



City Safe

A Guide To Assist In Training
Employees About:

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Winter Safety

Number 32

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Happy New Year to all of our KMIT cities! This issue of *City Safe* is dedicated to cold weather safety and operations. Just before Christmas this year, the western part of Kansas was reminded how quickly the weather can change conditions and paralyze a region. The blizzard of 2006 certainly made news with the impact at the Denver International Airport and the unfortunate travelers that were stranded there for several days before flights resumed. The second storm, a week later, provided even greater challenges for power and roads.

Cities may also face weather related challenges. City operations are critical to restoring services and allowing residents to conduct their daily affairs. This means that city workers are often on the front line when conditions are at their worst. Snow is a challenge, but here in Kansas, ice remains the most dreaded winter condition. Not only does ice make travel unsafe but also causes power outages, property damage from falling trees, and clean up that lasts far longer than snow alone.

In this issue, we will focus on several areas for potential injury. The first is shoveling snow. Although most cities will use mechanized methods for large snow removal operations on streets and sidewalks, there always remains some final cleanup that may done by hand. Our second review is how to properly jump start a dead battery. Stranded motorists may look to public safety personnel to help them get their cars started. Setting aside any liability questions for possible damage to auto computers, jump starting a battery can be accomplished safely if you follow a few simple rules.

The third and fourth topics have been covered by *City Safe* in the past, but a review of tree trimming and chipper safety may be timely if we have severe ice conditions that down a large number of trees. The safe disposal of tree waste is very important not only from the danger of working with machinery, but also the strains of lifting and feeding a large amount of waste.

The last topic is the safe use of a portable generator. This subject came from the IMA staff. Speaking of IMA, Renee Rhodes will be getting in touch with you to schedule a review of your safety procedures. Just remember, the greater your safety effort, the greater the premium discount and the added benefit of fewer claims.

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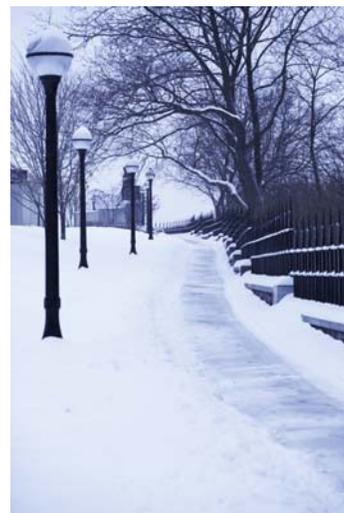
Finally, cold weather emergency situations call for long hours. City workers are very dedicated and push to clear the streets, repair damaged infrastructure, and keep city residents safe. These are perfect conditions for fatigue to set in. It comes as no surprise that as we tire, the likelihood of an accident increases. Encourage your workforce to take breaks and maintain a reasonable schedule with time for meals.

SNOW SHOVELING

While shoveling snow can be good exercise, it can also be dangerous for optimistic shovelers who take on more than they can handle. The National Safety Council offers the following tips to help you get a handle on safe shoveling:



- Individuals over the age of 40, or those who are relatively inactive, should be especially careful.
 - If you have a history of heart trouble, do not shovel without a doctor's permission.
 - Do not shovel after eating or while smoking.
 - Take it slow! Shoveling (like lifting weights) can raise your heart rate and blood pressure dramatically; so pace yourself. Be sure to stretch out and warm up before taking on the task.
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- Shovel only fresh snow. Freshly fallen, powdery snow is easier to shovel than the wet, packed-down variety.
 - Push the snow as you shovel. It's easier on your back than lifting the snow out of the way.
 - Don't pick up too much at once. Use a small shovel, or fill only one-fourth or one-half of a large one.
 - Lift with your legs bent, not your back. Keep your back straight. By bending and "sitting" into the movement, you'll keep your spine upright and less stressed. Your shoulders, torso, and thighs can do the work for you.
 - Do not work to the point of exhaustion. If you run out of breath, take a break. If you feel tightness in your chest, stop immediately.
 - Dress warmly. Remember that extremities, such as the nose, ears, hands, and feet, need extra attention during winter's cold. Wear a turtleneck sweater, cap, scarf, face protection, mittens, wool socks, and waterproof boots.



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Jump-Starting a Weak or Dead Automobile Battery Correctly

When a motor vehicle battery fails, a jump start often is the best short-term way to get the motor going. Because it is important that jump starting be done properly, the National Safety Council recommends the following procedure:



- Position another vehicle with a healthy battery and your car so they do not touch each other. Be sure both batteries are of the same voltage.
- Read the owner's manuals for BOTH vehicles for any special directions.
- Turn off the ignitions of both vehicles and set the parking brakes. Place automatic transmissions in "Park" and standard transmissions in neutral.
- Wear safety glasses and gloves while using cables.
- Unless given different directions in the owner's manual, use the booster cables in this order:
 - 1) Clamp/connect one end of the positive (+) booster cable to the positive (+) post of the dead battery.
 - 2) Connect the other end of the same cable to the same marked post (+) of the booster battery.
 - 3) Connect the second, negative (-) booster cable to the other post of the booster battery.
 - 4) Make the final negative (-) booster cable connection on the engine block of the stalled vehicle away from the battery.
- Start the booster vehicle and let it run for a few minutes. Then, start the disabled vehicle.
- Remove the cables in the reverse order of connection, being very careful not to let the booster cable clamps touch each other or come in contact with car parts. Also, avoid the fans of the engines. Electric fans may run without the engine being on.

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Protect Yourself Portable Generator Safety

Portable generators are internal combustion engines used to generate electricity and are commonly used during disaster response. Portable generators can be dangerous if used incorrectly.

Major Causes of Injuries and Fatalities

- Shocks and electrocution from improper use of power or accidentally energizing other electrical systems.

- Carbon monoxide from a generator's exhaust.
- Fires from improperly refueling the generator or inappropriately storing fuel.

Safe Work Practices

- Inspect portable generators for damage or loose fuel lines that may have occurred during transportation and/or handling.
- Keep the generator dry.
- Maintain and operate portable generators in accordance with the manufacturer's use and safety instructions.
- Never attach a generator directly to the electrical system of a structure (home, office, or trailer) unless the generator has a properly installed transfer switch because this creates a risk of electrocution for utility workers.
- Always plug electrical appliances directly into the generator using the manufacturer's supplied cords. Use undamaged heavy-duty extension cords that are grounded (3-pronged).
- Use ground-fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) as per the manufacturer's instructions.
- Before refueling, shut down the generator. Never store fuel indoors.

Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a colorless, odorless, toxic gas. Many people have died from CO poisoning because their generator was not adequately ventilated.

- Never use a generator indoors.
- Never place a generator outdoors near doors, windows, or vents.
- If you or others show symptoms of CO poisoning—dizziness, headaches, nausea, tiredness—get to fresh air immediately and seek medical attention.



Working Safely While Trimming Trees

We all know that spring time in Kansas brings warmer temperatures and sunny skies, but unfortunately it also brings severe weather. These storms (along with ice storms from winter) can leave the trees in our cities looking pretty rough. Eventually, these trees must be trimmed to prevent damage to power lines, other trees, or the public. So before you climb into that aerial bucket or climb that ladder, remember a few of these tips for safely trimming trees.

- Obtain training on proper tree cutting and trimming (nobody likes a butchered tree).
- If an aerial bucket truck or other boomed vehicle is used, ensure that the operators are trained in the safe operation of these vehicles.
- Before trimming a tree, inspect the area to identify possible hazards (e.g., presence of power lines, broken or cracked limbs after a severe storm) and take appropriate action to prevent injuries or accidents.



- Assume any power lines are energized or “hot.” Avoid any direct or indirect contact with the power line until the utility company has verified that the line has been de-energized.
- Mark off an area around the tree and prevent bystander access. Always work with another person who stays on the ground.
- Learn to recognize trees weakened by disease and types of trees prone to cracking.
- Inspect tree limbs for strength before climbing. Check for cavities in the tree, rotten or dead branches, splits and cracks in the trunk or where branches are attached, broken branches hanging in the tree, etc.
- Inspect the fall protection equipment and lines each time before they are used. Tag and remove any damaged or defective equipment from service until it can be repaired or replaced and disposed of properly, according to the manufacturer’s recommendations.
- If a ladder is used, tie it off on a secure branch.
- Use approved and appropriate fall protection gear when working above ground including when working from a ladder or platform.
- Break small dead branches off by hand as you climb. Remove larger branches with proper tools.
- Place hands and feet on separate limbs and move only one hand or foot at a time.
- Raise or lower tools by attaching hand lines to the end of tools. Tools attached at the center might catch on branches. Smaller tools may be raised and lowered in a bucket attached to a hand line.
- Use nonconductive tools and personal protective equipment if working near electrical power lines.
- Be sure that you can see the cut you are making so you do not cut hand lines, safety ropes, etc. unintentionally.
- Attach a composite or leather guard on saws that are held by a ring on a worker’s belt.



New Year’s Resolutions

- Safety & Health Attitudes and Actions -

So, you made it to another year. You are still alive (obviously) and, presumably, at least somewhat healthy. Will you still be able to say this when 2008 rolls around? While you cannot answer this question yet, you can begin by taking steps today to increase the likelihood you will be able to greet 2008 in at least as good a shape as you are today. What action should you take?

Begin with the realization that most premature deaths in this country are not work related. They are caused by your own personal habits as smoking, drug/alcohol abuse, or poor eating habits, usually a high fat diet. Cigarettes coupled with air contaminants can be more harmful to you than just cigarettes





***Regional Supervision Training
February / March 2007***

“Work Comp Training”

***Afternoon Workshops
each taught at four sites:***

***Dodge City, February 1st
Bonner Springs, February 8th
Coffeyville, February 15th
Haysville, March 1st***

alone. Being overweight can make you more susceptible to a back injury. Drug and alcohol abuse not only causes health problems, it is a concern to your employer because of the judgment and coordination problems it can cause. Evaluate your personal habits and limit your excesses.

More disabling injuries occur at home rather than at work. Why is this? Answer these questions for yourself: Do you apply the same safety precautions at home as you do at work? Are your home tools in good repair and properly guarded? Is your ladder of good quality and in good repair? If you are working with hazardous materials, do you wear personal protective equipment? When you are at work, you are expected, if not required, to follow the safety rules. At home, you call the shots. You will be much better off at home by following the same safety rules and procedures you use at work.

So now, hopefully, you have decided to make your life healthier and safer at home. What can you do this year to make yourself safer at work? It all begins with attitude. Working the safe way is the only way. Injuries are not a natural outcome of working. Injuries are the result of something going wrong. Accidents do not just happen; they are caused. Keeping this in mind; be alert to the dangers of your job. Anticipate hazards and eliminate or control them before they cause harm to yourself or others. Learn as much as you can about the dangers of your work and pass that experience on to others. Cooperate with the safety efforts your city is making.

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