

# The Pennsylvania Consultation Connection

**JULY 2023** 



1970:

# From the desk of the Project Director

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Seems every day headlines around the country cover a tragic, recent fatal workplace injury. The reason it "seems this way" is because it IS this way. On average, 14 workers around the country die on the job, every single day of the week. Today, 14 more will die. Tomorrow, 14 more...

Maybe your initial response is "OSHA needs to do more." Let's think about what OSHA has done...before President Nixon signed the OSH Act of

While the Bureau of Labor Statistics didn't exist until 1973 to capture workplace data, it is estimated in the 1960s that 14,000 workers died on the job every year, or 38 workers suffering fatal occupational injuries daily.

14,000 Americans, every year, year after year. That didn't count the 2.5 million annual non-fatal injuries, or the 300,000 workers who suffered from occupational diseases like silicosis, asbestosis, or black lung who would eventually die later that decade.

OSHA's impact over the past 50+ years is meaningful. While the number of American workers more than doubled to 160 million since 1970s, and the number of fatal and non-fatal workplace injuries and illnesses decreased 65%. Let's normalize this trend:

- 10.9: The rate of occupational injuries and illnesses per 100 fulltime workers in 1972.
- 2.3: That rate in 2021.

That is progress, but 2.3 isn't good enough, and we have a long way to go to protect workers and small business bottom lines.

Last year, Pennsylvania OSHA Consultation helped over 500 small PA employers identify, evaluate, and abate 2,321 serious hazards. With our technical guidance, those same employers removed more than 101,000 workers from risk of being injured by those serious hazards.

But don't wait for us - walk around and rout out workplace hazards - HALT A HAZARD NOW. A strong safety culture and low injury & illness rates translates directly to a stronger financial bottom line - safe businesses are sound businesses. Right now is the best time to demonstrate strong and dynamic management leadership. Gather your workers, and walk through you facility today. Identify and correct hazards you find in your workplace before an injury happens. You can learn more about building a strong safety culture by singing up for OSHA's "Safe + Sound" newsletters here: www.osha.gov/safeandsound.



In closing, what tangible steps should you take to better protect your workers? What can you do to reduce the risk of a fatal injury happening in your workplace?

- 1. Schedule a Consultation safety and health visit. Call us at (800) 385-1241 or visit <a href="https://www.iup.edu/pa-oshaconsultation">https://www.iup.edu/pa-oshaconsultation</a>.
- Share this newsletter with your professional peers and spread the word about no-cost OSHA compliance assistance services from IUP's Safety Sciences department.
- 3. Invite a safety & health consultant to speak at your next professional association meeting; we will share those best safety practices commonly utilized in your industry to reduce injury frequency.
- Train your workplace safety committee and apply for state certification. Safety research reveals joint labor/management workplace safety committees improve worker awareness of safety, create opportunities for those workers to be report hazards, improve your company's safety culture, and ensure safety and health hazards present in the workplace are corrected.

To learn more about this no-cost safety committee service from Bureau of Workers' Compensation office in Harrisburg, please visit: https://www.dli.pa.gov/Businesses/Compensation/WC/safety/committee/Pages/default.aspx

The PA Health & Safety Division will evaluate your safety committee, provide no-cost training for your committee to meet certification requirements and improve specific operational elements for your committee. Currently, more than 12,800 workplace safety committees across the commonwealth are certified, covering a staggering 1.6 million workers, and those participating businesses are receiving a 5% workers compensation annual premium

That 5% workers' compensation annual premium discount can be re-invested back into your business and help it grow, while your certified safety committee identifies, evaluates, and controls workplace hazards and prevents serious injuries. That improves your profitability.

The "bottom line" is this: **safety makes great business sense**. Call us here at IUP, we can help.

... It's that Easy.



# #KeepTeen WorkersSafe



#### CHANGE THE STATISTIC.

With the beginning of Summer comes the influx of young workers into Pennsylvania workplaces. From mowing to construction to restaurant work, many high school and college students are now part of the workforce. As an employer, it is your responsibility to ensure that they know how to do their jobs safely and return to school in September the same way they arrived at your business in June. According to NIOSH, the injury rate for youth workers (aged 15-19) is approximately double the rate for workers over 24 years old. To that end, the tips below are provided for keeping summer workers safe:

- \* Provide a safety orientation relevant to assigned job duties;
- \* Provide training addressing equipment the employees are permitted to operate and (equally importantly), the equipment they are not permitted to operate;
- \* Provide specific training addressing proper and safe use of equipment;
- \* Provide appropriate PPE and train for proper use, care, and replacement;
- \* Provide instruction addressing injury reporting and emergency procedures;
- \* Place summer employees with an experienced mentor until they demonstrate that they have mastered the elements required to do the job safely;
- \* Encourage questions if employees are unsure of job procedures or safety requirements.

It is important to remember that youth workers have the same rights as other workers. In addition, the Fair Labor Standards Act addresses, among other things, what types of equipment youth workers are permitted to operate and the number of hours they are permitted to work. A summary of these rules is available at:



A plethora of resources is available to aid in ensuring the safety and health of youth workers. Some of these resources are available at the following links:

Young Workers - Safe Work for Young Workers

Young Workers - Employer Responsibilities for Keeping Young Workers Safe

Keeping Teens Safe and Healthy at Work: It Takes Teamwork!

Young-Workers-Restaurant-Safety

Young Workers Agriculture

**Young Workers Construction** 

Young Workers Stop-Falls

Young Workers Heat-Exposure





# **Scissor Lift Safety**

Scissor lifts are work platforms used to safely move workers vertically and to different locations in a variety of industries including construction, retail, entertainment and manufacturing. Scissor lifts are different from aerial lifts because the lifting mechanism moves the work platform straight up and down using crossed beams functioning in a scissor-like fashion. Scissor lifts provide a safe and reliable platform for workers to perform job tasks when used according to the manufacturer's instructions. When not used properly, scissor lifts can present a serious hazard to workers.

# **How to Safely Use Scissor Lifts**

Safe scissor lift use includes properly maintaining the equipment, following the manufacturer's instructions, providing workers training and needed personal protective equipment (PPE), and implementing safe work practices.

Employers who use scissor lifts need to evaluate and implement effective controls that address FALL PROTECTION, STABILIZATION, AND POSITIONING.

#### **FALL PROTECTION**

Scissor lifts must have guardrails installed to prevent workers from falling (see 29 CFR 1926.451 (g) or 29 CFR 1910.29(a)(3)(vii)).

#### Employers should train workers to:

- Check to see that a guardrail system is in place before working on the scissor lift.
- Only stand on the work platform; never stand on the guardrails.
- ⇒ Keep work within easy reach to avoid leaning away from the scissor lift.

#### **STABILIZATION**

Employers should ensure that scissor lifts are stable and will not tip over or collapse. Some safe work practices to ensure safe, stable conditions for scissor lift use include:

- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for safe movement—this usually rules out moving the lift in an elevated position.
- ⇒ Isolate the scissor lift or implement traffic control measures to ensure that other equipment cannot contact the scissor lift.
- Select work locations with firm, level surfaces away from hazards that can cause instability (e.g., drop-offs, holes, slopes, bumps, ground obstructions, or debris).
- ⇒ Use the scissor lift outside only when weather conditions are good. Scissor lifts rated for outdoor use are generally limited to wind speeds below 28 miles per hour

#### **POSITIONING**

Positioning the scissor lift to avoid electrocution, arc flash, and thermal burns is important for safely using scissor lifts near energized power lines. Scissor lifts present crushing hazards similar to vehicles and other mobile equipment at worksites. Employers should train workers to be watchful when.

- ⇒ Implement traffic control measures around the scissor lift to prevent other workers or vehicles from getting too close.
- ⇒ Use ground guides when operating or moving the scissor lift around the workplace.
- ⇒ Select work locations that do not approach electrical power sources (e.g., power lines, transformers) by at least 10 feet and that do not pose other overhead hazards (e.g., other utilities, branches, overhangs, etc.).

#### **Maintaining Scissor Lifts**

- ⇒ Test and inspect controls and components before each use.
- ⇒ Ensure that guardrail systems are in good working condition.
- ⇒ Verify that brakes once set will hold the scissor lift in position.

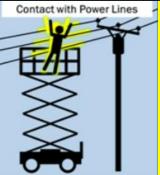
#### **Training Workers**

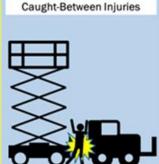
- ⇒ Manufacturer's instructions for operating the scissor lift vertically and while in transit.
- ⇒ How to handle materials on the scissor lift, including weight limits.
- ⇒ Other worksite hazards workers may encounter when working on a scissor lift (e.g., contact with electrical wires).

## **Scissor Lift Hazards**











**Additional Information** Many scissor lifts are covered under OSHA's Scaffolding standard. For technical assistance, please refer to OSHA's eTool and other resources on scaffolding and scissor lifts.

#### OSHA Scaffolding etools -

Fall protection, training, and design requirements for scissor lifts -

Scissor Lift use Requirements -

# **Employee Access to Medical and Exposure Records**

Under 29 CFR 1910.1020, employees have the right to access medical and exposure records. These records may also be obtained by an employee's designated representative. Employers must provide these records free of charge and within a reasonable period. Employers must notify the appliable employees upon hire and at least annually thereafter of the existence of, location, availability, maintainer, and the right to access medical and exposure records.

### **Exposure Records**



These records include exposures to the individual employees or may include records of employees who engage in similar work activities. These records include:

- Monitoring results of workplace air or measurements of toxic substances or harmful physical agents in the workplace, including personal, area, grab, wipe, or other forms of sampling results.
- Biological monitoring results
- ♦ Safety data sheets (SDSs) containing information about a substance's hazards to human health.

Employees may also access employee medical records concerning their individual health status. These records would be generated and/or maintained by a physician, nurse or other healthcare professional. These records may include:

- Medical and employment questionnaires or histories.
- Results of medical examinations and laboratory tests.
- ♦ Medical opinions, diagnoses, progress notes, and recommendations.
- First-aid records.
- Descriptions of treatments and prescriptions.
- ♦ Employee medical complaints.

Additionally, employees may access any analysis compilation of data or statistical studies of employee medical and exposure records that concern their working conditions or workplace. All personal identifiers must be removed from these records before access to that data is provided.

### **Medical Records**



### **Records Not Covered**

Employers are not required to provide access to the following:

- Physical specimens (blood and/or urine samples)
- Health insurance claims (if maintained separately from medical program and are not accessible by employee name or identifier)
- Litigation records that are privileged
- Voluntary assistance program records
- Trade secret information

### **Record Retention**

Specific OSHA standards require record retention that may vary from the general requirements.

An example of this is the noise standard 1910.95. This standard requires that exposure records must be maintained for two years, and audiometric test results must be maintained for the employee's duration of employment. If not otherwise specified in a specific standard, 1910.1020 requires medical records, with a few exceptions, to be maintained for the employee's duration plus 30 years. Exposure records must be maintained for at least 30 years with limited exceptions.

#### For additional information contact:

The PA OSHA Consultation Program for additional assistance or with any questions you may have including full details of your obligations for compliance as stated in 29 CFR 1910.1020.



#### Sun Friday Sat Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday 1 2 6 7 8 3 Happy 4th of July 9 **Gruntled Workers Day** Safe Pyrotechnics Displays \*\* Not an OSHA Event 16 18 19 22 28 23 **2**6 27 29 You have the right orkplace. 30

# **Summer Events**



Opposite of DIS-GRUNTLED DAY...this is a made-up day to celebrate all that is positive about one's work or job. A day to reflect on your work and make meaning out of it for yourself. In a world with growing dissent and job dissatisfaction, Gruntled Workers Day can serve as a powerful reminder that all work has meaning and purpose to it, and so much fulfillment we can find in our work isa actually a CHOICE.

National Whistleblower Appreciation Day







As Canadian wildfires continue to produce unhealthy air pollution in parts of the country, the U.S. Department of Labor announced that its Occupational Safety and Health Administration is offering employers important information to help protect outdoor workers from exposure to wildfire health hazards. OSHA has a comprehensive website with safety tips and resources to help employers and workers reduce their exposure to smoke during wildfires. At the same time, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health offers resources for outdoor workers exposed to wildfire smoke.

"Wildfire smoke exposure can create major health hazards for outdoor workers. These hazards can be reduced with knowledge, safe work practices and appropriate personal protective equipment," said Assistant Secretary for Occupational Safety and Health Doug Parker. "I urge all employers to have plans and preparations in place to protect workers by preventing or minimizing exposure to hazardous air quality."

The most significant hazard from wildfire smoke is exposure to particulate matter, tiny particles of partially burned material less than 2.5 micrometers in diameter, that can enter the lungs and even the bloodstream and is linked to serious health problems, including lung, heart and kidney disease. Workers exposed to smoke-polluted air may experience heat stress, eye and respiratory tract irritation, and suffer from exposure to other respiratory hazards caused by hazardous substances such as heavy metals entering the atmosphere. Employers should prepare for and plan to implement procedures to reduce exposures to smoke when necessary.

### Protective measures to reduce smoke exposure for outdoor workers:

Employers and workers should prepare for and plan to implement procedures to reduce exposures to smoke when necessary. If workers must work in areas with high levels of smoke, especially for long periods, or if a worker is sensitive to wildfire smoke and feels their health or safety is negatively impacted by smoke exposure, the following steps can be implemented to reduce smoke exposure:

- Frequently monitor air quality conditions in the area by visiting the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) <u>US Fire</u> and <u>Smoke Mapexternal icon</u> or the state health department's air quality website. This map provides the Air Quality Index (AQI) for a specific location and provides a range of air quality from good to hazardous. The AQI is EPA's color-coded tool for communicating air quality to the public.
- Relocating or rescheduling work tasks to smoke-free areas.
- Reducing levels of physical activity, especially strenuous and heavy work.
- Requiring and encouraging workers to take breaks in smoke-free places when possible.
- Limit the worker's smoke exposure by making accommodations for that worker to perform his/her duties indoors or in a location that reduces exposure to smoke, if possible.
- When possible, making accommodations for employees to work inside with proper HVAC systems with the highest efficiency filters recommended by the designer or manufacturer of the HVAC system. Operate heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems in the re-circulate setting or temporarily reduce the amount of outdoor air supplied to the building.
- Or install air cleaners equipped with a high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter or electrostatic precipitators,
- Ensure that windows and other building openings such as loading docks and bays are kept closed to reduce overall smoke exposure inside,
- Providing or allowing the use of NIOSH-approved respirators for voluntary use, when not otherwise required. When allowing respirators for voluntary use, employers must provide employees with the advisory information in <a href="Appendix D">Appendix D</a> of OSHA's Respirator Protection Standard.



- Pets and other animals can be affected by wildfire smoke too.
- Learn how to protect pets and livestock.
- Some evacuation centers do not accept animals.



Wildfire smoke is affecting parts of the US. The Air Quality Index (QQI) can help you track local air quality and understand the health risks of wildfire smoke. When air quality is unhealth, stay inside as much as possible and reduce outdoor activity. <a href="mairrow.gov"><u>airnow.gov</u></a>

# Air Quality Index (AQI) Basics

### What is the U.S. Air Quality Index (AQI)?

The U.S. AQI is EPA's index for reporting air quality.

#### How does the AQI work?

Think of the AQI as a yardstick that runs from 0 to 500. The higher the AQI value, the greater the level of air pollution and the greater the health concern. For example, an AQI value of 50 or below represents good air quality, while an AQI value over 300 represents hazardous air quality.

For each pollutant an AQI value of 100 generally corresponds to an ambient air concentration that equals the level of the short-term national ambient air quality standard for protection of public health. AQI values at or below 100 are generally thought of as satisfactory. When AQI values are above 100, air quality is unhealthy: at first for certain sensitive groups of people, then for everyone as AQI values get higher.

The AQI is divided into six categories. Each category corresponds to a different level of health concern. Each category also has a specific color. The color makes it easy for people to quickly determine whether air quality is reaching unhealthy levels in their communities.

AQI Basics for Ozone and Particle Pollution			
Daily AQI Color	Levels of Concern	Values of Index	Description of Air Quality
Green	Good	0 to 50	Air quality is satisfactory, and air pollution poses little or no risk.
Yellow	Moderate	51 to 100	Air quality is acceptable. However, there may be a risk for some people, particularly those who are unusually sensitive to air pollution.
Orange	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	101 to 150	Members of sensitive groups may experience health effects. The general public is less likely to be affected.
Red	Unhealthy	151 to 200	Some members of the general public may experience health effects; members of sensitive groups may experience more serious health effects.
Purple	Very Unhealthy	201 to 300	Health alert: The risk of health effects is increased for everyone.
Maroon	Hazardous	301 and higher	Health warning of emergency conditions: everyone is more likely to be affected.

### Five major pollutants

EPA establishes an AQI for five major air pollutants regulated by the Clean Air Act. Each of these pollutants has a national air quality standard set by EPA to protect public health:

- ground-level ozone
- particle pollution (also known as particulate matter)
- carbon monoxide
- sulfur dioxide
- nitrogen dioxide



## **Heat Illness Can Occur During ANY Season**

Millions of U.S. workers are exposed to heat in their workplaces.

Although illness from **exposure to heat is preventable**, every year, thousands become sick from occupational heat exposure, and some cases are fatal. Most outdoor fatalities, 50% to 70%, occur in the first few days of working in warm or hot environments because the body needs to build a tolerance to the heat gradually over time. The process of building tolerance is called heat acclimatization. Lack of acclimatization represents a major risk factor for fatal outcomes.

#### PREVENTING HEAT-RELATED DEATHS IN CONSTRUCTION: THE IMPORTANCE OF

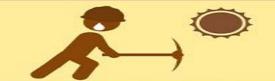
ACCLIMATIZATION

Acclimatization is how the body gets used to working in the heat through repeated exposure to a hot environment. During acclimatization, workers sweat more and sweat sooner, so it is important to drink more water while becoming acclimatized. Slowly increasing workload and duration builds physical capability and reduces the risk of heat-related illness.



Failure to acclimatize workers is the number one factor associated with heat-related deaths.1 Over 70% of heat-related deaths occur during a worker's first week.2

Acclimatize workers that are new to the job. temporary, pregnant, or new to the region. Re-acclimatize workers returning after one week or more, and when working outdoors when weather is significantly warmer than on previous days.



August 2022



Acclimatization is typically achieved by gradually increasing the amount of time spent working in the heat each day over a period of 7 to 14 days.1

#### Outdoors

Agriculture

Construction - especially, road, roofing, and other outdoor work

Construction – roofing work

Landscaping

Mail and package delivery

Occupational RISK FACTORS for **HEAT ILLNESS** include:

- heavy physical activity,
- warm or hot environmental conditions.
- lack of acclimatization.
- wearing clothing that holds in body heat.

Hazardous heat exposure can occur INDOORS or OUTDOORS and can occur during any season if the conditions are right, not only during heat waves.

#### Indoors

Bakeries, kitchens, and laundries (sources with indoor heat-generating appliances)

Electrical utilities (particularly boiler rooms)

Fire Service

Iron and steel mills and foundries

Manufacturing with hot local heat sources, like furnaces (e.g., paper products or concrete)

Warehousing







### **OSHA's Prevent Heat Illness at Worker Poster**



# **Prevent Heat Illness at Work**

Outdoor and indoor heat exposure can be dangerous.

## Ways to Protect Yourself and Others

#### Ease into Work. Nearly 3 out of 4 fatalities from heat illness happen during the first week of work.



- New and returning workers need to build tolerance to heat (acclimatize) and take frequent breaks.
- Follow the 20% Rule. On the first day, work no more than 20% of the shift's duration at full intensity in the heat. Increase the duration of time at full intensity by no more than 20% a day until workers are used to working in the heat.



#### **Drink Cool Water**

Drink cool water even if you are not thirsty — at least 1 cup every 20 minutes.



#### Take Rest Breaks

Take enough time to recover from heat given the temperature, humidity, and conditions.



#### Find Shade or a Cool Area

Take breaks in a designated shady or cool location.



#### Dress for the Heat

Wear a hat and light-colored, loose-fitting, and breathable clothing if possible.



#### Watch Out for Each Other

Monitor yourself and others for signs of heat illness.



#### If Wearing a Face Covering

Change your face covering if it gets wet or soiled. Verbally check on others frequently.

### First Aid for Heat Illness

#### The following are signs of a medical emergency!



- Abnormal thinking or behavior
- · Slurred speech
- Seizures
- Loss of consciousness



CALL 911 IMMEDIATELY



COOL THE WORKER RIGHT AWAY WITH WATER OR ICE



STAY WITH THE WORKER UNTIL HELP ARRIVES



#### Watch for any other signs of heat illness and act quickly. When in doubt, call 911.

#### If a worker experiences:

Headache or nausea Weakness or dizziness Heavy sweating or hot, dry skin Elevated body temperature Thirst

Decreased urine output



#### Take these actions:

- > Give water to drink
- » Remove unnecessary clothing
- > Move to a cooler area
- > Cool with water, ice, or a fan
- > Do not leave alone
- > Seek medical care if needed





For more information: 1-800-321-OSHA (6742) TTY 1-877-889-5627 www.osha.gov/heat

Factors law orithins you to a sofe workplace. You have the right to speak up about hazards without law of retailation. See yeards data, ages invertiges for information about how to file a confidential complaint with USAA and sale for an inspection.

SHARP
Recognition
for
Construction Projects
in PENNSYLVANIA

In September 2022 The Directorate of Cooperative and State Programs (DCSP) approved the IUP/PA Consultation Program's plan for implementing a

National Construction Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program Pilot

Historically in Pennsylvania, the SHARP recognition was limited to 'General Industry' businesses. The **Pennsylvania SHARP Construction Pilot** is one of the most prestigious safety and health recognition programs for the construction industry in Pennsylvania. This program is designed for **construction** (non-fixed) 'worksites' that have developed comprehensive and effective safety and health management systems. The **Pennsylvania SHARP Award** has been developed to recognize your organization's leadership and commitment to workplace safety and health excellence.

S afety
H ealth
A chievement
Recognition
P rogram



Recognized SHARP Construction 'worksites' are granted a deferral from OSHA enforcement 'programmed' inspections provided that all Pennsylvania SHARP program requirements remain in place.

By obtaining your SHARP Construction status for the specific worksite, you demonstrate to

- Employees,
  - Subcontractors & General Contractors
    - Customers
      - the Public
        - Others in The Construction Industry
           that you are successfully implementing an effective safety and health system.

Upon being granted SHARP status, your worksite will receive a **SHARP** banner that you can proudly display.



# and...speaking of SHARP...

On Tuesday, June 27, 2023,



#### **Achieved**

2,000 days, more than (5) five years, without a loss time injury.

That's a total of 799,263 hours worked!

The **Phoenix Sintered Metals Safety Committee** would like to extend their appreciation to all their employees for their continuous hard work enabling them to reach yet another impressive milestone. The safety committee attributes this achievement to learning from minor injuries/near misses and safety training.

"Working 2,000 days without a lost time injury is a great achievement... requiring more than just luck".

# **Congratulations!**



# **QUESTIONS?**

Call us Toll Free: 1-800-382-1241

Or

**Check out the PA OSHA Consultation Website** 



# **Training and Information**

The Pennsylvania OSHA Consultation Program has developed

**Focal Point Series**. provides information on the top 25 areas identified by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. The Series provides videos as well as presentation materials and employee handouts. The Focal Point Series can be found on our website and all materials are **free**.

**Quarterly Webinars** on prevalent Occupational Safety and Health compliance topics. These webinars are performed by our experienced safety and health consultants and may be viewed live during the presentation or the video and materials are available after via our website.

### YouTube Channel

Please consider subscribing to our YouTube channel to be notified of new webinars.

### *Facebook* and *Twitter*





Our consultants will post weekly news and safety and health related articles that are useful to employees and employers.

