

October 2019

Dear RETRO Members;

October 17th marks earthquake preparedness day with **Shake Out**. The Great Washington ShakeOut is a statewide opportunity to practice how to be safer during big earthquakes: "[Drop, Cover, and Hold On](#)". The ShakeOut has also been organized to encourage you to review and update emergency preparedness plans and supplies, and to secure your space in order to minimize damage and injuries. If you don't have a plan it is never too late to start and there is a section on business preparedness in the [RS Safety Library](#) under 'Emergency Prep' to help you.

First topic is: **Carbon Monoxide Poisoning** – It is cooler outside, doors and windows are closed more often, heaters are turning on and with these factors, the opportunity for CO to build up increases. It is also a good time to become more conscious of equipment that is being used, especially gas-powered ones; like forklifts, heaters, generators, etc. CO is odorless, colorless and otherwise undetectable to the human senses, which people may not know that they are being exposed. You should inspect any equipment that uses combustible fuels for proper operation and use. [RS SafetyTV](#) has several videos on this topic

There is a Carbon Monoxide section in the [RS Safety Library](#) for handouts.

The second item is: **Pallet Jacks** – Pallet Jacks are one of the commonly utilized pieces of equipment in shipping and warehousing operations. Some are motorized but many are manual. There are two risks associated with utilizing a pallet jack, your feet and your back.

Most pallet jacks truly aren't meant to be utilized on ramps and certainly not with the load behind you. However, there is danger of running over your feet even on flat surfaces. Most manual pallet jacks have their back wheels exposed and if you don't watch your feet position or are unable to stop a heavy load, your feet become the target.

Pulling heavy loads with a pallet jack can also cause back injuries as you try to start the load moving. Ensure you are square to the load and utilize both hands to pull the load utilizing the pallet jack handle. If it requires a lot of force then more often than not, stop and look under the wheels, there is probably a piece of a pallet or a nail or other object under the wheels. Your back is worth far more than a piece of wood.

See the section in the [RS Safety Library](#) on *Forklift and Machine Safety* for handouts, videos and other information. [SAFEME](#) also has a lesson on material handling safely.

Finally – **Eye Wash Stations** – It takes just one accidental splash of a corrosive substance, even a common **household chemical like bleach**, to cause serious or even permanent damage to a worker's eyes or skin. This is why emergency washing facilities are required to supplement use of [Personal Protective Equipment](#) (PPE) in workplaces where contact with **corrosive, toxic, or strongly irritating chemicals** is possible.

The best way to find out if a chemical is corrosive, toxic, or strongly irritating is to check the container label and Safety Data Sheet (SDS) for the chemical. Additional information can be found at; [DOSH Directive link](#), [WAC link](#), or the *PPE* section in [RS Safety Library](#). [SAFEME](#) also has a lesson on how to use an eyewash station.

Reminding you to, Think safe. Act safe. Be safe.

***Rick Means***

Safety Specialist

Retail Association Services

618 Quince SE Olympia, WA 98501

[rmeans@waretailservices.com](mailto:rmeans@waretailservices.com)

360-943-9198 ext. 18