



MAFES Dawg Tracks

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The Ten Most Important Safety Lessons



Safety is simple, unless we try to make it difficult. No one wants to get hurt or see their fellow employee hurt. Our endeavor is to see every employee go home every night unhurt, just like they arrived in the morning.

Albert Einstein stated that, *“It can scarcely be denied that the supreme goal of all theory is to make irreducible basic elements as simple and as few as possible without having to surrender the adequate representation of a single datum of experience.”*

Mrs. Pam Walaski, a lady of great knowledge wrote in “Health and Best Safety Practices”, her ten most important Safety Lessons, learned from years of working in safety and environmental health. Following are her ten points of safety lessons:

- **There is no such thing as an accident -**
An “accident” is the failure of a company’s safety management system. Stop looking for excuses and someone to blame. When we accept that accidents have no cause (or we can’t find the cause - or don’t have the time to figure out the cause - or can’t afford to correct the cause when we figure it out), we assure that they will happen again.
- **Let’s have a great big group hug -**
Your co-workers aren’t your family - and maybe not even your friends - but that doesn’t mean you can’t care about whether or not they work safely. Watching out for each other on work projects is critical. It’s especially important to watch out for new employees.
- **WMP-MC -**
The phrase “safety culture” has gotten a lot of publicity. What does it mean to have a strong safety culture? What happens when you don’t have one? Remember: **“WMP-MC - what management permits - management condones”**.
In other words, an effective safety program starts at the top of the organization. It involves management commitment and requires management support.
- **You’re being watched -**
Like it or not, all supervisors are role models for safe work practices. If you do it, the employees will “follow suit” and do it too. (If you don’t do it....) Supervisors or facility coordinators have a hard job. They need support and resources to be effective.

- **Listen up -**
Make sure that safety communications go both ways. Listen to folks doing the job. They know the hazards and may have good ideas on how to correct them. Always follow up on safety suggestions and concerns. Don’t let the “safety suggestion box” become the “black hole.”
- **Failing to plan is planning to fail -**
Planning ahead saves time in the long run and reduces dangerous mistakes. Find the tool that works for you- JHAs, toolbox talks, etc., and use them.
- **Look before you leap -**
Always pay attention to your surroundings. More people get hurt on a work project through slips, trips and falls than any other type of injury category.
- **Your momma doesn’t work here -- neither does your daddy -**
Clean up after you have finished a project and try to clean as you go. Take care of minor repairs or problems. Don’t wait for someone else to do it.
- **Common sense is not so common (Voltaire) -**
Common = “widespread general knowledge falling below ordinary standards.”

Sense = “definite but often vague awareness or past impression.”

Common sense is based on life’s experiences and values earned. My own perception states Mrs. Walaski. These won’t be the same as yours Relying on this perception might be a bit risky; one that you might not want to base your safety program on.
- **Priorities change: Values don’t -**
What are the safety values of your organization? The old saying of “what gets measured, gets done” is true. Be careful not to buy into the “safety flavor of the month.” Everyone is busy. Assure that the important tasks get to the top of someone’s list by measuring them.

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Excerpts: www.safetychange.org/health-safety

NEVER THINK WORKING SAFE IS IN VAIN --- WHEN IT COULD SAVE A LIFE OF PAIN!

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UNPREPARED – UNSAFE

A SAFER YOU IS A SAFER ME!!