



## Make Safety Training More Effective

Clay Thomas & Associates, LLC, offers unsurpassed resources to assist in your commitment to safety and loss control. If there are any questions please contact us.

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### QUICK TIPS

Here are three quick ways you can encourage your workers to focus on health and fitness at work:

1. Coordinate a mild physical activity for everyone to participate in at lunch hour. Even a simple walk around the block counts – a suggestion or route, along with a tally of the distance and calories they'll burn while doing the activity can be helpful;
2. Provide your team with fruit and granola bars as snacks to promote healthy choices (does not have to be necessarily every day); and
3. Encourage 5-minute daily sessions of stretching and flexibility exercises at the beginning of each shift.

Training is a critical part of workplace safety. It can help ensure employees are up to date on the latest safety practices, motivate employees to always work safely and bring new workers on board with the company's safety practices and procedures.

If designed correctly, a safety training program can be the most useful tool in educating employees on workplace safety. The trick is taking the time to ensure that your safety program is effective.

Companies often assume that as long as all of the required and necessary information is shared, the training is a success. This isn't true. Just because a company takes the time to give employees

required safety information doesn't mean the training was effective.

Consider these tips to develop an effective safety training program:

**Make it relevant.** It is important to cover all facility-specific safety practices and to make the training relevant to specific jobs. This means more job-specific training and less big training meetings with all employee categories in attendance.

**Ensure understanding.** It's your job to ensure the information covered in safety training is presented in a straight-forward and easy-to-comprehend way. Quizzes or hands-on demonstration of training topics are great ways

to insure the training was understood.

**Get creative.** Try using a variety of different tools in your training sessions to present information in a new way.

**Train everyone.** All employees, including managers, supervisors, full-time and part-time employees should be trained on your company's workplace safety practices.

**Make training a continuous process.** Training doesn't end after the 1-day/1-hour session or presentation is complete. You need to continually observe and remind employees of safe workplace practices.

## Going Above Compliance

Too often, company's think of safety only in terms of compliance.

It's easy to understand why. Governing bodies require companies to comply with a lot of rules and regulations designed to keep safe vehicles and drivers on the roads and workers safe and healthy at their workplace. If a company does not comply with state and federal regulations, these governing agencies can issue hefty fines for non-compliance and severe consequences are assured – to both the employer and the employee – if failure to comply with safety regulations

leads to injuries or even death.

Still, safety should not only be about compliance, it should also be about building a culture that engages the entire workforce in improving safety. Safety should be thought in terms of continuous improvement rather than only compliance and cost. Unfortunately most companies are focused on doing only the minimum (compliance) to meet safety regulations rather than engaging the workforce to create a safer workplace for employees and seeking out and removing injury risks.

Too often the role of safety is put into the hands of one person and pushed down to the employees. An effective safety program that goes above and beyond compliance should emphasize the need to involve the entire workforce in driving safety throughout operations and the workplace. The more people you engage in safety, the more cultural safety can be.

By going above and beyond compliance, companies can also demonstrate a dynamic safety program that proactively engages in safety in an

## Recognizing Workplace Violence

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, more than 2 million Americans are impacted by workplace violence annually.

Workplace violence is any act or threat of physical violence, harassment, intimidation, or other threatening behavior that occurs at work. It can affect and involve employees, clients, customers and visitors, and ranges from threats and verbal abuse to physical assaults and even homicide. Homicide is the most extreme form of workplace violence and is the FOURTH leading cause of fatal occupational injuries in the United States. However it manifests itself, workplace violence is a major concern for employers and employees nationwide.

Because of the significant levels of workplace violence and assaults, many work settings have observed the environmental conditions associated with workplace violence, identified them, and implemented control strategies at work to prevent these incidents from recurring.

The best way to decrease workplace violence is to prevent it from happening. A company should take a course of action to reduce workplace violence occurrences by building a culture of safety in the workplace and promote physical and mental well-being. These acts can lead to a less stressful

environment and potentially prevent workplace violence.

Beyond prevention the next best step is to be able to “recognize” or observe a situation that can potentially escalate into a violent issue. Typically there will be an increasing set of clues that precede an act of violence; unfortunately, these clues are often ignored thus escalating the chance of an outburst.

The following behaviors can be seen as potential “Warning Signs” that may lead to eventual workplace violence:

- **Drugs and Alcohol:** Usage can cause mood changes and increase paranoia or aggressive behavior.
- **Excessive tardiness or absences:** This is a significant sign for an individual who is typically prompt and committed to a full workday.
- **Increased need for supervision:** Generally, an employee requires less supervision as he or she becomes more proficient at their work. An employee who exhibits an increased need for supervision may be an individual who is signaling a need for help.
- **Lack of performance:** If an employee who is normally efficient and productive experiences a sudden or sustained drop in performance,

there is reason for concern.

- **Change in work habits:** As in the case of reduced productivity, an employee exhibiting inconsistent work habits may be in need of intervention.
- **Inability to concentrate:** If an employee is suddenly unable to concentrate, this may indicate that they are distracted and in trouble.
- **Change in attitude:** A sustained change in behavior is often an indication of an employee in difficulty.
- **Not taking responsibility for their actions:** A person who uses excuses and blames others is a classic behavioral warning sign.
- **Stress or Depression:** Can lead to outbursts so it is important to watch for the warning signs.

Recognizing workplace violence behavioral tendencies is critical in reducing the number of workplace violence occurrences. If these warning signs or any other unusual or irregular employee behavior occurs, be sure to attempt to determine what is causing the issue(s) and take prudent steps to prevent escalation of the employee’s distress and any potential workplace violence incidents.

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effort to create safer operations and a safer workplace, and reducing accidents, injuries and illnesses. A safety program that goes above and beyond minimum required regulations can go a long way if a company finds itself in a litigation claim. This good faith effort may lead to a more favorable outcome in these unfortunate situations.

Along with involving the entire management team in the safety program, here are a few things you can do to go above and beyond compliance:

- Develop and implement a comprehensive safety orientation program
- Conduct and document regular daily employee toolbox safety talks

- Conduct and document workplace and driver safety training annually or at frequencies greater than minimum requirements
- Conduct and document regular workplace safety inspections including corrective actions
- Thoroughly investigate and document workplace accidents and over-the-road collisions along with corrective actions
- Conduct and document remedial training as a result of negative incidents or loss claims

If a company wants to improve safety, create a safer workplace and reduce injuries and illnesses, a company must go above and beyond compliance, and do more than the minimum.



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## Safety Tips

## Driver's Edition



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## Seatbelt Safety for Professional Drivers

Wearing a seatbelt is a legal requirement for drivers in just about every State, yet some drivers (and passengers) continue to operate their vehicles without using this life-saving device.

Professional drivers are responsible for handling their vehicles and themselves in the safest manner possible. This includes wearing a seatbelt while operating their vehicle. However, many drivers choose not to buckle up because they feel it is uncomfortable or too restricting. But, correctly adjusting the seat once at the beginning of each work

day as well as adjusting the safety belt at the beginning of each trip is a quick and easy way to prevent discomfort.

Seatbelts should not only be worn during long trips, but it is also very important to wear them on short trips as well. Crashes occur when you least expect them, and many times at low rates of speed. It only takes about three seconds to buckle up. A driver could buckle up 20 times a day and still only spend about one minute buckling. That one minute could make the difference between life and death.

There are many reasons why

safety belts are so effective in reducing injuries and fatalities for large commercial vehicles. Here are a few reasons why:

- Safety belts, especially lap/shoulder belts, spread the stress and impact forces of a crash along the stronger and broader areas of the body, such as the hips and shoulders, thereby limiting injuries.
- Safety belts prevent serious injuries and fatalities by minimizing the possibility of drivers striking the steering wheel, windshield,

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## Obstructive Sleep Apnea

Sleep apnea is a hot topic – it's the cause of more than 50% of excessive daytime sleepiness cases. Government estimates indicate that it may be an issue in a large number of professional drivers. Sleep apnea results in fatigued driving, which leads to collisions and injuries.

### Recognizing Obstructive Sleep Apnea Symptoms

A sleeping partner may witness you experiencing difficulty breathing while you

are sleeping. If your partner has ever told you something along this line, you may have sleep apnea. In adults, a pause in breathing must last 10 seconds to be scored as an apnea. Clinically significant levels of sleep apnea are defined as five or more episodes per hour of apnea. Sleep apnea is diagnosed with an overnight sleep test called a polysomnogram, or a "sleep study".

You may have other health problems such as high blood

pressure, diabetes, arrhythmia, or cardiovascular disease, for which sleep apnea is a risk factor. People with diabetes or "borderline" diabetes have a higher risk of having obstructive sleep apnea.

You may also suspect you have it because you've experienced restless sleep, and you feel sleepy during daytime hours. If you've had these symptoms for some time you may have become conditioned to feelings of

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### Seatbelts (Continued from Page 1)

dashboard, side doors and windows, and roof.

- In a crash, a safety belt keeps the driver in place behind the steering wheel and in control of the vehicle, thereby avoiding or reducing the consequences of an accident.
- Safety belts can keep you from being knocked unconscious, improving your chances of escape. Fire or submersion occurs in less than five percent of fatal large vehicle crashes.
- In a frontal collision occurring at 30 mph, an unbelted person continues to move forward at 30 mph causing him/her to hit the windshield at about 30 mph. This is the same velocity a person falling from the top of a three-story building would experience upon impact with the ground!

The bottom line: Professional drivers need to buckle up, every trip, every time. Remember, you're the one who drives... for a living, and it's not just a law – it's your duty!

### Top 10 Reasons CMV Drivers Should Always Buckle Up

10. If buckled up you can be sure of staying at the wheel and in control of the vehicle. This increases your ability to properly react to any situation and pose less of a threat to other drivers.
9. The extra equipment in commercial vehicles such as radios, tachometers and onboard computers can contribute to your chances of being injured during a crash if you are not properly buckled up.
8. It's a federal and state law.
7. Good drivers usually do not cause collisions, but they are often involved in crashes caused by other drivers. If you are in a crash, safety belt use can save your life and prevent long-term disability.
6. You drive more miles than the average person and are on duty for long periods of time. Driving for extended periods of time or in heavy traffic can be stressful and your awareness can be reduced. Safety belt use keeps you in a

better position to stay aware of your surroundings at all times.

5. At times you are on the road at night when you are most likely to encounter impaired drivers. You must be in good control of your vehicle at all times.
4. The weight of your vehicle is at least ten times the weight of passenger cars and trucks. You must maintain control of your vehicle to ensure defensive driving measures.
3. You are four times more likely to be killed if you're ejected from a vehicle and fourteen times as likely to receive a spinal cord injury. Safety belts prevent you from going through the windshield.
2. When you wear your safety belt, your chances of being injured or killed are reduced by up to 50 percent.
1. And the reason you should always Buckle Up...

You are someone's son, daughter, mom, dad, husband, wife, or friend...The life you save may be your own!

### Sleep Apnea (Continued from Page 1)

fatigue and not realize that they're associated with sleep apnea. You may also have gotten used to masking symptoms by using stimulants such as sugar and caffeine.

Here are some sleep apnea symptoms you may recognize:

- Excessive snoring or snorting
- Restlessness or interrupted sleep
- Workday drowsiness
- Excessive nighttime urination
- Erectile dysfunction
- Hypertension
- Diabetes
- Smoker
- Obesity

### What Is The Treatment For Obstructive Sleep Apnea?

Depending on the level of the problem, there are various things you could try to find relief and get a more restful night's sleep.

- Some treatments involve lifestyle changes, such as avoiding alcohol or muscle relaxants, losing weight, and quitting smoking.
- Many people benefit from sleeping with their upper body elevated, like sleeping in a recliner.
- Sleeping on your side, as opposed to sleeping on your back, is also recommended as a treatment for sleep apnea.
- Dentists who specialize in obstructive sleep apnea can prescribe various kinds of mouthpieces to keep the airway open during sleep.

- The treatment used by most doctors is the continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) machine or the BiPAP machine. The CPAP assists only inhaling, whereas the BiPAP is used in more severe cases for inhaling and exhaling.

- There are also surgical procedures to remove and tighten tissue and widen the airway.

What you shouldn't do is ignore the problem. Obstructive sleep apnea is a medical condition that can have serious consequences if not treated. If you have reasonable suspicion that you have sleep apnea, it's recommended that you investigate it further, see your physician and do a sleep test if necessary. Sleep test have become much less intrusive in recent years and can often be remotely monitored, allowing you to sleep at home rather than in a lab.



## Workplace Safety

# CLAY THOMAS & Associates, LLC. Hand Injury Prevention

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The hands and feet contain more bones than any other single part of the body. We use them all day, to do everything; they “take a licking and keep on ticking.” Feet provide us with mobility, and hands can do the most intricate maneuvers, but most of us never give them a second thought.

How many times have you reached for something without looking and stubbed a finger? How often have you hit your finger with a hammer or slammed your fingers in a door? It happens all the time! For those few minutes we are totally aware of our fingers. Soon, however, we forget them again and keep doing whatever it

was that hurt them in the first place. We take them for granted.

Hand injuries account for one third of the two million disabling on-the-job accidents each year.

When using machinery, pinch points can catch us when we’re not looking. Pulleys and belts can form in-running nips, a type of pinch point that can draw the hand in and cause severe damage.

Eighty percent of all hand injuries are caused by pinch points!

Hand protection is not a new development. Below are several hand protection tips that you can practice to help prevent

hand and finger injuries.

- Never wear gloves around in-running nips. The glove can be caught and pull the hand right into the point of operation. (flywheels, fan belts, etc.)
- Always use machine guards and replace any guards that have been removed.
- Always de-energize and Tagout/lockout your machinery before reaching into it – this includes tagging/locking out vehicles when servicing it – especially the engine!
- For safety’s sake, don’t wear any rings when working – a

## Workplace Fire Safety

Fires can be catastrophic, causing injury to employees and crippling to a business or home. As we are taught when we are kids, fire is never something you should play with. Fires are dangerous and can be life threatening if facilities are not properly equipped with a Fire Safety System and employees are not properly trained in recognizing and responding to fire hazards and fires. . Fire safety deals with the safety measures the need to be taken to minimize or avoid accidental cases of fires. Fire safety measures are incorporated in a building as part of the planning, as well as in the buildings

construction.

Here are a few common Fire hazards in the work place:

- Flammable and Combustible materials – these materials are necessary to a transportation operation found through transportation garages and facilities
- Smoking – Most companies do not allow smoking inside anymore, though this is still frequently allowed in some of the most dangerous areas – the garage
- Torches, Welders and Grinders – another necessary

tool in many garages

- Poorly maintained electrical wiring or equipment – this should be part of a facility inspection
- Over accumulated trash bins - these often go unchecked and trash can accumulate quickly

It is important for employees to recognize the potential fire hazards that may exist in their workplace and to take proper precautions and actions to prevent fires from occurring at the facility. It is also important that employees understand what

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## Workplace Safety Edition

ring caught in machinery or

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on a protruding object can badly damage a finger.

- Wear appropriate work gloves when handling rough materials and when hands are directly involved with lifting or moving objects.
- Be equally cautious when setting down loads.
- Take time to remove or bend down protruding nails, splinters and sharp edges on materials before you begin working with them.
- When moving objects with a hand cart/truck, make sure that you have

sufficient room to get through doorways and small spaces with enough clearance for cart and hands.

- Keep hands free of grease and oil – slippery hands can get you in trouble. If you get grease or oil on your hands, clean them right away with a degreaser.
- Wear gloves to pick up broken glass, nails or other sharp objects – including when sweeping up. Never attempt to handle these things with your bare hands.

Despite the precautions we take, our hands will receive minor injuries from time to time. Always treat these injuries promptly, so they don't become infected.

Whether at home or on the job, always

remember the following:

- Pay attention to what you are doing,
- Keep an eye on pinch points and in-running nips,
- Keep guards in place at pinch points,
- Don't wear gloves around in-running nips,
- Wear gloves to avoid cuts and splinters,
- Keep hands free of grease and oil,
- Don't wear rings when working, and;
- Have minor cuts and scratches treated to prevent infection.

Our hands will do whatever we ask them to, whether it's wise or not. Always

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fire safety equipment is available at their facility, how to properly operate fire equipment and how to respond to warnings and alarms.

The following fire safety equipment at work place will help to minimize the loss due to fire:

- Smoke detectors detect smoke and issue a signal to a fire alarm system. These should be inspected at least once a quarter, and the batteries should be changed at least once a year.
- Fire Extinguishers are portable fire suppression units that are used to fight early stage fires. These units are typically located throughout a facility and should only be used to fight incipient stage fires which a trained employee could reasonably handle.
- Fire Sprinkler Systems are the safest and easiest way to protect work places from fire hazards. Fire Sprinkler Systems sense abnormal amounts of smoke or fire and then is activated to effectively reduce the fire.

It is also beneficial to keep the following workplace details in mind to make sure your employees are well equipped to handle a fire and potential evacuation:

- Location of fire exits and assembly areas outside the facility
- Location of the fire alarms and fire extinguishers
- What kind of fire extinguishers are located in the area
- Types of other firefighting equipment at the facility - sprinklers, fire blankets, hoses and monitors
- Emergency numbers to call

## Organize Your Workplace

Have you ever spent twenty minutes searching for a missing screwdriver that you're sure you left "right there?" That screwdriver could be: the file you made for a major project, the chemicals you need to clean something, or your car keys. Whether you are at home or work, organizing things and putting them back after use not only saves time and effort when you need to find them again, but is also a way to stay safe from injury. An orderly work area contributes a great deal to your safety.

If you are one of those people who look at a mess and say, "I know where everything is," you may one day become part of a national statistic. Let's look at some of the statistics:

- Disabling injuries at home and work combined reach over six million a year
- 25,000 are killed in home accidents annually
- 14,000 are killed on the job annually (3,000 of these deaths are caused by falls)

Falls often result from tripping over equipment or tools left in aisles or work areas, wet spots on the floor, or trash and other articles left on stairs. Everyone

should help keep the work area clean and free of clutter or debris. If you throw a wad of paper at the trash can and miss, get some exercise: walk over, bend down and pick it up!

Don't pick up broken glass or nails with your bare hands. Put on gloves, or use a broom and dust pan. When you see a mess, don't walk by and think, "Someone should get that." You wouldn't want anyone else to get hurt, would you?

You don't like cleaning up someone else's mess, and they probably feel the same way about you - clean up after yourself! If your work area has been neglected for a long time, it may take a little bit of effort to clean up and get organized, but it will be well worth the effort. The next time you need your tools for a job, they will be right where you expect them to be. It takes much less time to clean up - and to get started on projects - when things are where they're supposed to be.

Remember - There is a place for everything and everything in its place!



**Stay Protected**

**Not Ejected**

**Always Wear Your Seatbelt**



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*Insuring the industry that moves America*