



## Safety Management and Disciplinary Action

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(By Jody Warner, ASP, CFPS - Cambridge Risk Control Department)

One of the most important safety responsibilities that all supervisors have is to "Enforce All Safety Rules". It's a great way to establish standardized, acceptable behavior in a work environment and create a model safety culture. However, many will agree that enforcing the existing rules is much easier said than done. To accurately apply and enforce safety policies, a few steps should be considered.

### First of all - **Document, Document, Document !!**

- **Written Job Descriptions** – Safety consultants are frequently asked why they recommend written job descriptions for their clients. Quite simply, written job descriptions establish in writing the expected day-to-day activities of the staff. In other words, a company might have difficulty determining that an employee acted "...outside the scope and function of their employment..." unless there's a documented baseline of daily expected behavior.
- **Written Safety Rules and Policies** – Safety rules are designed to outline expected employee behavior when dealing with specific work safety issues. These rules are often broken into a few different categories:
  - *General Safety Rules* – i.e. no running, no horseplay, remove your jewelry, no long sleeve shirts, don't remove safety guards from any equipment, etc.
  - *Specific Safety Rules* – i.e. always wear a proper face shield when using any grinder, a hard hat is always required in the warehouse, etc.
  - *OSHA Safety Rules* – Respiratory Protection, Bloodborne Pathogens, HazCom, Lockout/Tagout, etc.
  - *Operational Safety Rules* – i.e. we only run the assembly line #4 when fully staffed, etc.
  - *Governmental Safety Rules* (non-OSHA) – "wide loads can only be transported on highways during daylight hours", etc.
- **Training, training and more training** – Now that you have all of your job descriptions and safety rules written, make sure that you use this database of knowledge to train employees. Training is the key – employees will only know what the expected behavior is if they've trained on it. It's been said that, "...employees will do whatever they want to do until you tell them to do differently...". Also, document all your training. It's also been said that, "...if it's not written down, it never happened...".
- **Progressive Disciplinary Policy** – Work with your HR (Human Resources) department (if you have one) to develop a policy that ensures that all staff members are treated fairly and equally when they've violated established safety rules. The policy should be equal, fair and serious. Follow the standard HR progressive application of action. For example:
  - First Offense – documented verbal warning, consultation and retraining.
  - Second Offense – documented written warning, consultation and retraining.
  - Third Offense – documented shift suspension, without pay. Retraining.
  - Fourth Offense – Termination.

### 2004 Dates To Remember:

#### January:

Plan Your Safety Training Now!  
Call Jody For Training Ideas!  
312-381-8208

#### February:

8-14 Child Passenger Safety Week

#### March:

16-22 Poison Prevention Week  
Workplace Eye Safety Month  
Save Your Vision Month

#### April:

Sports Eye Safety Month  
4-10 Intl Building Safety Week  
7-11 Workzone Aware. Week  
26-30 Playground Safety Week

#### May:

Clean Air Month  
Melanoma Awareness Month  
Electrical Safety Month  
16-22 National EMS Week  
16-22 Poison Prevention Week

#### June:

National Safety Month

#### July:

EYE INJURY PREVENTION MNTH

#### August:

Prepare Your Winter Safety Training!

#### September:

19-25 Farm Safety/Health Week

#### October:

5-11 Nat. Fire Prevention Week  
20-24 School Bus Safety Week  
20-24 Radon Action Week

#### November:

Take advantage of the weather and do your classroom training!

#### December:

"3D Month" - National Drunk & Drugged Driving Prevention Month

### Smoking Materials & Fires:

A May 2003 report published by the NFPA (National Fire Protection Association) outlined very startling statistics relative to fire safety and smoking materials.

"An estimated 167,700 smoking material fires caused 807 deaths, 2,193 injuries and \$559.1 million in damage. Fires started by smoking materials (i.e., lighted tobacco products but not matches or lighters) accounted for an estimated 167,700 fires reported to U.S. fire departments in 1999.

The number of fires and the damage total both increased substantially from 1998, while the death and injury tolls decreased substantially and were lows for the...years studied."

Source: "The Smoking-Material Fire Problem" John R. Hall, May 2003. National Fire Protection Association.

www.nfpa.org

I think that I know what you're thinking - "You're suggesting that I terminate employees for violation of safety rules!?!?" Yes, if it becomes necessary to protect the employee from an injury. A true, functioning safety culture treats violations of safety rules with the same respect and authority that operational violations would get. For instance, would your company terminate an employee that repeatedly failed to meet operational goals? Most likely, you would.

Be as lenient as you'd like to be – just be fair and equal to everyone and document, document, document.

Companies should be prepared to send employees home healthy rather than allowing them to get hurt.

### Summer Safety Resources

The summer season is here and it can mean summer employment for many. OSHA's new website is full of information for teen workers, their families, and employers to ensure their safety and health over the summer work season.

Look for construction, life guarding, agricultural work, parks and recreation, restaurants, lawn care and more on the site and it's also offered in Spanish!

www.osha.gov/SLTC/teenworkers

### HEALTHIER LUNCHES?

The American institute for Cancer Research (www.aicr.org) reported that if you bring your lunch from home, you're bagging more than a bargain.

Besides being easy on your wallet, homemade meals can be good for your health as well. The portion size, calories and fat content are under your control. At the same time, you can serve yourself a delicious variety of vegetables, fruits, whole grains and beans that lower the risk of cancer and other chronic diseases.

See www.aicr.org for more information.



**Does Your Company Have Tractors?** July, 2004 - Volume 1, Number 12, Page 2  
**Become Familiar With ROPS!**

Tractors are common to all farm operations, commercial mowing, municipalities and others. They provide power, mowing and many other capabilities that are exclusive to the nature of a tractor. They also are the major cause of death in agriculture today. Tractors are linked to more than half of national farm-related deaths, for instance. The National Safety Council estimates that hundreds of people are killed annually while operating tractors. Statistics suggest that about half of the deaths are attributed to tractor rollovers. This high death rate associated with tractor rollovers is not a new problem. Since 1970, tractor rollover has been the leading cause of farm operator deaths, according to the National Safety Council. Statistics from tractor rollover accidents show that during the past two decades, about five people are killed each year for every 100,000 tractors in operation. The cumulative death toll from tractor rollovers since the development of the tractor is staggering.

**ROPS – "Rollover Protective Structure"**

ROPS, or "rollover protective structure", is a cab or frame that provides a safe environment for the tractor operator in the event of a rollover. Also called anti-roll bars or ROPS cabs, they are designed to prevent death and minimize injury. The first ROPS device was not marketed on new tractors until 1965 and many older tractors used today don't have them. A tractor's ROPS frame must pass a series of static or dynamic crush tests. These tests examine the ability of the ROPS to withstand various loads to see if the protective zone around the operator station remains intact in an overturn. The tests are extensive and will certainly destroy the tested rollover protective structure.

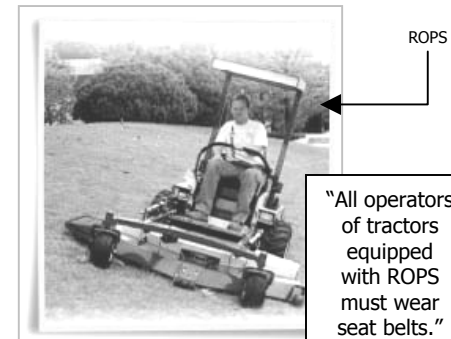
Homemade bars attached to a tractor axle, or simple sun shade, cannot protect the operator if the tractor overturns. Tractor owners and operators should not add rollover protection devices to tractors manufactured without ROPS. Without proper design and testing, homemade devices offer a false sense of security that can be more dangerous than operating a tractor without ROPS. The Society of Automotive Engineers (www.sae.org) and the American Society of Agricultural Engineers (www.asae.org) have standards on the design of rollover protective structures.

**Seat belts and ROPS**

ROPS affords some safety during tractor overturns, but operators need more protection. All operators of tractors equipped with ROPS must wear seat belts. Without a seat belt, the operator will not be confined to the protective zone created by the ROPS. During an overturn, the operator of a tractor with ROPS could be thrown from the protected area and crushed by the tractor, or even the rollover protective structure itself, if the operator is not wearing a seat belt. Never use seat belts on a tractor without ROPS. In this case, the operator has no chance of survival because the seat belt will keep the operator in the seat as the tractor rolls over and crushes the operator. It is not certain whether the operator would be thrown clear from the tractor if seat belts were not worn, but that remains the operator's only chance of survival.

The National Ag Safety Database is part of the National Centers for Disease Control (www.cdc.gov/nasd)

Rollover Protective Structure (ROPS)



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**Safety Resource Center**

*It's Good To Know:*

**Home Safety Tip**

When loading your dishwasher, load all the knives, forks and sharp, pointed objects "blade down, handle up".



This small safety step helps prevent cuts when loading and unloading silverware and can also prevent serious injuries if someone accidentally falls onto or near the dishwasher when it's open.

*July is:*

*"Eye Injury Prevention Month"*

Eye injuries of all types occur at a rate of more than 2,000 per day. In particular, an estimated 1,000 eye injuries occur in American workplaces alone.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) found that almost **70% of the eye injuries studied occur from falling or flying objects, or sparks striking the eye.**

**Safety glasses, goggles & face shields**

**WORK!**

**PLEASE WEAR THEM!**

*Kitchen Safety Tip:*

**Knife Use**

Cut resistant gloves made of a sturdy material called "Kevlar" are great for industrial settings where protection from lacerations is needed. They're also great protection during knife use and can be purchased in an FDA approved version that's designed for the food service!



Kevlar safety glove for knife use.



Chain mail glove for oysters and powered slicers.