



TOOLBOX TALK #46

Monday Morning Safety Reminders

Vol. 1 No. 46

ACCIDENT PREVENTION

There are as many causes of accidents then there are accidents. Have you ever considered what events lead to an accident? We have talked about unsafe conditions and unsafe acts, but let's look at some of the complexities that surround accidents.

There can be any number of events that lead to an accident, but typically, a detailed accident analysis will reveal three types, or levels, of causes: Basic, Indirect and Direct. Let's review them in reverse order. The direct cause of an accident is a force, object or substance that cannot be safety absorbed. Think in terms of a falling hammer. The hammer hitting the worker is an example of a direct cause.

An indirect cause is the unsafe act or condition that led to the direct cause. The hammer that fell from a platform to Buddy's hardhat had been left unattended during Wally's break. Another worker passing through while eyeballing a looker walking across the street from the jobsite accidentally kicked the hammer with his work boot. This combination of unsafe act and unsafe condition is the indirect cause of the accident.

The basic cause falls back to our own management and policies. What can we do to make sure this type of thing doesn't happen? We may have been fortunate in this one case because the hammer didn't do serious damage, but next time it might. Where do you see yourself fitting in this picture? The goal is to prevent accidents. When you break accidents down to these three levels, you can easily find that you have a role to play in avoiding indirect causes and basic causes of accidents. You are the eyes and ears in the field. Report potential hazards before they become the indirect or direct cause of an accident. Help us understand your safety needs so that we can maintain the highest level of safety standards in our industry.

Facilitator Notes: Use another example to put your own crew in the story. Do not make light of safety, but keep your crew interested in your talk by using real names and incidents if possible. The point of understanding basic, indirect and direct causes of accidents is to help us understand what we mean by recognizing hazards and eliminating them. The point is to prevent the accident by recognizing a potential indirect or direct cause.

Additional Notes: _____

Crew Member Comments: _____

Presented By: _____ **Date/Time** _____

Attendees: _____

List additional attendees on back of sheet