RETAIL
ASSOCIATION
SERVICES Inc.

February 2020

Hello RETRO Members;

February is National Heart Month sponsored by The American Heart Association educating Americans on the battle of cardiovascular disease and how to live heart-healthy lives. This also ties in with our first topic - CPR training.

First topic is: **CPR/AED**. If you have not taken this class in a while, there have been some changes and AED (Automated External Defibrillators) have become a part of the class. Whether you have one in the store or not, you could find yourself in a location with one and it would be good to understand its use. There is also a second option CPR method of just doing chest compressions instead of the combination of breathing and compressions. L&I requires that first aid certified personnel are on hand when employees are present.

The second item is: **Slips-Trips-Falls.** Slips, trips, and falls are among the most common in workplace accidents. Employees, employers, and customers are put at risk for serious injury when slip, trip, and fall hazards aren't noticed and fixed in parking lots, walkways, stairwells, and other work locations. Fortunately, with proper training, housekeeping techniques, and encouraging a safety culture in the workplace, you can spot, report, and correct these hazards before someone gets hurt.

You will find more information on this topic at the RS Safety Library, with several items to pick from as part of your safety meeting for this month. A printable sign is available here. For safety tips there is information here. The **SAFEME** app http://www.wrasafeme.org/ has a module on Slips Trip and Falls that can be used as a great refresher course!

Final item is – **Air Gun Safety** A simple tool that can have consequences when not used or equipped properly. Many workplace injuries occur because of the misuse of compressed air. It may be amusing to direct a jet of air at a coworker, but it can actually produce severe internal injury. It is extremely important to understand air gun regulations when it comes to using compressed air safely in the workplace.

Washington Retail Association
618 Quince St. SE • PO Box 2227 • Olympia, WA 98507
tel 360.943.9198 waretailservices.com

Hazards

Filings, chips, shavings, particles of metal, etc., can be thrown when compressed air is used for cleaning purposes. The pressure necessary to remove the particles from machines and surfaces is also strong enough to blow them into the eyes, ears or skin of people nearby. The greatest danger in dusting yourself down lies in accidental internal injury to the body. Compressed air can enter the body where skin is not present (i.e., ear, nose, scratch or puncture in the skin, however small) and can cause the affected part to swell to alarming proportions and be accompanied by severe pain. If the air gets into the bloodstream, it can make its way into the small blood vessels of the brain, burst the vessels and potentially cause death. A pressure strong enough to dust or clean is strong enough to breach the skin and penetrate the body. Even pressures as low as 5-10 pounds per square inch (psi) can cause serious injury.

Regulation

Due to the serious injuries than can be caused by compressed air, it shall not be used for cleaning purposes except where reduced to less than 30 psi and then only with effective chip guarding and personal protective equipment.

The phrase “reduce to less than 30 psi” means that the nozzle pressure or opening of a gun, pipe, cleaning lance, etc., used for cleaning purposes will remain at a pressure level below 30 psi in the event the tool is dead ended, meaning if the tip of an air gun is blocked. This can be achieved by relief ports that discharge sufficient air to reduce the air pressure at the nozzle to less than 30 psi. Employees should not use compressed air to clean themselves or their clothing while the garments are worn.

Effective chip guarding means any method or equipment that prevents a chip or particle (of any size) from being blown into the eyes or unbroken skin of the operator or other workers. Effective chip guarding may be separate from the air nozzle as in the case where screens or barriers are used. The use of protective cone air nozzles is generally acceptable for protection of the operator. However, barriers, baffles or screens may be required to protect other workers near the operator if they are exposed to flying chips or particles. Always check your local or state regulations as they may differ from the federal regulation discussed in this document.

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Some commonly asked questions
Q: Can compressed air greater than 30 psi be used for industrial purposes? A: Yes. Most pneumatic tools, including air guns, require 80-120 psi to operate effectively and to do useful work. However, they must have a relief device or air port within the system that will drop the pressure to under 30 psi if the air system becomes dead ended.

Q: If I reduce the air pressure to less than 30 psi, can I allow my employees to clean their clothing and/or themselves with the air gun? A: No. Under no circumstances should employees use compressed air to clean off clothing or any part of their body. Pressures as low as 5-10 psi have been known to cause serious injury.

Please review your tech's tool kits to make sure they are using the proper blow gun attachments that contain dead ended safety devices on them.

Here at WRA, we want all employees to take the time and be safe! Remember, DOSH can fine your business if you are not holding and documenting monthly safety meetings.

Thinking safety for you,

Rick Means
Director of Safety and Education
Retail Services
618 Quince St SE Olympia, WA 98501
rmeans@waretailservices.com
360-943-9198 ext. 118

Air tool tips courtesy of Grainger http://www.grainger.com/content/qt-pr-air-gun-safety-187