

March 2020

Dear RETRO Members;

March is [Save Your Vision](#) and [Workplace Eye Health and Safety Month](#). This is an opportunity to check your personal protective eye gear and ensure that your employees are properly using them. Eyes are priceless and eye protection is cheap in comparison!

Safety Inspections. Giving your shop an annual 'physical' by doing a top-to-bottom check is important even when you routinely perform safety inspections for the different parts of your operation. Yes, just like getting an annual check-up with your doctor.

That means you go through everything: Accident Prevention Plan, Hazard Communications-MSDS, posters, workstations, personal protective gear, emergency plans, first aid kits, fire extinguishers, electrical cords, smoke alarms, and so on. Checking everything should produce a list of items that will need attention or correction. Making sure your operation is doing the best to reduce accidents to build a culture of workplace safety.

Here is a link to the [RS SAFETY library for Check List worksheet](#). If you need a different format to make it easier for you to modify in Excel or Word, please [contact me](#).

Forklift Safety. Common forklift injuries are often due to driving off loading docks or fall between docks and an unsecured trailer. Other workers are hurt when they are struck by a forklift, or when they fall while standing on elevated pallets and tines. Most incidents also involve property damage, including damage to overhead sprinklers, racking, pipes, walls, and other machinery. You also need to consider type of load, speed, incline and surface when operating a forklift. [Link to forklift training tools](#). There are some good videos on [RS SafetyTV](#) in the forklift section. Forklift operators are required to be at least 18 years old and have a separate certification.

Compressed Gas. You may have different types of compressed gas cylinders in the shop. You weld or use a torch to loosen bearings or bolts. These cylinders need to be stored properly when not in use, that means removing the gauge set, re-capping and securing tanks so that they don't tip over.

Most of us know what the various compressed gas cylinders are used for on the job, but how many of us realize that the gases stored in those cylinders are under pressure from 250 psi to 2200 psi? These pressures make the cylinders not only dangerous from a fire standpoint but if

not handled and stored properly, you are looking at a bomb or a rocket. Today we want to talk about the safe use of compressed gas cylinders.

Some discussion topics:

1. Always store compressed gas cylinders in a secure upright position.
2. Always store with caps over the valves. Remove the gauges and hoses after use.
3. Never store two different types of gases closely together.
4. Never tamper with any safety devices on the valve or cylinder.
5. Always open valves slowly.
6. Avoid storing cylinders in areas of high temperatures (shade works).
7. Never use cylinders for rollers or sawhorses.
8. Never attempt to repair valves or regulators.
9. Separate full cylinders from empty ones.
10. Do not try to transfer gases from one cylinder to another.
11. Keep a fire extinguisher nearby when handling or working with compressed gas cylinders.
12. When in use, keep cylinders secured to a cart designed for that use.
13. Remove empty cylinders from the work area.
14. Never expose gases to oil or grease.

Remember that improper use of compressed gas cylinders is a common safety violation. Most people think the cylinders are safe. However, they are safe only if treated properly. To ensure that they don't become a hazard, follow the basic rules we just discussed. L&I rules can be found here; https://lni.wa.gov/safety-health/safety-rules/chapter-pdfs/WAC296-24.pdf#WAC_296_24_295 and then look at Part K.

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. Number three cited item for 2019!

Thinking safety for you,

Rick Means

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