

August 2020

Hello RETRO Members;

As you are aware, we are still in an above normal risk of Covid-19. Employers need to keep vigilant to keep your workplace healthy by practicing careful employee health screening and enforce face covering with employees and customers. Making it inviting for them to share information with you is the best policy.

Steps you can take to ensure compliance:

- You need to make sure masks are available to employees free of charge and immediately replace if becomes damaged.
- The type of face covering needs to be appropriate to the risk of their work environment using L&I's publication on [Which Mask for Which Task?](#)
- Ensure facial coverings are worn to protect workers and customers
- Designate a manager/supervisor to oversee the COVID-19 safety program at your shop



Minimum requirements for a business to comply with the customer mask order:

- Post prominent customer mask policy signage at entrances (*should be in main customer base relevant language English, Korean, and Spanish, etc.*).
- Take steps to contact customers to ensure facial coverings are worn to protect workers and other customers– but avoid creating violent situations. For tips on facial covering conversations with customers, see [de-escalating article here](#).
- Adopt customer masking policy and procedures into COVID-19 worker safety program.

For more information on re-opening phases tools go [here](#).

You need to update your Accident Prevention Program to include a section on pandemic in the Emergency Planning section where you show your Earthquake and Fire processes. If you plug in the [Safety Operational Plan](#) you would have it already to go.

**De-escalation Techniques.** Since mask wearing has become a requirement, some customers could refuse to comply and can even become confrontational when dealing with such situations we recommend training employees on de-escalating techniques due to an increase number of situations that have turned out badly. We suggest that role playing some different scenarios would a great way to show employees ways to do this.



For more tips on how to de-escalate potential situations go [here](#).

**Ladder Use** – Just how important is ladder safety? Well, ladders are one of the major causes of fall-related fatalities, according to the National Safety Council's statistics. It is estimated that in any given year 65,000 individuals receive emergency room treatment due to ladder accidents. Most ladder incidents happen at *ten feet or less from the ground*. Remember to pick the right ladder for the project. More information is available on [RS SafetyTV](#) or the [RS Safety Library](#). The [SAFEME](#) app has a module on Ladders that can be used as a great refresher course!



**Battery Safety** - Batteries contain sulfuric acid and produce explosive mixtures of hydrogen and oxygen. Because the self-discharge action generates hydrogen gas even when the battery is not in operation, make sure batteries are stored and worked on in a well-ventilated area. Some of the hazards that can happen when working with batteries are:



- Chemical burns from the sulfuric acid
- Electrical shocks or burns
- Explosion from a spark igniting the hydrogen/oxygen gases
- Lifting injuries – batteries are heavy!

Safety tips for working with batteries:

- Always wear ANSI Z87.1 approved safety glasses and face shield or splash proof goggles when working on or near batteries.
- Always wear proper hand protection.
- Keep all sparks, flames and cigarettes away from the battery.
- Never try to open a battery with non-removable vents.
- Keep removable vents tight and level except when servicing electrolyte.
- Make sure work area is well ventilated.
- Never lean over battery while boosting, testing or charging.
- Exercise caution when working with metallic tools or conductors to prevent short circuits and sparks. If you are wearing jewelry, you should remove it during while working with batteries.

For such a small item, batteries are heavy, and you should exercise care when lifting them. If possible, store batteries at waist height so that you are not bending over as much. Another good tool is to transport them with a cart or hand truck, instead of hand carrying them the entire distance. Having a battery spill kit on hand is recommended.

There is more on this subject that can be found in the [RS Safety Library](#) in the Auto section

Finally, we would like to introduce you to our Safety Intern, Norberto Uribe. He is currently enrolled at Pierce Community College AAS-T in Occupational Safety and Health Tech. He will be helping in the Safety department for the next few weeks to complete his requirements for graduation. After graduation he would like to find a position where he can show off his newly earned skills.

In his spare time, he enjoys camping with his family, raising honeybees, and doing small engine repair.



Please welcome Norberto and do not be surprised if you get a call or email from him, he is onboard to help you with safety!

Think safe. Act safe. Be safe.  
Rick Means  
Director of Safety & Education  
Retail Services Inc.  
[rmeans@waretailaservices.com](mailto:rmeans@waretailaservices.com)  
360-943-9198 ext. 118