



PARTNER BY CHOICE. SAFETY BY DESIGN.

Tool Talk Safety Meeting

September 28, 2020

Zero Injuries. Zero Deaths

Last week was a difficult week for our industry. Within the same week two road workers were struck by vehicles in two separate incidents. One worker was struck by a vehicle in a [hit-and-run incident on I-94](#) near 9 Mile Road in St. Clair Shores and the other [worker was hit](#) by a vehicle while working on Sherwood Highway, over I-69 in Eaton County. Both road workers died from their injuries.

The workers were outside the confines of a work zone. The person hit on I-94 was adjusting a manhole cover when he was struck in the head by a vehicle side mirror. The worker on the low volume rural bridge deck over I-69 was marking out patches for bridge deck repair; performing a task comparable to laying out a road for pavement markings. The risks for injury are present on any road in any situation.

We pause out of respect for two fallen workers. Our prayers go out in support of their families.

While we recognize the hazards of road work and the sacrifices made by all of us working in this industry. Our goal is Zero Injuries. Zero Deaths. Working in traffic is hazardous and it is imperative that we follow best practices, traffic control plans and safety policies designed to create a safe work environment. Over the season and more recently the past month, I have visited jobs throughout the state. You may have seen me and other safety professionals reviewing your projects. It is always a pleasure meeting the hard working men and women of PK contracting. The primary purpose of job visits is to identify and analyze potential exposure to injuries and areas that risk compromising work zone safety.

Fundamental to working safely is staying alert and using your senses to always be aware of your surroundings. Your first and last line of defense, in many instances, is likely to be your senses and your PPE. Stay focused on the task at hand. Avoid distractions. Safety is designed into everything we do. The human element of behavior and doing the right thing is essential and begins with you.

Observations:

- Good use of lights and flashers on equipment. Support trucks with night lighting provide effective “presence” lighting for the motorists and illumination of the work area for workers. We are increasing the number of support trucks equipped with LED night lighting to ensure that all support trucks are properly equipped for night work.
- Overall we observed good use of safety vests for employees working in traffic. However, there is room for improvement as workers were observed wearing safety vests/garments that were dirty, sleeves cut off or rolled up. Others weren’t wearing a safety vest. Replace worn or dirty safety garments with new. Do not cut the sleeves off of safety vests or garments. Wear your safety vest/garment at all times.
- On three occasion employees were observed riding in the bed of trucks to transport between locations within the work zone. Riding in the bed in an unapproved seat is prohibited. Employees can be bounced out when the truck is moving, even at low speeds.
- Employees are observed wearing earbuds on the job. Wearing earbuds is prohibited. Wearing earbuds distracts in a work zone and does not provide effective hearing protection.

- Many of our operations generate high noise levels. Although we observed employees wearing ear plugs and ear protectors there is room for improvement. We will continue measuring noise levels of our various operations to determine additional engineering controls for hearing conservation. There should be ear plugs available at all divisions and in the glove box of every PK truck.
- Observed the use of plastic fuel cans in the shop and on the job. Plastic fuel cans are prohibited by OSHA. Discontinue use of plastic fuel cans immediately and replace with approved steel safety cans.

Steel **YES**



Plastic **NO**



- Observed good personal night lighting and leggings compliance on projects inspected. Wearing the required personal lighting halo around the neck or on the hard hat illuminates the immediate work area enhancing visibility, and provides illumination for the motorists to identify the presence of workers. Reflective leggings are required and make workers more visible.



- While a good number of employee were observed wearing eye protection on all job visits, the percentage of employees wearing appropriate safety glasses could be improved. Employees are often observed wearing safety glasses and then over time the safety glasses are back on the forehead. Eye injury is preventable. Examples of vision saving events are below.



Spray
Thermoplastic material sprayed in the face of the person working on the STP gun tip that was under pressure.



Epoxy flush discharged in the air hitting the employee in the face. The material melted the safety glasses.

Finally, this time of year is often referred to as the “year end push” where we battle the wet, cold weather and shorter periods of daylight as we work to meet completion dates and our customer’s needs. During this year end push we must continue to work safe and do what is right. Safety will reflect in our behavior and our work that defines our safety culture. Be a leader and do what is right every time.

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