

MSU-ES Dawg Tracks



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Seven Common Causes of Accidents



Did you know that 80 out of every 100 accidents are the fault of the person involved in the incident? **Unsafe acts** cause four times as many accidents as **unsafe conditions**.

Accidents occur for many reasons. In many situations, people tend to look for “things” or reasons to blame when an accident happens. This seems to them to be easier than to look for the “root” or basic reason for the incident to begin with.

Below are some of the reasons that accidents occur. As you read them, remember if you have ever been guilty of any of these. I know that I have, and I’ll bet some of you may have experienced some of these same things. It may not have resulted in an accident, but the next time that you experience one of these causes, you might not be so lucky.

COMMON CAUSES OF ACCIDENTS:

- ***Taking Shortcuts*** – Every day we make decisions that we hope will make a job go faster and more efficient. Often times when we think we are saving time, we have to be careful that we aren’t jeopardizing our health or the health of one of our employees. Shortcuts that reduce the safety of the job aren’t shortcuts, but are items that might increase our chances of injury.
- ***Being overconfident*** – Confidence is a good thing. Overconfidence to the point of arrogance is too much of a good thing. Also, the old adage of “it can’t happen to me,” is an attitude that can lead to improper methods of doing your work, using incorrect procedures or sometimes the wrong tools. Any one of these items can cause an injury to you or to a fellow worker.
- ***Ignoring Safety Procedures*** – Ignoring safety procedures, intentionally or unintentionally, can endanger you or other employees. The university has safety policies in place and we are supposed to observe them. **Casual attitudes about safety can result in a “casualty.”**
- ***Starting a Job with Incomplete Instructions*** – We know in order to do a job safely and to do it right the first time, we need a complete set of instructions. We’ve all seen situations where an employee made a mess of a task or assignment because he didn’t have sufficient instructions or the instructions weren’t clear. When you are working on a job, don’t ever be afraid to ask questions or get explanations for what is unclear to you. How many times have you heard, “I’m afraid to ask questions.” It’s not dumb to ask, but dumb not to ask.
- ***Poor Housekeeping*** – Anytime that guests, friends, colleagues or safety professionals come through your work site, whether it is the maintenance shops, storage areas, offices, etc. the first impression they get is sometimes the lasting one. If the office is unorganized or dirty, the maintenance shops are cluttered and unorganized, it portrays a sense of looseness and a lack of pride in the work site. On the other side of the coin, if they enter and see it neat and orderly, a sense of pride and quality of purpose is the attitude that they are most likely to leave with.
- ***Mental Distractions from Work*** – Bringing outside problems to work can keep you from focusing on your job. If this happens, it can be a hazard. Friends coming by while you are at work can cause a distraction and can keep you from focusing on the task at hand. Both of these incidents can put you into a hazardous situation. Don’t become a statistic; stay focused on the task at hand.
- ***Failure to Pre-Plan your Work*** – In the office or in other fields of work, it is important to pre-plan your work. First of all, it will uncover unforeseen problems and give you the opportunity to solve it and continue to work. Secondly, it will make the job go faster and more efficiently because you thought out the processes in advance of the start up.

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*“It is better to be careful 100 times
Than to get killed once”
(Mark Twain)*