

Practice Fire Prevention

A SAFETY TALK FOR DISCUSSION LEADERS

This safety talk is designed for discussion leaders to use in preparing safety meetings.

Set a specific time and date for your safety meeting. Publicize your meeting so everyone involved will be sure to attend.

Review this safety talk before the meeting and become familiar with its content. Make notes about the points made in this talk that pertain to your workplace. You should be able to present the material in your own words and lead the discussion without reading it.

Seating space is not absolutely necessary, but arrangements should be made so that those attending can easily see and hear the presentation.

Collect whatever materials and props you will need ahead of time. Try to use equipment in your workplace to demonstrate your points.

DURING THE MEETING

Give the safety talk in your own words. Use the printed talk merely as a guide.

The purpose of a safety meeting is to initiate discussion of safety problems and provide solutions to those problems. Encourage employees to discuss hazards or potential hazards they encounter on the job. Ask them to suggest ways to improve safety in their area.

Don't let the meeting turn into a gripe session about unrelated topics. As discussion leader, it's your job to make sure the topic is safety. Discussing other topics wastes time and can ruin the effectiveness of your safety meeting.

At the end of the meeting, ask employees to sign a sheet on the back of this talk as a record that they attended the safety meeting. Keep this talk on file for your records.

Following rules closely and maintaining cooperation are integral parts of fire prevention, whether at home, in the plant or outdoors. A company that is conscious of fire prevention is better organized for safety, health and efficiency. This fire-prevention consciousness is a good insurance policy for your personal safety.

In the plant, do not smoke or light a match near flammable materials, gases or liquids. Smoke only where it is permitted. To prevent fire when smoking carefully extinguish cigarettes, matches or pipe dottle before throwing them away. Keep matches away from children at home and do not smoke in bed. Always break matches before disposing of them and don't use them as torches for light in dark places.

For electrical lighting, use lamps of proper wattage, avoid contact with cloth or paper shades or other combustible material, and make sure "trouble lights" are adequately protected against breakage.

All electrical wiring and cords must be approved by Underwriters' Laboratories and installed by qualified electricians. Replace all worn or frayed cords on appliances, and never use a light cord for heavy loads.

An overload or short circuit results in a burned-out fuse, which acts like a safety valve. When this happens, replace the blown fuse with a new, approved fuse of proper capacity. At home you must also have adequate wiring and avoid overloading electrical circuits. Never bridge fuses with coins or other metal.

Motors and generators must also be protected with approved fuses and checked so that belts and pulleys don't slip.

Check and immediately repair any hydraulic leaks that could come into contact with engine manifolds or exhaust systems.

Never use flammable liquids in a closed area or near open flames or sparks.

Liquids like benzine, naphtha and gasoline give off vapors that are heavier than air and can travel along the floor to open flames or flash back to containers.

Use approved, self-closing safety cans for gasoline, and keep the main supply outside, underground. Also keep all chemicals in their original containers with a well-marked label and store them in a fireproof room away from other supplies. Also store oily rags in tightly closed metal cans to prevent spontaneous ignition. And never wear clothing that is soaked with oil or paint, or made of synthetic material near open flames, furnaces or welding operations. Never store paints or other combustibles near your home furnace.

When working outdoors, grass, brush and forest fires threaten life and property, as well as natural resources.

Secure a burning permit if it is required, and notify the fire department before starting a fire. Have a fire extinguisher available on all vehicles, and never leave a motor running in dry grass or brush. Different types of fire extinguishers are available, so be sure to select the proper kind.

Never start a fire in forest areas where the ground is covered with heavy leaf and slash from timber operations, or in wooded areas under dry-weather conditions.

It is easier to control grass fires by working on the rear and flanks of the fire. Keep back-pumps, swatters or wet burlap sacks on hand for fighting small grass fires.

Peat swamp and an "outcropping" seam of coal are the most difficult fires to extinguish once they get going. As a result, do not attempt to burn out either kind. With rubbish fires, use a rake to remove combustible material from a 3-foot strip around the rubbish or trash to be burned. Stay with the fire until it is out, or extinguish it yourself by covering it with dirt or drenching it with water. This is also a good way to put out campfires. Avoid burning rubbish when the winds are strong.

At home, do not let grease accumulate on the stove, and dispose of objects you no longer use to keep areas uncluttered and to avoid fires.

In case of a fire at home, call the local fire department; the telephone number should be posted next to the phone. Also know where the nearest fire alarm box is located and how to use it. Evacuate the premises.

When performing first aid on burns caused by fire, there are a few measures you should know. The first is the degree of a burn--the depth to which body tissues are injured. First-degree burns are characterized by reddened skin, and second degree by blisters. There is a deeper destruction of tissue, like charring, in third degree burns.

Although the pain accompanying first-degree burns is apparent, the danger of infection is not as great as in deeper burns. Never apply ointment or salves to burns. Simply cover the burn with a sterile dressing and take the victim to a hospital. Never remove the victim's clothing.

If your own clothing catches on fire, roll up in a blanket or rub to smother the flames. Keep your head covered. If a rug or blanket is not available, lie down and slowly roll over, using your hands to help beat

out the flames. Never run, because you will fan the flames; if you stand upright, you can inhale toxic fumes or flame.