

CLOSE Call

OSHA defines a **near miss** as an incident in which “no property was damaged and no personal injury was sustained, but where, given a slight shift in time or position, damage and/or injury could have easily occurred.”

Think of a near miss as an opportunity to solve a problem before it becomes a bigger problem. If you have a near miss at work, report it to your supervisor immediately. If your company doesn't have a formal reporting form, here are some questions to help you when you communicate the near miss:

When did it occur — date and time? Was it early or late in the day? Was it dark? Poor lighting?

Explain the circumstances — what do you believe caused the near miss? Human error? Machine malfunction?

Was weather a factor? Was it raining? Snowing?

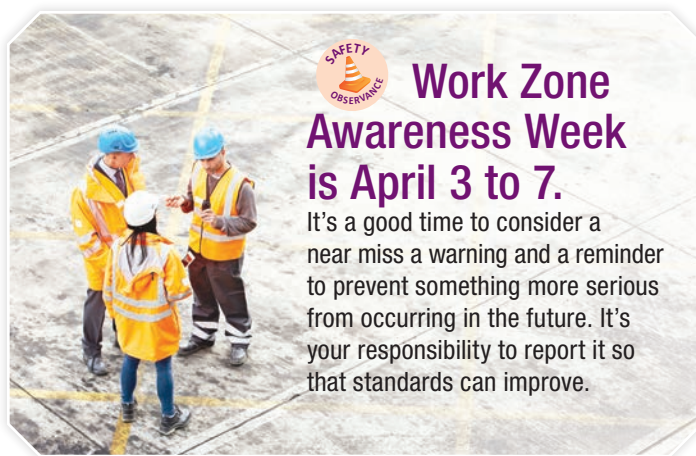
Was everyone wearing the proper protective gear and were all safety procedures followed?

What was the chain of events that led up to the near miss?

What was the loss potential? Was it a life-threatening situation? A minor injury? Property damage?

Have there been similar near misses? Note: Pay attention to patterns.

How can you help prevent a repeat of this?



Work Zone Awareness Week is April 3 to 7.
It's a good time to consider a near miss a warning and a reminder to prevent something more serious from occurring in the future. It's your responsibility to report it so that standards can improve.

SAFETY CORNER



Window Watch

Window Safety Week is April 2 to 8 and a great time to wash your windows. Make sure you stay safe while cleaning your view of the outdoors.



- ✓ **Use protective gloves and glasses** if working with harsh chemicals when cleaning windows. **Tip:** For a safe, less toxic way to clean, use a mixture of half vinegar and half water.
- ✓ **Set your ladder on a flat, even surface** and inspect it before climbing.
- ✓ **Keep 3 points of contact while on a ladder** and reposition it after cleaning each window so you aren't tempted to over-reach.
- ✓ **Wear shoes** with non-slip soles.
- ✓ **Avoid carrying window-washing tools up the ladder;** instead, have someone hand them to you.



6 Tool Belt TIPS

Tool belts allow you to remain hands-free and keep your tools close by. However, there are certain safety precautions that you should use when wearing a tool belt:

- 1 **WEAR** a tool belt that fits properly.
- 2 **USE** a padded tool belt and suspenders to allocate weight evenly between your shoulders and waist and to reduce contact stress.
- 3 **BALANCE** your tool belt — distribute tools evenly.
- 4 **COVER** sharp tools with a sheath before placing them in your belt. Place the sharp end of tools down into the tool belt pocket.
- 5 **REDUCE** the number of tools in your tool belt so you can reduce the weight carried.
- 6 **CARRY** a backpack-style tool bag if you need to carry a large number of tools for extended distances.

Flash Floods

Flash floods are the most dangerous type of flooding because they can occur with little or no warning, quickly destroying everything in their path. If you get caught in a flash flood or a flash flood occurs nearby, follow these guidelines to stay safe:



Stay away from floodwaters and pay attention to road signs. It is never safe to walk or drive into a flood even if it seems shallow. According to the National Weather Service, “A mere 6 inches of fast-moving floodwater can knock over an adult. It takes just 12 inches of rushing water to carry away a small car, while 2 feet of rushing water can carry away most vehicles. It is **never** safe to drive or walk into floodwaters.”

The Federal Highway Administration often posts yellow and black signs in areas prone to flooding and issues temporary pink incident management signs to flooded areas. However, even if you don't see a sign, but see water covering the road, turn around and find another way to your destination — water may be deeper than it appears.

Pay attention to flood warnings and advisories in your area and obey evacuation orders. A flash flood warning means that the flash flood is imminent or occurring. **Note:** It can happen even if it isn't raining. A flood advisory or flood watch means you should be prepared. Check media often for updates.

Get to higher ground. If a flash flood is occurring where you are, do your best to get to higher ground immediately and call 911.

Avoid parking near streams, creeks or rivers — especially during or if heavy rainfall is predicted.

SHIFTWORK ZONE



What is split sleep?

A split-sleep schedule involves sleeping for 3 to 4 hours before your shift, and then another 4 to 5 hours immediately after getting off work. This may allow you to reach all the sleep stages you need, while allowing time for other activities.

Shredder Safety

Paper shredders are common in most homes and offices. If you use one, remember to be careful by following these recommendations:

READ instructions before operating the shredder.

KEEP jewelry, hair and loose clothing away from the shredder opening when using it.

PLACE the paper shredder at least 4 inches away from walls or furniture so that air can circulate freely through ventilation holes.

KEEP hands and fingers away from the shredder during use.

TURN off the shredder and unplug it if it overheats.

DON'T place anything except paper in a shredder unless the shredder is made to shred other materials (e.g., disks, cards).

TURN off and unplug the shredder to fix paper jams, empty or clean it.



5 Simple Rules of the Game

Youth Sports Safety Month is a good time to remind you and your children that safety is not a game. If your children play sports, take the following steps to make sure they stay safe:

1. Get a pre-participation physical exam from your health care provider to ensure your child is healthy enough to play.
2. Make sure your child wears all required protective equipment during games and practices. Ensure it's worn correctly and fits well.
3. Encourage your child to follow the rules and practice good sportsmanship.
4. Make sure your child stretches before and after practice and games to help prevent sports-related injuries.
5. Remove your child from play immediately after a blow to the head, even if he or she doesn't lose consciousness and seems okay. Concussion symptoms can occur several days after the blow to the head. They include: headaches, dizziness, vision problems, nausea and confusion.



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