

# TOOLBOX TALK, September 30th, 2024.

## **PTP Competition:**

The winners for last quarter's PTP competition are Lorena Guevara, Bryan Woolverton, and Carlos Coria. Each will receive a \$50 gift card for doing great PTPs. Remember, good pre-task planning is one key to safer work. Congratulations!

## **Recordable Incident:**

Last week we had our second recordable of the year when a worker had caulk burst into his eye from an incompletely punctured tube. Leading up to this, he made couple of fateful choices. First, he didn't remove the battery from the electric caulking gun when he stopped to look for an obstruction. Second, he took off his safety glasses as he examined the tip to see the problem better. As with most incidents, this happened as he rushed ahead without planning his work, losing focus on safety and making choices that led to trouble.

## **First Aid vs Recordable:**

According to OSHA, "You must consider an injury or illness to meet the general recording criteria, and therefore to be recordable, if it results in any of the following: *death, days away from work, restricted work or transfer to another job, medical treatment beyond first aid, or loss of consciousness.*"

Going to a medical facility always increases the possibility of an incident becoming recordable. But in this case the worker had broken blood vessels in his eye and had experienced an impact which elevated the incident to a level where urgent care made sense.

First aid is always preferred over going to a medical facility. For instance, if a cut can be treated with a bandage or can be butterflyed or glued shut with super glue it's considered first aid. But if there are stitches, it becomes recordable. If an eye injury can be treated by rinsing, or if a foreign body can be removed with a magnet or swab, it's first aid, but if the object must be removed with tweezers or other mechanical means it becomes recordable. If an antibiotic or pain medication is *prescribed by the doctor*, it's recordable. But if treatment is limited to topical antiseptic or a few over the counter Ibuprofen it's first aid.

We always seek the best treatment for anyone who's been hurt, but if we can prevent incidents from happening, and treat incidents that do happen in a way that promotes healing by doing first aid, we all win. So, when incidents occur, our first choice is onsite first aid, only escalating to a medical facility as needed.

## **Situational Awareness:**

Even if we imagine we've thought of everything, there's a chance that something we haven't anticipated could still happen. According to Murphy's law, "Anything that can go wrong will go wrong". Though good planning may help keep us out of trouble, Murphy's Law says there's always some degree of risk.

Another trade might leave a hole uncovered; something could drop from the ceiling; a car may run a red light; a stack of material may be bumped and fall over; these kinds of unexpected circumstances make consistent situational awareness important. The key to situational awareness is to look ahead and around and up and down frequently, recognizing unexpected hazards as we go. Increasing the possibility that we see something coming, is what it's all about. Being aware and ready to respond can free us from the pessimism of Murphy's Law and keep us safer too.

**When has situational awareness worked for you?**

**How did being aware of what was going on around you help you avoid trouble?**

