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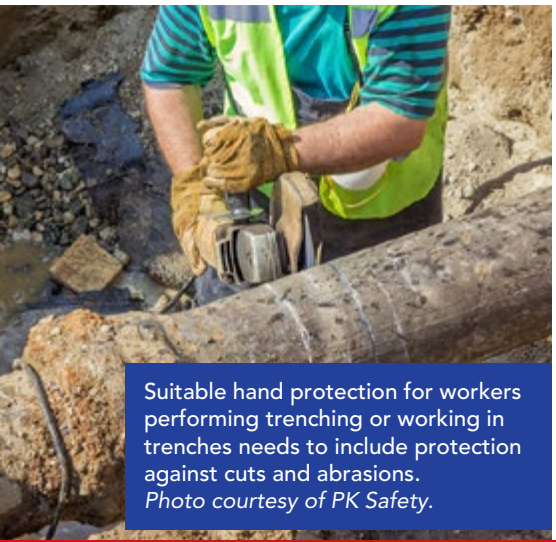
Contents

Gloves for Trenching: How to Find the Perfect Pair

By: **Rick Pedley**, *Contributor*

In construction trenching, workers remove rocks, soil, and other material from the ground for the placement or repair of buried utilities, pipelines, water transport, and other potentially hazardous activities. These materials can be dangerous to workers, especially on their hands.

Trenches are deeper than they are wide, and cave-ins pose the greatest risk to workers. While systems including shoring, benching, sloping, and shielding help protect workers, and safety measures are in place from a competent person regularly inspecting the site, workers are largely responsible for their own safety and the safety of their coworkers while in the trenches. It's vital that workers follow the relevant standards and safety systems to protect themselves and others working with them. These safety systems also include wearing and using protective gear they're trained on, including a harness and lifeline, hard hat, and safety gloves.



Suitable hand protection for workers performing trenching or working in trenches needs to include protection against cuts and abrasions. *Photo courtesy of PK Safety.*

FOCUSING ON HAND PROTECTION

Suitable hand protection for workers performing trenching or working in trenches needs to include protection against cuts and abrasions. Those hazards exist in the form of equipment, as well as the environment that includes metal, dirt, and rocks. Cut-resistant gloves will protect from lacerations and some punctures from job hazards, whereas abrasion-resistant gloves protect against friction and other abrasive materials and work conditions. These gloves come in an array of materials and combinations of materials, ranging from leather to chainmail, based on the kinds of hazards the worker needs protection against.

Leather safety gloves made from cowhide, pigskin, or goatskin, may also be a good option during milder trenching work. They stretch and don't limit one's range of motion, can grip equipment easily, and can be highly durable while offering decent protection from the different elements of this type of work. Reinforced leather safety gloves can offer cut resistance and be designed for electrical safety.

Impact resistance is an important quality for trenching gloves as well. Construction work in general, requires PPE like hard hats, steel-toed boots, and safety glasses to protect against fragments, dust, stones, and other flying pieces of debris from drilling, sawing, sanding, and grinding. Your knuckles and hands are in danger from falling objects, swinging equipment, and other impacts, especially because trenches are such tight spaces where you can't always get away from a hazard easily. Impact-resistant gloves can be ergonomic, helping you avoid the pain from pounding, and they prevent hand injuries from outside impacts as well.

NARROW IN ON YOUR NEEDS

Impact resistance is another important quality for trenching gloves. Photo courtesy of PK Safety.

Will you be welding, cutting, or brazing during trenching and shoring? You'll need specialized welding gloves for that purpose. These gloves need to protect against flames, heat, and metal splatter dangers. Standard gloves that protect against cuts, flames, heat, and sparks won't offer enough protection during this type of work. Welding gloves will be insulated with thermal protection and have longer sleeves than other safety gloves to help protect your arms and work with other PPE that you're wearing.

There are many glove options on the market and depending on the specifics of your trenching and shoring work, you might need a combination of protections,

Impact resistance is another important quality for trenching gloves. *Photo courtesy of PK Safety.*

or more than one pair for different aspects of your job. Keep in mind that the more kinds of protection that a glove offers, the less dexterous it becomes. While more protection than you need sounds great, making sure that you're protecting only against those dangers you're likely to face means that you'll be much more productive and comfortable at work.

No matter what kind of glove you're wearing on the job, you should regularly inspect them for damage. If you find that your gloves are damaged before you begin your shift, or something happens on the job to damage them, they need to be immediately removed from service and replaced or repaired, as appropriate. ■

*Rick Pedley, PK Safety's President and CEO, joined the family business in 1979. PK Safety, a supplier of occupational safety and personal protective equipment and manufacturer of their own new FR line GRIT, has been operating since 1947 and takes OSHA, ANSI, PPE, and CSA work safety equipment seriously (*www.pksafety.com/contact-us*).*

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Milwaukee Tool® Disrupts the Jobsite with Zero Gas Emissions and Safer Equipment

Milwaukee Tool remains committed to disrupting the wet concrete process by providing safer and more productive alternatives. Gas and corded equipment cause user frustrations and safety concerns on jobsites because of emissions, equipment malfunctioning, tripping hazards, and more. Milwaukee's MX FUEL™ Equipment system delivers the performance and durability demanded by the trades, while operating on one compatible battery platform. This system goes beyond the limitations of gas or corded solutions and eliminates the hazards associated with them.

NO GAS HEADACHES (EMISSIONS & GAS MAINTENANCE)

When working on a jobsite, a user is subject to the hazardous emissions from gas-powered equipment and the frustrations of engine maintenance. Emissions will cause carbon monoxide (CO) accumulation, which can occur even in areas that appear to be properly ventilated. This build-up inevitably leads to CO poisoning, which is highly dangerous and, in many cases, fatal within minutes.

In addition to workplace hazards, gas-powered equipment needs regular maintenance and upkeep. There is a constant risk of engine failure if the gas and oil are mixed incorrectly or if the engine is not properly maintained. Additionally, priming, choking, and pulling the engine to start is a lengthy and strenuous process, while running the risk of flooding the engine and forcing users to start the process all over again.

With the MX FUEL™ Equipment System, these common gas hazards and frustrations are eliminated. The MX FUEL Backpack Concrete Vibrator and the new MX FUEL Vibratory Screed provide instant power with no gas headaches, produce less noise, and zero emissions for a safer workspace, indoors and outdoors. Both products are compatible with all MX FUEL™ REDLITHIUM™ batteries, giving users the most reliable power for their equipment. Their push-button start delivers instant, reliable power, eliminating the repetitive motions of a pull start and reducing downtime, allowing users to get jobs done faster while matching the power and performance of the gas units users are accustomed to.

NO TRIPPING HAZARDS

Historically, many concrete vibrators have been run on-site with generators and extension cords, which can cause tripping hazards on the jobsite. When introducing the new MX FUEL™ Concrete Vibrator, Milwaukee sought to eliminate extension cords and generators that cause excess clutter. By eliminating the need to run extension cords across the jobsite to power a concrete vibrator, Milwaukee is both improving safety on site by removing tripping hazards and increasing the user's mobility and productivity because they no longer need to manage an extension cord. Lastly, the MX FUEL™ Concrete Vibrator's wireless remote gives users the ability to turn the vibrator on from up to 30 feet away, which can be extremely beneficial when using longer whips.

The MX FUEL™ battery-powered equipment system delivers the demanded performance and durability without the hazards associated with emissions, tripping on cords, and the frustrations of gas maintenance. To learn more, visit https://www.milwaukeetool.com/Innovations/MX-FUEL ■

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- NO ENGINE MAINTENANCE
- NO CORDS

How the A10 Standards Can Help Improve Construction and Demolition Safety

Construction and demolition sites can expose workers to a wide range of hazards that can lead to serious injuries and fatalities. The ANSI/ASSP A10 series of voluntary consensus standards provides safety requirements to help address these hazards. Tim Fisher, director of standards development and technical services for the American Society of Safety Professionals (ASSP), joins us to answer some frequently asked questions about the A10 standards.

CAN YOU GIVE US SOME BACKGROUND ON THE A10 COMMITTEE?

A10 is one of the oldest committees under the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) dating back to the 1920s. The first A10 standard was written in 1943. With more than 1,000 members and 50 subgroups, A10 is also one of the largest standards-writing committees in the United States.

It's comprised of four main interest categories:

- First are the large construction companies, large contractors and contractors' associations.
- Second are labor unions including almost every major union whose members perform construction and demolition operations.
- Third, is general interest groups that include a variety of government agencies and some universities.
- Fourth is large engineering companies and consulting organizations.

A10 standards represent the biggest compendium of consensus standards anywhere in the world addressing occupational safety and health for construction and demolition operations. These standards are currently used in more than 70 countries to help prevent worker injuries and fatalities.

WHAT ROLE DOES ASSP PLAY IN THE FACILITATION OF THESE STANDARDS AND HOW THEY ARE DEVELOPED?

ASSP is the secretariat for the A10 standards committee. We manage the committee to ensure it follows the accredited procedures to write standards that are based on good science and sound technology. We make sure the standards development process is conducted in a transparent way that is fair and unbiased so that the standards are credible and valuable to the construction and demolition industry.

HOW ARE STANDARDS TOPICS CHOSEN BY THE A10 COMMITTEE?

The A10 committee canvasses our entire membership at our bi-annual meetings to bring topics, issues and concerns facing our industry to the forefront. The committee then votes on a topic and if it passes, we request an individual to sponsor the topic, choose a group to work with and create a white paper. ASSP as an organization then approves the project and launches the initiative with public notice and call for comments. If the proposed standard is approved, we then proceed with creating the standard.

WHY SHOULD SAFETY PROFESSIONALS USE A10 STANDARDS?

Safety programs that incorporate written policies and procedures are key to developing and maintaining an effective and efficient safety culture. The A10 series of standards covers safety requirements for a whole host of construction and demolition activities. Following the ANSI standard development process, these standards are revised or reaffirmed every five years. This process and procedure keeps the A10 standards current and having positive impact on the construction and demolition industry. Using the technical information and guidance found in A10 standards, safety and health professionals can develop their own comprehensive program that includes policies and procedures that represent industry best practices and go beyond regulatory compliance.

A10 STANDARDS ENCOMPASS SO MANY DIFFERENT CONSTRUCTION AND DEMOLITION TASKS. CAN YOU GIVE US A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF WORK AND TASKS COVERED BY THESE STANDARDS?

A10 is at the forefront of addressing hazards in a variety of subsets of the construction industry. Some of these hazards include scaffolding collapses, hearing loss, falls from height and trench cave-ins. The A10 series of standards provide much more up-to-date and technically specific safety and health operating practices than other regulatory standards that may not address due to technical and technological changes over time. There are standards also created to address safety in niche areas like masonry, wind turbine facilities, telecommunications towers and highway construction safety.

ANSI/ASSP A10.47-2021, Work Zone Safety for Roadway Construction, is specific to the hazards of road construction. This standard has been around for a while, but recently was revised to ensure best practices are incorporated. This includes guidance on developing traffic control plans, implementing protective safety measures, improving worker visibility and creating an emergency response plan.

WHAT A10 STANDARDS APPLY TO CONSTRUCTION AND DEMOLITION SAFETY MANAGEMENT?

We receive this question often. This is likely because requests for proposals (RFPs) may require that the successful bidder have a safety management system for large-scale construction projects. These A10 standards provide OSH management guidance.

ANSI/ASSP A10.1-2018 Pre-Project and Pre-Task Safety and Health Planning for Construction and Demolition Operations, will help you set priorities and create a plan for a project.

ANSI/ASSP A10.33-2020, Safety and Health Program Requirements for Multi-Employer Projects, addresses the complexities of the contracting environment and sets administrative structure for the project to provide a safe and healthful work environment where multiple employers are or will be engaged.

ANSI/ASSP A10.38-2021, Basic Elements of an Employer's Program to Provide a Safe and Healthful Work Environment, aims to help employers provide a safe work environment.

ANSI/ASSP A10.39-1996 (R2017), Construction Safety and Health Audit Program, establishes an internal method of measuring compliance with an organization's written safety and health program requirements. Using this standard will help you gauge the effectiveness of your program.

WHICH A10 STANDARDS WOULD YOU RECOMMEND TO A NEW SAFETY PROFESSIONAL OR SOMEONE NEW TO THE CONSTRUCTION AND DEMOLITION INDUSTRY?

These foundational standards are good for every safety professional to have in their toolbox. These standards will help you develop a site-specific safety plan that can then be published and communicated to all workers, sharing best practices with everyone involved with the project.

ANSI/ASSP A10.6-2006 (R2016) Safety and Health Program Requirements for Demolition Operations, specifically addresses how to prevent damage to property and how to protect the public during demolition operations.

ANSI/ASSP A10.7-2018, Safety and Health Requirements for Construction and Demolition Use, Storage, Handling and Site Movement of Commercial Explosives and Blasting Agents, is another good standard for everyone to have. You might not use it often, but it's important to know these best safety practices when you have the need.

ANSI/ASSP A10.25-2017, Sanitation in Construction, describes how to create a healthy work environment.

ANSI/ASSP A10.26-2011 (R2016), Emergency Procedures for Construction and Demolition Sites, explains emergency information in a user-friendly way, making it easy to communicate the procedure to workers.

ANSI/ASSP A10.34-2021, Protection of the Public on or Adjacent to Construction Sites, is a recently updated standard that addresses situations like high-rise construction sites where you need to have a plan that protects the public from the hazards of your job site.

ANSI/ASSP A10.49-2015 Control of Chemical Health Hazards in Construction and Demolition Operations, focuses on hazards you can't see. It contains state-of-the-art guidance that will help you protect workers.

HOW DOES SOMEONE JOIN THE A10 COMMITTEE AND GET INVOLVED IN THE STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT PROCESS?

Visit assp.org/standards to apply online. It's important to note that committee members represent their organization and not an individual viewpoint. We will start by getting you involved with a subgroup to work on the technical content of a document. From there you can move to a main committee. It takes some time and effort, but it is not a particularly difficult process. Contact us and we will get you started.

ANY CLOSING COMMENTS?

Yes, use the A10 standards. They incorporate the most current accepted safety and health practices. Implementing these standards will help move your occupational safety and health programs forward to keep construction and demolition workers safe. ■

Tim Fisher, CSP, CHMM, CPEA, ARM, FASSP, is director of standards and technical services with the American Society of Safety Professionals (ASSP). Fisher holds an M.S. in Industrial Management-Safety and Industrial Hygiene from Northern Illinois University, an M.A. in Public Administration from University of Illinois-Chicago and a B.A. in Management from the University of Maryland.

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Addressing Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Construction Safety Helmets

1. WHAT IS THE MAIN DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CONVENTIONAL HARD HATS AND SAFETY HELMETS?

ANSWER: A safety helmet features an integrated chin strap to ensure a comfortable and secure fit to a workers head – even in the event of a trip, slip or fall – eliminating the chance of the safety helmet dislodging if gravity were to take over. Safety helmets may also feature integrated safety accessories including retractable eyewear, face shields or earmuffs.

2. ARE SAFETY HELMETS ONLY APPLICABLE FOR WORKING AT HEIGHTS?

ANSWER: No, safety helmets are designed to help ensure a secure fit in the event of a fall from heights and minor trips and slips at ground level.

3. WHAT STANDARD(S) SHOULD MY SAFETY HELMET MEET?

ANSWER: OSHA 1926.100(b) states that head protection administered by a construction employer in the U.S. must meet the specifications outlined in the ANSI Z89.1 standard, which is the American standard of performance and testing requirements for industrial safety helmets. This means all safety helmets used in the U.S. construction industry must at least meet the ANSI Z89.1 requirements for Type I impact protection.

4. WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ANSI TYPE I AND ANSI TYPE II SAFETY HELMETS?

ANSWER: Type I safety helmets are designed to reduce force from an impact only to the top (crown) of the head. Type II safety helmets are designed to reduce force from an impact to the top (crown) and sides of the head. The additional side impact protection is achieved from an integrated foam impact liner.

5. WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN EN 12492 SHOCK ABSORPTION AND ANSI TYPE II IMPACT PROTECTION?

ANSWER: EN 12492 is a European standard of safety requirements and testing methods for mountaineering helmets. Clause 4.2.1.1, 4.2.1.2, 4.2.1.3, and 4.2.1.4 refer to the vertical, front, side and rear of head impact shock absorption, respectively.

ANSI Z89.1 is the American standard of performance and testing requirements for industrial safety helmets. ANSI Type II hard hats and safety helmets provide top, front, back and side of head impact protection. OSHA 1926.100(b) states that head protection administered by a construction employer in the U.S. must meet the specifications contained in the ANSI Z98.1 standard.

6. WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CLASS C, CLASS G AND CLASS E HARD HATS?

ANSWER: Class C (Conductive) safety helmets are not intended to protect wearers from contact with electrical conductors, where Class G and Class E safety helmets are. Class G (General) safety helmets are designed to reduce the danger of contact with low voltage conductors up to 2,200 volts. Class E (Electrical) are tested up to 20,000 volts and are designed to protect the worker from high voltage conductors.

7. HOW CAN I TELL IF MY HARD HAT/ SAFETY HELMET IS ANSI Z89.1 CERTIFIED?

ANSWER: ANSI Z89.1 head protection required markings include:

- Manufacturers name
- Fate of manufacture
- Testing legend
- Type and class designation
- Approximate sizing range

8. DO SAFETY HELMETS ALLOW FOR THE ADDITIONAL INTEGRATION OF OTHER PPE ITEMS?

ANSWER: PIP® safety helmets allow for the additional integration of earmuffs and face shields with universal accessory slots located on the sides of each helmet. PIP® also offers safety helmets with pre-installed retractable items such as Z87 + certified face shields and eyewear.

9. MAKING THE SWITCH TO A MORE COMPLETE LEVEL OF PROTECTION IN SAFETY HELMETS SEEMS EXPENSIVE. ARE THERE AFFORDABLE OPTIONS?

ANSWER: There are many different types of safety helmets on the market. Some contractors may be looking to implement basic upgrades, such as a style or impact change. Other contractors may be looking to make the same upgrades with a more comprehensive option that addresses more than just head protection. PIP® has a full line of safety helmets to address those different types of safety needs and budgets. ■

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Soon It Will Be Summer: The Forecast Calls for a New OSHA Heat Standard

By: **Robert Lahey**, *Contributor*

Springtime will soon give way to a sweltering summer in most of the country. A dramatic reminder of the consequences of heat stress are the hundreds of lives lost throughout the Pacific Northwest last year as a result of a two-week period of record-breaking high temperatures.

As the Earth's climate continues to warm, heat waves are becoming more frequent and more severe. Employers and employees—in both outdoor and indoor environments—should be concerned.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) cites heat as the leading cause of weather-related deaths since 1990 – five times deadlier than cold weather, three times deadlier than hurricanes, and twice as deadly as tornadoes.

This phenomenon is not likely to change anytime soon. However, heat-related illnesses and fatalities in the workplace are preventable. It requires an effective health and safety plan to:

- Identify on-the-job hazards
- Correct or reduce risks
- Train workers about protections
- Prepare for first aid
- Plans for emergency response

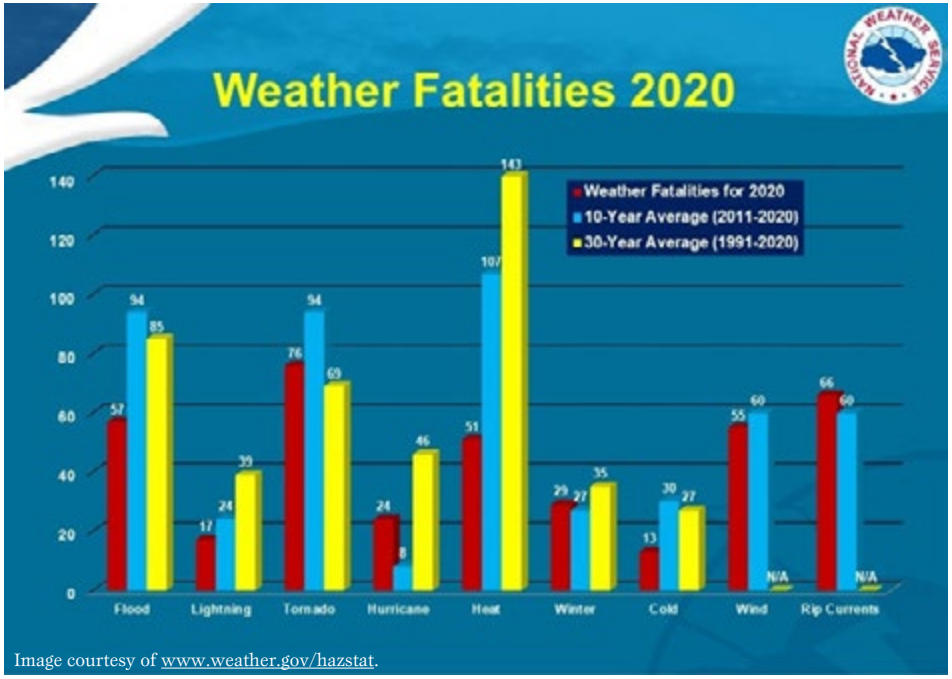

Image courtesy of www.weather.gov/hazstat.

The need for these preventive measures is shared by government officials, as well. In October 2021, the Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) published an *Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking for Heat Injury and Illness Prevention in Outdoor and Indoor Work Settings*.

Currently, a heat-specific standard does not exist to protect millions of workers from exposure to hazardous conditions. A public comment period that concluded in January 2022 was intended to obtain information about "the extent and nature of hazardous heat in the workplace." The timeline for next steps has not yet been announced.

In the meantime, however, OSHA has instituted a heat-related enforcement initiative and plans to issue a National Emphasis Program (NEP) for heat-related safety efforts later this year.

All of these actions represent a national commitment to the development of a permanent federal rule and the implementation of other means to increase awareness about the dangers of heat.

Employers do not need to wait for direction from Washington, D.C. in order to take actions that are in the best interest of employees. The risks are real, as evidenced by the nearly 400 workplace fatalities and additional 35,000 injuries and illnesses attributed to workplace heat stress during the past decade. Furthermore, the time is right, with summer months now on the horizon.

Excessive temperatures can cause heat stroke, and even death, if an employee is not treated properly. Such conditions also make worse existing health problems, such as asthma, kidney failure, and heart disease. Construction workers are at higher risk, but the problem affects all who are exposed to extreme heat – including persons working indoors in a non-climate-controlled environment.

The most common strategies for protecting workers include:

- Providing sufficient water, rest, and shade.
- Allowing new or returning employees to gradually increase their workloads and take more frequent breaks in order to build tolerance for the heat.
- Monitor all workers for any signs of illness.
- Train on prevention, but plan for emergencies.

Indeed, 'tis the season for adopting a proactive approach to this known health hazard. ■

Robert Lahey is the President & CEO of Chicagoland Construction Safety Council (www.buildsafe.org).

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Construction Safety Training Best Practices

By Melody Hollis, Education Services Manager & Maureen Mallach, Manager of Professional Services, HCSS

Construction sites and work can be hazardous if safety measures are not correctly put in place and if workers at the jobsite are not adequately trained. Skimping on safety training is not a good idea as it can lead to significant liability for the contractor. Even if your firm is under pressure to meet deadlines, putting safety training on the back burner is not wise.

Safety training is a whole new ballpark. It involves more than just selecting a software tool to manage safety. It involves detailed training from certified professionals, change management, and developing a safety culture.

SOME SAFETY MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE

Safety management software providers contract with certified safety professionals to deliver training on their software. These certified professionals are senior safety officials with decades of industry experience who can go beyond just reviewing a checklist of features of the product. They will address the company's safety culture, working with employees to instill a corporate culture that focuses on safety.

Safety professionals who train others know and understand OSHA's laws and regulations and other safety standards. They know how to create an effective safety program built around a safety culture and processes. They know what information to collect and how to use and analyze it to improve safety across the board.

Some safety management software offers pre-built safety meetings and inspections to promote ownership of safety within construction crews. Crew leaders can verify and update crew member skills and certifications, use relevant inspections as teaching tools, record safety meeting attendance and topics, track individual employee safety education goals, and track near misses, incidents, and observations to help spot leading indicators of potentially unsafe behavior.

BEST PRACTICES FOR TRAINING

Deliver training that mirrors a company's real-life business with all its complexities. In other words, provide real-world challenges that the participants can solve using their newfound knowledge and skills.

Don't try to include too many things in training at once. For many students, complicated technology training can be a nightmare. Use the 80/20 rule, where training is focused on 20 % of the main functions that employees will use 80 % of the time. This focus speeds the training process and provides the most significant usage of the new system.

Keep communications flowing freely with employees to understand how the new software implementation is going, who benefits, and the overall impact on the business' growth and competitive advantages. The more each employee understands how their efforts to change processes affect the company, the more likely they will invest time and energy into making those changes.

Offer training incentives for employees to encourage them to use the new software. These incentives can range from certificates and plaques to Starbucks gift cards or cash.

Provide a variety of training formats, from online to in class. Give employees the choice of when to take the training, allowing them to consider their current schedules. Give them plenty of advance notice of when training must be complete.

Ask for feedback from the trained people by sending out a survey throughout the implementation and training processes to ensure the vendor is on the right track. Then rely on the surveys to guide how the vendor is doing and what they can do better.

Offer virtual or in-person workshops monthly, which can be a forum for advanced users to pick the brain of the vendor engineers and other power users. A vendor may also offer introductory courses that cover all the essentials. For example, a workshop on construction bidding software would cover estimating, bidding, quoting, pricing, and reporting.

Ongoing online learning allows employees to train at their own pace. Giving each employee access to this learning environment will provide them with as-needed refreshers on performing specific actions with the new software.

Once the software is in place and the team trained, how do you know that the team will use it? This is where change management enters the picture.

CHANGE MANAGEMENT

Change management is vital because it helps your workers gradually accept changes because of the new software. Even with a formal change management process, approximately 50 % [1] of all organizational changes are unsuccessful, so this has to be handled delicately.

Critical steps in the change management process include:

- Preparing the organization for change
- Crafting a vision and plan for change
- Implementing the changes

1 https://www.gartner.com/en/human-resources/insights/organizational-change-management

- Embedding the changes within the company culture
- Reviewing progress and analyzing results

J.F. Brennan, a marine construction, environmental remediation, and harbor services company with job sites in all 50 states, implemented a safety program that accepts voluntary field observations submitted by employees from job sites and work areas. These observations are then distributed to the whole company to discuss.

Each week, the company has weekly, corporation-wide safety meetings to discuss the safety department's observations. Everyone from the field workers to the CEO can call into the session. Because these observations can be submitted via mobile devices in real-time, discussions about what happened and the solution to the issue can occur quickly. Plus, people are more likely to take photos and submit them along with the write-up, providing more details on an incident or observation.

CREATING A SAFETY MANAGEMENT CULTURE

Foremen and Safety Managers are always prepared for the unexpected when you use a safety management solution with hundreds of toolbox talks, comprehensive inspection reports, crew skill tracking, and safety trend reports that recommend if any specific training topics are needed. When you empower your crews to take on-site ownership of safety, you're able to go beyond compliance and build a strong safety culture.

Additionally, by creating a strong safety culture, you can reduce your exposure to a fine, reduce workers' comp costs, and eliminate costly claims while improving your EMR.

BUILDING A SAFETY CULTURE

There are several steps a company should follow to start to build a safety culture within its organization. The steps are:

1. **Practice, practice, practice.** Have supervisors practice reporting incidents into a safety management program to coach their teams on how to fill out quality incident reports without the stress of an actual incident. The more practice employees have done, the more comfortable they feel doing it.
2. **Be proactive, not reactive.** Develop a process for communication about a safety issue. For example, with COVID-19, some contractors developed an approach to help employees who needed to support a sick child, provide them with places to go and get tested, and determine what to do to help. Whether giving a toolbox talk about watching out for school zones or staying six feet apart, the goal is to be proactive, not reactive.
3. **Teach crews how to advocate for themselves.** Empower your construction crews to suggest safety processes and ensure they know how to advocate for themselves at work and in life. For example, in the case of COVID, teams should feel comfortable asking questions about the precautions being taken at the jobsite to keep workers safe from contamination, such as how to maintain safe distances, wear masks, and use hand-washing stations frequently.
4. **Recognize exceptional safety behavior.** Recognize employees in front of their peers when they perform an unprecedented safety act. The public recognition empowers crew members to become safety experts in their way.

Software training is essential. When businesses invest in employee software education, they get a better return on the software they purchase. However, safety training is different and involves training on the features and functions of the software and a culture shift of the entire organization. Everyone within the organization needs to focus on safety for success. ■

HCSS is the trusted leader in construction software for estimating, field entry, project management, safety, digital plans, 3-D drone imaging, fleet management, and telematics. For 35 years, the company has used annual user's group meetings to listen to customers resulting in innovative software to manage every part of the project lifecycle. With 24/7 instant support and a proven implementation process, HCSS has helped improve operations for over 3,500 companies ranging from $1M to billions in revenue across the United States and Canada (hcss.com).

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Construction Worker Safety Guide

Construction sites are dangerous places to be. There are many hazards and obstacles present that can seriously injure a worker if they are not careful. For this reason, organizations like OSHA have made a huge effort to reduce the risk of construction workers. This construction worker safety guide breaks down the rules and regulations in place for construction sites, the short term and long term risks for construction workers, and how employees and employers can be safer at work.

Not only are workers at risk of obvious incidents like slips from heights, getting struck by objects, and electrocution, but there are long term effects of the job that are often overlooked. An example is the fact that lung cancer and lung diseases are more prevalent in construction workers. Also, workers are more prone to hearing loss and musculoskeletal disorders later in life (50 % and 40 % respectively).

Even though OSHA has clear guidelines, employees and employers can ignore them. Some of the most common issues that cause injuries are listed below.

- Failure to communicate hazards
- Improper crane use
- Lack of head protection
- Poorly constructed trenches
- Faulty ladders
- Improper scaffolding use
- Improper equipment on an excavation site
- Inadequate training on machinery operations
- Improperly maintained stairways

Construction workers are crucial for our cities and towns to function properly. Because of them we are able to commute to work, live/work in buildings, and practically everything else. It's important that they stay safe at work and protect their long term health to the best of their ability. For more in-depth information read this construction worker safety guide. ■

Thought Leadership Interview with Bob Lahey of Construction Safety Council

Bob Lahey, President and CEO of the Construction Safety Council, discusses heat-related illness – something that can strike outdoor workers as well as those performing tasks indoors in certain environments. Learn about the elements of a successful heat illness prevention program and about a standard being developed to address the hazard. The CSC offers safety training classes for both employers and workers. Go to https://buildsafe.org/ to learn more. ■

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An RDG Media Inc. Publication
PO Box 80915 Rochester, MI 48308
www.workplacepub.com