



ASSP NORTHEAST FLORIDA CHAPTER NEWSLETTER – JUNE 2019

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Training teen workers can help make injury prevention a lifetime habit

I'm going to reminisce here for a moment. When I was 19, my first real job was in the QC department of a large paper mill. After two weeks of training, I was on my own and working the third shift. About one hour into my shift, the dry end horn sounds; it's a paper break.

On this particular night, close to 3,800 sq. ft. per minute of steaming-hot, wet, heavy paper was falling onto the floor. And my job was to cut a tail in this steaming hot mass with an ice pick so that the winderman could rethread it and get it back onto the rotary dryers. I was mortified. My hands were shaking; the paper was piled up to my chest; I was sweating profusely; people were yelling. But somehow, I

managed to cut a proper tail. The paper was rethreaded and production was resumed.

The number of things that enabled me to make it through this event is numerous. I was young and ambitious; and I did not have a good sense of what should be feared. But mainly, I worked for a company that was very safety-oriented, provided great training, had excellent safety rule books, and employed seasoned personnel who helped me and watched out for me. Some teenagers don't have these things. Hence, the need for this article. Please read on.

Matt Pomerinke, who was injured in a horrific workplace event, wasn't initially keen on sharing his story with teens entering the workforce.

"I really didn't want to keep reliving the worst day of my life," said the former sawmill worker, who, at the age of 21, got his left arm caught in an unguarded



machine. His arm had to be amputated just above the elbow.

His wife, Nagwa, had other ideas, however.

“She said, ‘Of course you’re going to do that,’” Pomerinke recalled. “You have two kids. If you talk to one kid [who] ends up training your kid”

Eight years after that conversation, and with two teens of his own, Pomerinke shares details about the 1999 incident as part of the Washington State Department of Labor & Industries’ Injured Younger Workers Speakers Program. Speaking roughly 150 times a year at high schools, community colleges, universities and jobsites, his audiences are predominantly teens.

The 41-year-old – who has worked the past 18 years as a papermaker at a paper mill in Longview, WA, where he is a member of the safety committee and coordinates new-hire orientation – has

been speaking long enough that he occasionally crosses paths with adults who attended one of his presentations as students. For instance, two years ago at a safety conference, mill workers who had won an award approached him. They had attended one of his talks in high school and said his message still resonated with them.

“That was definitely one of the highlights,” Pomerinke said. “It reaffirmed that I’m making a difference.”

Danger in the workplace

Teen workers face plenty of dangers on the job. According to NIOSH, a teen is injured in the workplace every five minutes in the United States. Further, the rate of work-related injuries that require an emergency room visit is nearly 2.2 times greater for workers ages 15 to 19 than those who are 25 and older.

“That’s the statistic that really stays with me,” said Rebecca Guerin, a NIOSH

research social scientist who studies young worker safety. “Those are the things that keep me up at night, not only as a researcher, but as a mother.”

A work injury can be life-altering, leading to a teen living with a disability the rest of his or her life and having to change life goals. “Keeping kids safe at work not only protects them now, but that’s protective throughout their lifetime,” Guerin said.

What makes teens unique?

For many teens, it may be the first time applying and being hired for a job. “Not having been in the workforce, they don’t recognize hazards,” said Diane Rohlman, assistant professor and director of the Healthier Workforce Center of the Midwest at the University of Iowa. “If somebody tells them to do something, they’re just going to do it. That’s the model they’ve been following.”

In a school environment, asking for permission and



following clear directions and deadlines are commonplace.

“They have to ask to go to the restroom,” said Ruth Ann Henson, education coordinator, northern region, for the Southern Illinois University-Carbondale Nurse Aide Testing program. “They have to ask to go to their locker. There are so many things they have to ask to do.”

When Henson’s students become certified nursing assistants, their responsibilities change drastically.

“Now, they are the patient advocate and they need to make decisions,” Henson said. “That’s a huge change in their role. Many are able to adapt quickly, but do they have the right tools in their toolkit to make the right decisions?”

“Employers shouldn’t assume teens know things. [Teens] need to know up front with those clear expectations.”

Although some teens may be able to handle a job

physically, their bodies and minds still are growing.

“The brain keeps developing until age 25,” Rohlman said. “Your decision-making skills may not be there. You may engage in more risky behavior. Even though you may be physically tall, you’re still developing. You may also be a smaller person and not be able to use adult-sized equipment.”

Along with working, many teens have responsibilities at home, heavy class schedules and active social lives, and may be involved in sports or activities at their school or church.

“Remember, these kids have a lot on their plate,” said Rohlman, who teaches numerous students with agricultural backgrounds. “Work is another thing that they’re trying to fit in, and their sleep patterns and eating habits are different.”

Train, train and train again

More than 1.5 million teens are in the U.S. workforce, according to

NIOSH. When educators such as Diane Bush want to reach this group, they cast a wide net.

Bush is the coordinator of public programs for the Labor Occupational Health Program at the University of California, Berkeley. LOHP oversees a statewide partnership around worker safety via the YoungWorkers.org website.

In addition to training, the partnership provides tools and resources for anyone in a teen’s sphere of influence, including employers, parents and care providers. Also available is the program’s free “Are You a Working Teen?” mobile app.

“We put the employer first for making sure that folks have a safe place to work,” Bush said. “We also know that doesn’t always happen. More support can be helpful, especially for young people. The more knowledge and skills they come in with, the better off they’re going to be, and the better off the employer is going to be.”



Bush encourages employers to rely on hands-on training and continued reinforcement of safe habits. Some employers also have mentorship programs or buddy systems for teens.

“Everybody learns better by doing than by being told or looking at a picture of how to do something,” Bush said. “Show them. Have them show you. Ask them, ‘Do you have any questions or concerns?’ Or ask, ‘Can you show me how to do this?’”

Finding their voices

One of the biggest hurdles for teen workers is speaking up about potential hazards.

“They don’t understand that it’s better to ask questions,” Bush said. “That’s one of our main messages.”

Teens wanting to fit in and be seen as competent workers may avoid asking for directions and expressing concerns.

“They’re trying to put their best foot forward and appear as adult and knowledgeable as possible,” Bush said. “A

young person might think, ‘They wouldn’t ask me to do this if it were dangerous. I’m going to try to do it. I don’t want to look stupid.’”

Employers can ensure open communication by making it part of the job description for teens.

“That’s how you’re going to get them to talk more,” said Rohlman, who recently worked with teen lifeguard, food service and retail workers on how to have conversations at work. In a follow-up, about one-third of the teens said the communication exercises changed their work behavior.

“They gave examples like, ‘I spoke to my supervisor about chemicals that weren’t properly stored,’” Rohlman said. “Or, ‘I asked for help when I was moving tables.’”

Encouraging communication also comes through employer policies and having a safety program in place.

“It’s telling them, ‘It’s expected that you’re going to

speak up, and we have a policy of reporting any hazards and addressing them right away,’” Rohlman said. “Those will help get [teens] more confident.”

There’s value in safety

What can a safe, healthy first work experience mean for a teen entering the workforce?

“The value is astronomical,” Henson said of her certified nursing assistant students. “They need to be nurtured in order to grow. When they do have that environment, No. 1, we are going to have patient safety. We’re also going to have worker safety.”

A safe first job also provides a foundation of lifelong habits for teen workers.

“We’d like to see young people work in a safe environment and see what that’s like to find problems and have them addressed,” Bush said. “They can carry that experience with them.”



Added Rohlman, "Most of us have to work for much of our lifetime. Starting young, these safety habits can become part of your everyday life. That's what we want."

So, to close out this lengthy but important article, I'd like to say that had I not been trained properly and thoroughly from day one, I might not have survived the many years of manufacturing and construction employment that I am fortunate to have had. I was indeed one of the fortunate ones.

Safety and Health Magazine

Online Edition

May 26, 2019

[Safety and Health Magazine](#)

Center for Progressive Reform (CPR) issues guide to help workers reduce toxic exposures

Each day, an average of 137 workers in the United States lose their lives to diseases and illnesses caused by [on-the-job exposures](#) to hazards like [silica dust](#),

[asbestos, and a wide variety of toxic chemicals](#). That means every year, roughly 50,000 people die from occupational illnesses, and the toll is likely much higher because of underreporting and incomplete statistics. A new advocacy guide from the Center for Progressive Reform (CPR) aims to change that by assisting workers who are seeking to take action to eliminate or reduce their exposure to hazardous substances.

"Inadequately regulated chemical hazards are at their deadliest in the workplace," said Katie Tracy, CPR Policy Analyst and co-author of the guide. "People exposed to toxics at work tend to encounter dangerous substances more frequently, for longer durations, and at higher levels than the public at large. Too often their employers fail in their obligation to protect them, so we've put this guide together to share resources and

strategies workers can use to secure a safe workplace."

According to [Chemical Detox for the Workplace: A Guide to Securing a Nontoxic Work Environment](#), workers are at substantial risk across dozens of sectors including agriculture, domestic cleaning, hair and nail salons, home repairs, building construction, and chemical manufacturing. These risks persist despite workplace safety and environmental laws on the books in the United States.

"Agencies like [OSHA](#) and EPA encounter serious obstacles when developing workplace protections against toxic substances, even when they have overwhelming scientific evidence of significant health risks," said Thomas McGarity, CPR Board Member and guide co-author. "The difficulty results not from a lack of data, but from intense lobbying from well-funded industries."

Rena Steinzor, CPR Member Scholar and a guide



co-author, added, "Budgetary constraints and lack of political will also stall updates to existing health standards and the creation of new ones. As a result, when OSHA moves to address hazardous chemicals in the workplace, it can take a decade for the agency to clear a new rule through the regulatory system. Once health standards are adopted, OSHA and the state occupational safety and health agencies often fail to enforce standards vigorously, all but inviting unscrupulous employers to ignore the law and endanger their workers."

CPR produced the advocacy guide to help workers, their representatives, and advocates move faster than OSHA or EPA can in securing a safer and healthier work environment. It is intended to assist workers and advocates with finding information on chemical hazards and utilizing that

information to achieve a nontoxic workplace.

The Guide

- **Section One** of the guide provides a list of tactics worker advocates can employ to reduce toxic risks and assist injured workers, such as working with an employer to utilize safer alternatives, filing a complaint with OSHA or submitting a tip to EPA, suing lowroad employers, and advocating beyond the workplace.

- **Section Two** gives readers a basic overview of the federal laws applicable to toxic chemicals.

- **Section Three** specifies the best resources available to help identify chemical information and take action to reduce hazards in the workplace.

"Although the guide does not cover every issue or situation workers may face, it is our hope that it will assist with identifying the appropriate questions to ask, initiating research on chemicals of concern in the

workplace, and collaborating with other workers, unions, and local organizers to take action," said Sidney Shapiro, CPR Board Member and co-author of the guide.

Chemical Detox for the Workplace: A Guide to Securing a Nontoxic Work Environment is available [online](#).

The Center for Progressive Reform is a nonprofit research and educational organization with a network of Member Scholars working to protect health, safety, and the environment through analysis and commentary.

Industrial Safety and Hygiene News

Online Edition

April 19, 2019

[ISHN](#)

Does Obamacare make injured workers wait longer for treatment?

A recent survey of 30 metropolitan areas showed a 30% increase from 2014 to 2017 in the average wait time



for a new patient to be seen by a doctor. Did the subset of workers seeking treatment for workers comp (WC) injuries experience the same delays?

A recent study by the National Council on Compensation Insurance (NCCI) yielded some surprising results.

The NCCI research was designed to answer the question: “Did the Affordable Care Act (ACA) stress the healthcare delivery system and make it more difficult for workers compensation claimants to get medical care?”

“If the ACA, or other changes to US healthcare delivery, makes access to care more difficult, then it is reasonable to expect longer times from injury to medical treatment.”

The study determined that the time from a WC injury to the initial professional medical care has remained unchanged from 2011 to 2016.

“While the time to receive specialized treatment has varied over that time, we

find no convincing evidence relating longer times to ACA implementation. Rather, we observe the opposite—that times for referral care generally increased each year from 2011 to 2014 and since 2015 have, depending on the type of provider, stabilized or decreased to 2013 levels or lower.”

Key findings:

The organization’s latest research brief, “Monitoring the Time from Injury to Treatment,” analyzed data going back to 2011 and found that:

- Since the ACA went into effect, injured workers did NOT see an increase in wait time to see a doctor
- In fact, some wait times actually decreased, depending on the type of provider
- There is no consistent relationship between time to treatment for workers compensation claims and the proportion of the population with medical coverage

The research brief delves into specifics for different

provider groupings, in-network vs. out-of-network, and types of injury. For more details on these and other findings, access the [complete report](#).

Industrial Safety and Hygiene News

Online Edition

March 28, 2019

[ISHN](#)

OSHA Requests Information on Possible Updates to the Lockout/Tagout Standard

WASHINGTON, DC – The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) is requesting information on a possible update to the Control of Hazardous Energy (Lockout/Tagout (LOTO)) standard. The Agency is interested in comments on the use of control circuit-type devices to isolate energy, as well as the evolving technology for robotics.

OSHA is requesting information about how



employers have been using control circuit devices, including information about the types of circuitry and safety procedures being used; limitations of their use, to determine under what other conditions control circuit-type devices could be used safely; new risks of worker exposure to hazardous energy as a result of increased interaction with robots; and whether the agency should consider changes to the LOTO standard that would address these new risks.

The current LOTO standard, published in 1989, requires that all sources of energy be controlled during servicing and maintenance of machines and equipment using an energy-isolating device. The standard specifies that control circuit devices cannot be used as energy-isolating devices, but the agency recognizes recent technological advances may have improved the safety of control circuit-type devices.

Comments must be submitted on or before August 18, 2019. Comments and materials may be submitted electronically at <http://www.regulations.gov>, the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal, or by facsimile or mail. See the [Federal Register notice](#) for submission details.

Under the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, employers are responsible for providing safe and healthful workplaces for their employees. OSHA's role is to help ensure these conditions for America's working men and women by setting and enforcing standards, and providing training, education and assistance. For more information, visit www.osha.gov.

OSHA News Release

May 17, 2019

[OSHA News Release](#)

Job Market Links

General Employment Links



Safety Manager,

St. Augustine, FL

Position Summary:

Ring Power has a newly-created position of Safety Manager at its St. Augustine location. Reporting to the Safety Director, the Safety Manager will be responsible for managing the EHS management system & third party contractor safety processes (ISNetWorld, Avetta, etc.), creating and updating safety programs and processes, developing and presenting safety-related training materials including weekly toolbox meetings, provide safety services to Ring Power's specialty divisions, and help the team create a proactive safety culture.

The ideal candidate will have a degree in Safety or a closely related field and 2



years' experience in a related industry. Experience in electrical safety is a plus. Strong communication skills, both written and verbal required. Travel throughout Florida and some US travel required.

If interested, please apply at <https://ringpower.com/careers> and search for job 19-5663, Safety Manager.



**Assistant Safety Manager,
Fernandina Beach, FL Mill**

Position Summary:

This role is the #2 person responsible for the leadership & technical support of all matters pertaining to facility safety and employee health.

The successful candidate will be a key leader at the location, helping to create a culture of safety excellence.

The position has the responsibility to work in concert with Operations and Maintenance leaders to

design, modify, recommend and implement safety and health programs to assure a safe work environment.

They will support the mill as it accomplishes important tasks by offering practical and compliant solutions for working safely. Additionally, supporting compliance with all applicable safety and health regulations, corporate requirements and audit processes, will be critical.

They will also participate in post injury case management and lead the audit preparation and response processes.

Interested parties should contact Randi Leonardis at randi.leonardis@westrock.com.

Generic Job Links

[ASSP](#)

[BCSP General Safety Jobs](#)

[BCSP Construction Safety Jobs](#)

[BCSP Industrial Hygiene Jobs](#)

[EHS Careers](#)

ASSP Chapter Links

Find us on the web at:

[ASSP NFL](#)

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Local Chapter Officers and Chairs

Elected Officers

- President - Steve Brown
- President Elect - Bob Dooley
- Secretary - Steve Wilson
- Treasurer - Yaniv Zagagi
- Delegate - Dave Bedsole

Appointed Chairs

- Membership Chair - Eric Gray
- Newsletter Chair – Bob Dooley
- Nominations Chair – Dan Hemsall
- Past President - Dan Hemsall
- Program Chair - Tom Drygas
- Social Chair – Ravyn Tyler
- Social Media Chair - Vernon Adams
- SPY Awards Chair – Open



Local Chapter Information

The North Florida Chapter of the American Society of Safety Professionals, formerly the American Society of Safety Engineers, was chartered in 1952 and currently has more than 165 members.

Professional meetings are held nine times per year in the Jacksonville area.

Meeting notices are distributed and RSVP's are returned by email. If you are a member of ASSP and are not receiving notices by email, please email the [Chapter Secretary](#).

Help Wanted – We Need Leadership Volunteers

Local Chapter elections are coming soon, and volunteers are needed to support the various functions of the chapter. If you are interested and able to devote time to

the local chapter, please contact [Dan Hempsall](#) (Nominations Chair) or [Steve Brown](#) (President) for details. We believe that you will enjoy the experience and comradery and we most-certainly appreciate your help.

Local Chapter Meeting Schedule

The chapter is currently on recess for the summer.