

HAZARD AWARENESS

SAFETY TOOL BOX TALK

A hazard is defined as a condition or changing set of circumstances that presents a potential for injury, illness, or property damage. The potential or inherent characteristics of an activity, condition, or circumstance which can produce adverse or harmful consequences.

An accident is defined as an unfortunate event often the result of carelessness or ignorance. An unforeseen and unplanned event or circumstance usually resulting in an unfavorable outcome.

There are some key words in these definitions: Unplanned; Unforeseen; Unfortunate; Unfavorable and most importantly POTENTIAL!

I met a person the other day who had fallen from a height of 25 feet. He was fortunate to have escaped this accident with only a badly broken leg. A few weeks ago a worker fell just a couple of feet off a ladder and he passed away. Both of these situations have been discussed to the limit and on several occasions I heard people refer to luck, good and bad! Well, the last time I looked, luck was not an effective accident prevention or loss control technique. For an unplanned or unforeseen event to take place, there has to be potential!

Complacency and taking things for granted are causes of a tremendous number of injuries each year. Recognizing hazards and doing something about them is everyone's responsibility! So as you begin work, ask yourself: Do I have the right tools/equipment for the job? Have I inspected my tools/equipment to make sure they are in good repair or am I trying to get by? Is the work laid out to provide safe completion of the job? Are the materials I am using safe, and do I need additional personal protective equipment such as: safety glasses, gloves, hard hat, respirator, etc.? Is there a safer way to accomplish the task? Are all necessary equipment guards in place? Are written procedures such as lockout/tagout being followed?

Be aware of the potential hazards associated with your work and make your choices carefully!

