from falls. Fall injuries are as common in the home as they are at the worksite, so fall prevention is truly everyone's business. To avoid injuries from falls, be sure that your footing is firm—wear slip-resistant shoes and avoid hurrying. Make sure that walkways are well-lighted and clear of obstacles. Learn how to use ladders and scaffolding safely, and always use handrails when climbing stairs.

### **Machine Accidents**

The last of the major causes of on the job injury is machine-related accidents—getting caught by moving machine parts. When working around any machine that rotates, slides, or presses, use extreme caution—never wear jewelry or loose-fitting clothing that could get caught in your machine. Always use safety guards, shields, and appropriate lock-out procedures. And, never work on a machine unless you are specifically trained to do so.

### **Be Safe, Not Sorry**

The nature of accidents is that they can happen anywhere at any time. But, by using safety sense, you can eliminate the overwhelming majority of worksite injuries. Be alert to the hazards you face each day and learn what you can do to protect yourself against accidental injury and disability.

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# HORSEPLAY HURTS

*...We're Not Just Horsing Around!*

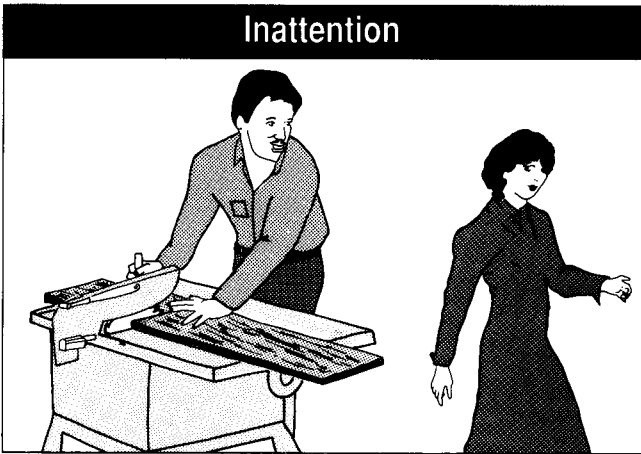
Who doesn't enjoy a good joke? We all know that a laughter "break" can release tension as well as improve our morale. But horsing around *on the job* is no laughing matter. The overwhelming majority of accidents—industrial and otherwise—are caused by inattention and carelessness. Horseplay—"horsing around" on the job—is one of the primary causes of inattention, carelessness, unsafe practices, and recklessness.

## How Does Horseplay Hurt?

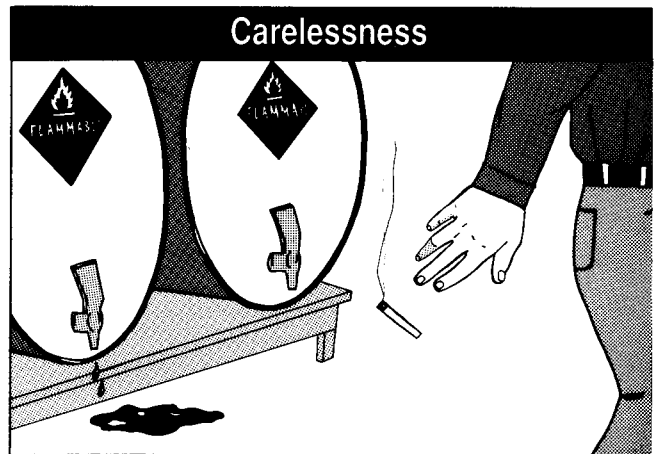
The following situations show some of the ways in which horseplay can hurt you, your friends, and your coworkers.



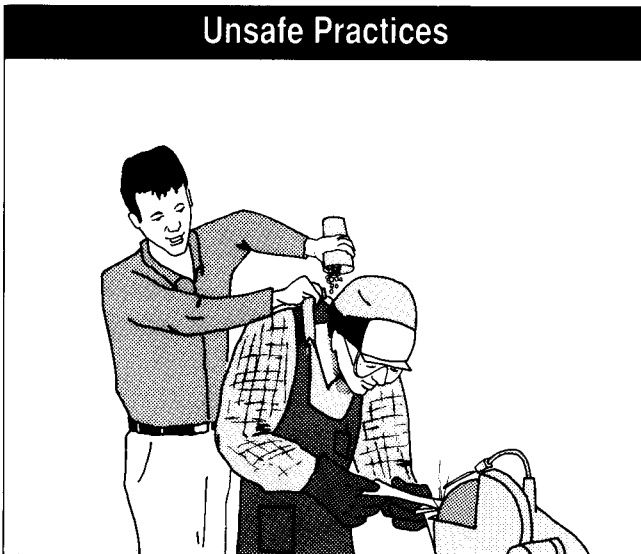
**Inattention**



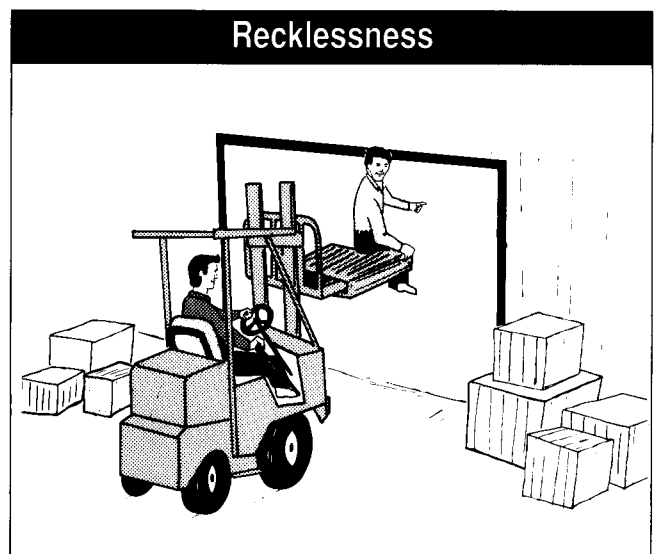
**Carelessness**



**Unsafe Practices**



**Recklessness**



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# ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION

## *Essential Tool For Safety & Health*

Accidents are unexpected, unplanned and undesirable. Yet they also offer the chance to learn a great deal about good safety and health. Accident investigation is the first step toward avoiding future injuries and financial losses. When dangerous conditions and careless attitudes are changed as a result of an accident, it can also lead to increased performance and productivity.

### **Goals Of The Investigation**

An investigation determines what, why and how the accident happened. Its purpose is not to blame someone. A good investigation looks at how a system makes it possible for accidents to take place. Often, it will find out that many similar incidents (small, less serious

accidents) have happened before. It is very helpful to investigate incidents, too.

To be useful, investigations must be honest. Sometimes it is difficult for a supervisor to perform an objective investigation in his or her own department. People from outside the department often have a helpful perspective.

### **Create An Investigation Plan**

Each company and department should have a tested investigation plan. Then, if there is an accident, the plan can be put into effect immediately. Often, investigators must move quickly.

A written plan may include:

- who is in charge;
- the complete "chain of command" listing all those to be notified

and when, including at night and on weekends;

- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) which should be at the scene;
- special transportation or communication needs;
- how to gain access to the site for as long as necessary;
- who will record interviews of supervisors, employees involved in the accident, and other witnesses;
- who will take photographs and gather evidence that might be destroyed or changed, such as weather conditions or contaminated clothing;
- who will prepare the final report.

### **After The Investigation**

Following the investigation, investigators will usually write an accident investigation report. The report may include a description of causes and suggested corrections. A good report is accurate, detailed and produced soon after the accident.

### **Honesty Helps Ensure Safety**

Everyone involved, including supervisors and employees, should be helpful and honest during an investigation. When a complete understanding of the accident emerges, this can make it less likely that a similar accident will happen again. From giving information to learning from the investigation, supervisors and employees can help in many ways to ensure worksite safety.



An investigation determines what, why and how the accident happened.

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