

5 Workplace Safety Resolutions You Need to Make

It's time for New Year's resolutions, so why not focus on safety for some of those promises? Here are 5 that can be lifesavers:

1 I promise to stay focused on the task at hand. Whether I am driving, running machinery or doing anything that requires my full attention, I vow not to look at my phone, talk or do anything else that distracts me from my job.

2 I will always take time to put on my protective gear correctly. Before I wear it, I will check it for damage, ensure that it is the correct type to protect me from expected hazards and make sure that it still fits properly.

3 I will be as careful at home as I am at work by checking my tools, wearing appropriate safety gear and following instructions.

4 I will always put away my tools, store chemicals properly and clean up after myself to avoid unnecessary and unsafe clutter.

5 I will not take shortcuts when it comes to safety.



Keeping these 5 resolutions will give you a great and safe start to 2016. Feel free to clip and post this list and add a few resolutions, yourself.

SAFETY CORNER

Stop Mold Cold

Mold can cause adverse health effects when present in large quantities. If an area in your workspace (or at home) has been flooded or is extremely damp because of a leak, you can prevent mold growth by following these simple yet effective tips:

Remove excess water from an area with a wet-dry vacuum or a high-powered industrial fan if it can't be removed with a mop.

Dispose of all porous materials that have been wet for more than 48 hours.

Clean wet surfaces with a bleach and water solution.

Discard water-damaged materials that cannot be cleaned.

To prevent future growth, seal all windows, doors or exits; make sure your home or work area is properly ventilated; make sure areaways are clear; install a dehumidifier to reduce excess humidity; and fix all known leaks.



Danger Zones

Working with heavy equipment, such as cranes and excavators, is dangerous and only properly trained and experienced workers should handle this equipment. Other workers should stay clear of what is known as the danger zone, where the equipment is being used. A danger zone can be anywhere surrounding the equipment, such as the sides of equipment, blind spots, travel path, swing radius, or under-suspended or overhead loads.

Here are some tips to keep everyone safe at the worksite:

✓ Stay alert at all times.



✓ Establish communication methods before operating machinery — hand signals, whistles, alarms, flags or radios.

✓ Make sure there's a spotter who keeps a constant line of sight or communication with the equipment operator.



✓ Install barriers or signs around the danger zone and don't allow anyone who is unauthorized to enter. If you're authorized to enter the area, make sure you establish communication or eye contact with the operator or spotter before you enter.

✓ Wear high-visibility clothing and other appropriate personal protective gear.

✓ Watch for shifting or unstable loads.





Radon Q & A

Radon gas is a by-product of uranium in the ground and is dangerous if it penetrates your home. While the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) advises that no levels of radon are safe, it recommends fixing your home if the radon levels are **4 picoCuries per liter (pCi/L)** or higher.

Radon Action Month is a great time to find out all the answers to your radon questions.

Q: Why is radon gas called the silent killer?

A: Radon, classified as a Class 1 carcinogen, is a proven cancer-causing agent. Since you can't see or smell radon, you need to test for it to make sure dangerous levels — above 4 pCi/L — aren't in your home.

Q: What is a picoCurie (pCi)?

A: The picoCurie (pCi) is a measure of the rate of radioactive decay of radon. Four pCi/liter is the lowest level at which the EPA recommends you take corrective action.

If you test for radon and your results are 4 pCi/L or higher, consider calling in an expert.

Q: How can radon get into my home?

A: Radon moves up through the ground to the air above and can enter your home through cracks and other holes in the foundation.

Q: My home is new so I don't have to worry about radon, correct?

A: Home construction can affect radon. However, radon can be a problem in any home — old or new and in homes with or without basements. Factors that affect radon levels have to do with local geology, construction materials and how the home was built.



Q: How can I test for radon?

A: Purchase a radon testing kit online or at your local home store. You can also hire a qualified professional radon tester by contacting your state's radon expert. Visit the EPA's website at www.epa.gov/radon/ for more information.

Q: What can I do to get rid of radon?

A: Seal cracks and openings in basement floors, foundation walls or openings around pipes. If this doesn't work, you may have to install a special suction system that draws air from under the basement floor and sends it outside. An expert can help you figure it out.

Q: Where can I find out more?

A: Read **A Citizen's Guide to Radon** on the EPA's website at www.epa.gov/radon/.

The 2016 cars are full of innovative new safety features. However, some models are still safer than others. Check out the safety rating of the vehicle you're considering buying at the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) website at www.safercar.gov/Safety+Ratings. The NHTSA also recommends looking for the following safety features:



- ➔ **Electronic stability control** is standard on many vehicles. This system uses automatic computer-controlled braking to assist the driver in critical driving situations.
- ➔ **Remote keyless entry systems** make it easy (and safer) for you to enter your car in a hurry instead of fumbling for keys.
- ➔ **Frontal pedestrian impact mitigation braking** will automatically apply the brakes to avoid impact with a pedestrian.

- ➔ **Forward collision warning systems** detect vehicles ahead and caution drivers.
- ➔ **Lane departure** and lane keeping support will alert drivers when the vehicle veers or drifts into another lane.
- ➔ **Backup camera** or rearview video systems allow the driver to see if any obstacles are behind the vehicle.
- ➔ **Automatic crash notification** automatically notifies emergency responders immediately after a crash.

These features can make your drive a lot safer, but they aren't a substitute for driving well. Stay alert, don't drive aggressively, wear your seat belt and avoid distractions while driving.



Canned Air Dangers

Canned air products are usually used to clean keyboards, shredders and other office equipment. Canned air products contain a gas that's mostly compressed into a liquid and some are highly flammable. In addition to being incendiary, these products can also cause frostbite and, in extreme cases, asphyxiation and toxicity. To avoid danger, follow this advice:

- ✓ **Read** the can's ingredients and check with a Safety Data Sheet (SDS) for any precautions.
- ✓ **Follow** instructions on how to use the product safely.
- ✓ **Switch** from a flammable to a nonflammable canned air product.
- ✓ **Use** in an open and well-ventilated area.
- ✓ **Don't** shake the can.



Reach your personal best with www.personalbest.com/extras/16V1tools.

01.2016