



## ON THE ROAD WITH DRIVER FATIGUE

Drinking and driving can prove to be a deadly combination, but what about fatigue? In many cases, the combination of sleepiness and driving has just as much potential for catastrophe. Any time a driver isn't fully focused on the task at hand, the potential for an injurious and/or fatal collision increases.

The word "fatigue" is often used as a general term to describe reduced awareness and responsiveness as a result of not enough sleep or overexertion. Whenever you bring the condition of fatigue with you behind the wheel, you increase your risk of veering off the road or into other drivers. The dangers increase significantly in occupations where long-haul driving is part of the job, since many commercial drivers find themselves on the road for at least 10-12 hours per day—more than enough time to become drowsy.

Fatigue can cause impaired judgment, vision, reaction times, and decreased awareness, short-term memory loss, inability to process information, and aggressive or moody behaviors. It is estimated that approximately 30 to 40 percent of roadway accidents in North America are a result of driver fatigue, adding up to over 6,000 fatalities and 190,000 injuries each year. With numbers like those, it's no surprise that many consider commercial driving to be among the most dangerous careers in the world.

Fatigue management should be a part of your workplace safety program. Drivers need to be trained on how to manage their daily schedules both on and off the clock in order to maximize their physical and mental awareness during



travel. Include topics that discuss sleep schedules, the importance of breaks and knowing when to pull over, techniques to combat fatigue, how diet and caffeine can affect fatigue, and being educated on the effects of one's prescription medication.

For information on how we can help create a fatigue management program for your company, visit [safety-services-company.com](http://safety-services-company.com).

## COMPLIANCE CORNER

June 2015

Tornado Preparedness	pg 2
National Stand-down	pg 2
Heat Stress- Part II	pg 3
Boom Loophole?	pg 3
Dangerous Distractions	pg 4

***“Drowsiness is the last step before falling asleep, not the first.”***

**Dr. William Dement**

Founder, Sleep Research Center

## NATIONAL STAND-DOWN

Fatal falls from heights account for about one-third of all construction fatalities. This year, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) teamed up with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and the Center for Construction Research and Training (CPWR) to promote its annual Safety Stand-Down during May 4-15.

The purpose of the Safety Stand-Down is to promote awareness of the dangers of working from heights. Management teams and occupational safety and health representatives visited over 5,000 worksites throughout the U.S. and Canada to talk with workers about fall hazards and the importance of continually reinforcing a workplace fall prevention program.

NIOSH Director Dr. John Howard said, "No child should lose a parent, no wife should lose their husband, and no worker should lose their life in a preventable fall. The stand-down serves as an important opportunity for worksites to recognize the hazards that cause those falls, and train employers and workers on how to avoid them so these tragedies can be prevented once and for all."

Strengthen your fall prevention program, visit: [safety-services-company.com](http://safety-services-company.com).

## TORNADO PREPAREDNESS

Tornados are responsible for an average of 60 deaths and countless injuries per year; knowing how to react in the event of a tornado is crucial.

While spring and early summer bring the highest frequency of tornado activity, they can occur year round. Tornado conditions appear when warm and cold air masses collide. However, seasonal changes and region can set the stage for storms at any time of the year. While the "Tornado Alley" of the United States is considered the tornado capitol of the world, tornadoes have touched down in all 50 states as well as in every other country in North and South America.

It is a common misconception that the tornado itself causes injuries. In fact, it is flying debris and the collapse of structures that are responsible for the vast majority of fatalities and injuries. At their most violent, tornados can produce wind speeds of up to 300 mph. Very few structures can fully withstand that amount of force directly, and people located at an unsafe distance are at a high risk of serious injury due to a collapsing building or falling debris.

In response to Hurricane Katrina, Louisiana Governor Kathleen Blanco said, "I believe we are prepared. That's the one thing I've always been able to brag about." Her sentiment could not be more valid yet resulted in a shortfall; tornados are sporadic and unpredictable, and the strongest tool against them is preparedness. Though you'll want to examine your workplace, its region, and your individual resources to tailor a company-specific emergency weather plan, we'd like to share some tips to get you started.

It's a good idea to have a NOAA Weather Radio on hand to listen for changes in outdoor conditions. Familiarize yourself with weather-related verbiage so you understand the implications of weather announcements. For example:

**Tornado Watch:** Tornados are likely to occur in your area. Be prepared to take shelter quickly. Monitor radio and television broadcasts for more information.

**Tornado Warning:** There is an imminent threat of tornado activity. Either a tornado

has been reported in the area, or one has been identified on radar. Take shelter immediately.

Take the time to identify a shelter location. Ideally, this should be in an underground area such as a basement or storm cellar but if neither are available, make do with what you have. Find an interior room or hallway on the lowest level of the building away from doors, windows, or outside walls. If possible, choose a room made of reinforced concrete, brick, or block. Windows are one of the greatest safety hazards during inclement weather, as they can shatter and spread flying glass shards.

Establish accountability procedures in the workplace. Develop a system for knowing who is in the building at any given time. Ensure alarm systems are in place, in working order, tested often, and located conspicuously – all employees need to know how and when to trigger them in the event of an emergency.

Communication methods should be tailored to accommodate employees with disabilities, or those who speak languages other than English. Prepare a roster and checklist to take a head count after workers have arrived at the shelter location.

All employees must be trained in all facets of the workplace emergency preparedness plan. Training should include shelter location, individual responsibilities, evacuation procedures, assembly points, and emergency contacts and procedures.

Consider using the **S.T.O.R.M.S.** approach. (see page 3)



2626 S Roosevelt St.  
Tempe, AZ 85282

877-780-4106



## HEAT STRESS - PART II

There are numerous ways to reduce worker exposure to dangerous, high-temperature situations, many of which we highlighted last month. Increased core body temperatures pave the way to potentially life-threatening health conditions, and only careful planning and thorough preventative measures can minimize risk. But with all the concern about how heat can affect us inside the body, we sometimes forget about how it can harm us on the outside.

The sun comes with as many hazards as it does benefits; it can improve mood, lower blood pressure, help with sleep cycles, and provide us with Vitamin D. However, sunlight also comes with ultraviolet (UV) rays, which can damage skin and tissues beneath the skin, and cause skin cancer.

There are three types of UV radiation: UVA, UVB, and UVC. UVC is absorbed by the earth's atmosphere and is inconsequential. UVB penetrates the skin to a lesser degree than UVA, but is primarily responsible for skin tanning and burning and may lead to certain types of skin cancer. UVA rays (of which approximately 95 percent of solar radiation at the earth's surface is comprised) penetrate beyond the skin, and while they are less directly intense than UVB rays, their prevalence and penetrating qualities lead to increased risks of damage and cancer.

It's practically impossible to avoid the sun 100 percent of the time. The next best option is to protect the skin with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).



Hats with a four-inch brim are necessary to protect the scalp, face, neck, and ears. Wear sunglasses to protect the eyes, especially while working around reflective surfaces like metal, standing water, snow, and light sand. Sunglasses should have UV protection, as polarized coating alone is not enough. Select clothing with a tight weave and an Ultraviolet Protective Factor (UPF) of 25 to 39.

An often-underappreciated piece of PPE is sunscreen. While limited sun exposure and engineering controls are best to protect workers from sun damage, sunscreen can be effective in keeping skin clear of harmful UV rays. Most commercial sunscreens boast a Sun Protection Factor (SPF), which only protects against UVB radiation. In order to achieve maximum protection results from a sunscreen, select products with an SPF 30 that are labeled "Broad Spectrum," which means additional physical ingredients (such as zinc oxide) are included to help protect against UVA. Be sure to reapply sunscreen regularly as physical labor and sweat will reduce its effectiveness.

## BOOM LOOPHOLE?

On Friday, April 24, 2015, Trevor Loftus, a construction safety director in Manhattan, New York City, was killed when the arm of a mini crane crushed him against a flatbed truck. Loftus, 40, died at the scene.

"The hydraulics malfunctioned, and the victim was caught between the boom and the flatbed itself," said FDNY Deputy Chief Joseph Carlson. Loftus was in harm's way while inspecting the boom during a mechanical failure.

Javier Mendez, a local delivery man, said, "They were using the crane to lift materials up to the second or third floor. Everything seemed normal. It was fine."

Loftus was a U.S. immigrant from Ireland who took ownership of Kenry Contracting in Yonkers as the "crane safety coordinator." Despite a background and career in safety, he was unprepared for the freak accident. Much of the problem may be attributed to city regulations, which currently overlooks the inspection of small cranes (or knuckle booms) in the same way that larger cranes are considered and addressed.

This tragedy does more than draw attention to city regulations; it highlights the importance of performing thorough hazard assessments and routine and preventative maintenance regardless of whether there is a bare-minimum or non-existent requirement.

## THE S.T.O.R.M.S. APPROACH

### 6 STEPS TO MINIMIZE RISK

**Shelter:** Know where to find shelter.

**Time:** Get early warnings. If you wait until you hear sirens, it might be too late.

**Others:** Know how to communicate with coworkers and first responders in case of injury.

**Resources:** Make sure you have everything from immediate supplies to

adequate insurance coverage.

**Medical:** Provide first-aid training and have first-aid kits available.

**Sweeping Up:** Continue to be wary of hazards after the fact. Additional storms, downed power lines, and sharp debris remain even after the tornado has passed.

# Q&A

**Q:** *Do I need to implement GHS now?*

**A:** Yes, it's a good idea to start.

As of June 1, 2015, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) will go another step further towards protecting the health and safety of U.S. workers by introducing the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labeling of Chemicals (GHS).

The new standard will require all chemical manufacturers and importers to follow a uniform set of guidelines in how they convey safety hazard information on their labels and material safety data sheets (MSDS). One of the objectives behind the changes is to provide alignment with global standards and elevate hazard communication to promote "understanding" rather than simply "knowing."

OSHA expects the standard to cover 43 million workers in 5 million workplaces across the country, to prevent over 500 injuries and 43 fatalities annually.

For more details, read our latest blog on GHS:  
[safety-services-company.com/topic/uncategorized/ghs-closer-think/](http://safety-services-company.com/topic/uncategorized/ghs-closer-think/)

## DANGEROUS DISTRACTIONS

There are extenuating circumstances that exist completely out of worker control, but almost all injuries are preventable through training, equipment maintenance, and workplace safety programs. However, no matter how proactive your safety program may be, it can derail in its effectiveness with even the simplest distraction.

Workplace distractions can take many forms. Evaluate the work area and perform regular walk-throughs to identify when and where distractions are mostly likely to be present. Be vigilant – they're not always immediately apparent. Ensure whatever guidelines are in place are also followed by management; setting an example goes a long way to encourage acceptance of a workplace safety program. Consider the following examples:

**Housekeeping:** Housekeeping isn't just about slips, trips, and falls. Yes, poorly placed debris can lead to a walkway accident, but workplace clutter can also take attention away from the task at hand. A visual distraction, such as misplaced furniture, tools, or messy workstations, can cause an employee to lose focus.

**Audio:** Communication is vital to workplace safety. This can happen when workers listen to music playing in the background, but the use of headphones or earbuds at an inappropriate volume

can set up a dangerous environment very quickly. Imagine what would happen if you couldn't hear when a hazard warning was issued.

**Casual Social Interaction:** There's a time and place for everything, to include shooting the breeze with coworkers. Disturbing a fellow worker while they're in the middle of a hazardous or critical task can lead to injury.

**Deadlines:** Though not quite as obvious as other distractions, deadlines may take focus away from safe working procedures and place it on the importance of finishing a project on time. When a worker is more concerned with meeting a deadline than safe, deliberate job attention, the risk of injury increases.

These days, arguably the biggest workplace distraction is the cell phone. Recent surveys show that 90 percent of people in the U.S own cell phones of which over 60 percent are smart phones ([www.pewinternet.org](http://www.pewinternet.org)). Now consider that most of the 3 billion texts sent each day occur during work hours. In a workplace environment, this distraction opens the door to avoidable injuries. The few seconds it takes to check your phone while walking through an office can lead to an injury, especially while climbing up and down a flight of stairs. It has never been more important to set stringent guidelines on cell phone use at work than now.

## ENSURE SAFETY COMPLIANCE *without worry.*



### Injury/Illness Prevention Manual Offer Includes:

- ☒ 100% turn-key safety solution
- ☒ Complete core chapters
- ☒ Choose from more than 100 industry-specific chapters
- ☒ Manual maintenance for 1 year

**\$150 OFF**

IIPP SAFETY MANUAL

APPLIES TO  
US & CANADA

**NOW!**

Call **877-780-4106**

IS YOUR MANUAL MORE THAN 1 YEAR OLD? CALL US FOR A SPECIAL OFFER.

