



Accidents Happen... to be Preventable!SM

"Accidents happen" is another one of those classic excuses that we hear quite often and need to be careful of. It is an excuse for not taking a proactive action.

If your child's teacher called you on the phone and said, "Mrs. Smith, your child was severely injured on the school field trip. I am very sorry but sometimes, accidents happen." Would that be acceptable?

An accident is an unplanned event that sometimes results in injury or death. An accident is made up of a myriad of small events each of which contributes to the incident as a whole. So if we remove one of the events or "links" in the chain, the accident may be avoided.

Too often I hear many talking about and see others taking steps to prevent after a tragedy occurs. How many people have been killed by drivers who were talking on their cell phones? Many towns and cities are now passing legislation to prevent people from holding their phones while driving. Even so how many of us say "let me just make this one quick call." It just may

be that one call that causes an accident. We have to ask ourselves, is it worth the risk even for just one minute?

So before we make another excuse, I will state the obvious, ACCIDENTS HAPPEN... TO BE PREVENTABLE!SM.

This article is an excerpt from SAFE? "Reflection on Living A Safer Life". SAFE? was written by Milton Jacobs, Certified Safety Professional. Milton can be reached at mjacobs@safety-solution.com.



"Accident Prevention is our Business"

Safety and Public Health News

- OSHA revising Respiratory Protection Standard** - OSHA is in the commenting phases of revising the Assigned Protection Factors (the numbers that reflect the level of respiratory protection need in the workplace) in its Respiratory Protection Standard. According to OSHA, this revision is expected to prevent 900 deaths from cancer and chronic disease .
- Trans Fat Labeling to assist in heart disease prevention** - Trans fat, the type of "hidden" fat that is found in partially hydrogenated vegetable oils (contained in foods such as crackers, cookies, margarine, etc.) will be required to be placed on food labels beginning in 2006. Trans fat raises total blood cholesterol by decreasing the "good" cholesterol in the blood. Controlling trans fats is believed to reduce the risk of coronary heart disease, the leading cause of death in the United States.
- "Off the Job" Injuries Cost Employers** - According to a study performed by the Home Safety Council, on average, employers spend \$280 per employee per year to pay for injuries that workers and their dependents suffer at home. These injury costs are almost double what employers pay for off-the clock auto crashes.

• Always shut off the switch and the breaker (whenever possible) when removing a broken light bulb from the fixture. It takes only one-tenth (0.1) amp of electricity (most homes have 20 amp service) flowing through the body for two seconds to cause death. Any active electrical circuit can be potentially lethal.

- Have safety glasses with side shields and gloves (rubber and leather palm) handy for use with lawn mowing, household chemical use (rubber gloves) and yard chores. While it may appear that this is overkill it sure beats a trip to the hospital.
- When using cutlery for slicing and dicing be sure to cut away from the body and keep fingers bent to reduce possibility of cuts.

- Use a fiberglass ladder/ step ladder to prevent electrical shock and falls (from use of buckets, chairs, etc.) when working around the home. Ensure you get the right size ladder to complete your task so that you are not overreaching or standing atop the ladder.

Below are tips for preventing home-related accidents:

“Preventing Accidents at Home”

SAFETY INSIGHTS

Ask Milt!



ASK MILT... is our latest addition to the newsletter. Individuals can write/fax questions to Milton relating to home, child or workplace safety and Milt will answer questions in this column. All submissions will become the property of SSCI and

will be eligible for inclusion in all SSCI media. This means we can share your questions and our answers on the web and in other print materials; however, no personal information will be published. Milton Jacobs can be reached at mjacobs@safety-solution.com, 1-888-240-7724 or visit him online at www.safety-solution.com.

Q: "Do I need a respirator to remove or work with fiberglass at home?"

A: I strongly recommend that at a minimum you get a half faced negative pressure respirator with a High Efficiency Particulate Air filter to capture the particulates, which can get into your lung due to particle size. A full- faced respirator may be excessive but will provide eye and respiratory protection all with one unit. Do not forget to consider eye protection, education, and a physical exam to assess your lung capability. Also appropriate clothing, such as a disposable coverall and gloves to protect you from the itching. Another option may be to subcontract the work to a reputable company.

Q: "Several of my employee's feel that they have been getting sick (runny eyes, etc.) when they enter the file room. What can we do?"

A: You should first have them document their symptoms and track them for several days. Have them note especially if they feel better when they leave the room. You should also call your Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning contractor and have them perform a review of the system to see if there is a problem. If this does not address the issues, a baseline air quality assessment (first visual inspection, then testing if needed) should then be performed by a qualified safety and health professional.

