



# SAFETY VISIONS



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*US Department of Labor Announces:*

### **NATIONAL EMPHASIS PROGRAM to HELP and PREVENT WORKPLACE FALLS**



The U.S. Department of Labor announced that its Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has begun a National Emphasis Program (NEP) to prevent falls, the leading cause of fatal workplace injuries and the violation the agency cites most frequently in construction industry inspections.

The emphasis program will focus on reducing fall-related injuries and fatalities for people working at heights across all industries. The targeted enforcement program is based on historical Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) data and OSHA enforcement history. BLS data shows that of the 5,190 fatal workplace injuries in 2021, 680 were associated with falls from elevations, about 13 percent of all deaths.

The program establishes guidance for locating and inspecting fall hazards and allows OSHA compliance safety and health officers to open inspections whenever they observe someone working at heights. An outreach component of the program will focus on educating employers about effective ways to keep their workers safe. If a compliance officer determines an inspection is not necessary after entering a worksite and observing work activities, they will provide outreach on fall protection and leave the site.

The OSHA instruction providing guidance to OSHA National, Regional, Area, and State Plan offices for implementation of this NEP to reduce or eliminate workplace fall hazards associated with working at heights can be found at: [National Emphasis Program - Falls](#)

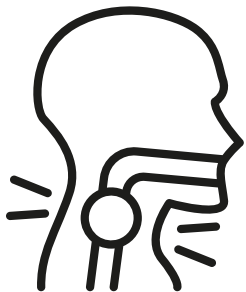


**For more information** contact Jim Saulters at (513) 858-5022 or [Jim.Saulters@sedgwick.com](mailto:Jim.Saulters@sedgwick.com).

# Emergency Care for Choking

Choking can occur when a solid foreign object, such as a piece of food, or small object, enters a narrowed part of the airway and becomes stuck.

On inhalation, the object can be drawn tighter into the airway, blocking air from entering the lungs.



Your help could be required to save the person's life.

A forceful thrust beneath the ribs and up into the diaphragm can pressurize the air in the chest and pop an obstruction out of the airway.

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If choking occurs:

- Stand behind an adult or kneel behind a child, reach around, and locate their navel;
- Make a fist with one hand and place thumb side against the abdomen, just above the navel and below the ribs;
- Grasp your fist with the other hand;
- Quickly thrust inward and upward into abdomen;
- Each thrust needs to be given with the intent of expelling the object; and,
- Continue until the person choking can breathe again.

## What is a Competent Person & When Do You Need One?



What makes a competent person competent? That may be a question you ask yourself while reviewing the Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) construction standards. Luckily, OSHA provides us with a definition of a competent person "one who is capable of identifying existing and predictable hazards in the surroundings or working conditions which are unsanitary, hazardous, or dangerous to employees, and who has the authorization to take prompt corrective measures to eliminate them".

Listed below are some OSHA standards that require a competent person:

- 1926.101(b) - Ear protective devices inserted in the ear shall be fitted or determined individually by competent persons. *-continued-*

# What is a Competent Person & When Do You Need One?

*-continued-*

- 1926.251(a)(6) - Rigging equipment for material handling. Each day before being used, the sling and all fastenings and attachments shall be inspected for damage or defects by a competent person designated by the employer.
- 1926.354(a) - Before welding, cutting, or heating is commenced on any surface covered by a preservative coating whose flammability is not known, a test shall be made by a competent person to determine its flammability.
- 1926.404(b)(1)(iii)(B) - Assured equipment grounding conductor program. The employer shall designate one or more competent persons to implement the program.
- 1926.502(h)(1) - Safety monitoring systems. The employer shall designate a competent person to monitor the safety of other employees.
- 1926.502(k)(4) - Fall protection plan. The implementation of the fall protection plan shall be under the supervision of a competent person.
- 1926.503(a)(2) - Fall protection training. The employer shall assure that each employee has been trained, as necessary, by a competent person.
- 1926.651(k)(1) - Daily inspections of excavations, the adjacent areas, and protective systems shall be made by a competent person.
- 1926.1053(b)(15) - Ladders shall be inspected by a competent person for visible defects on a periodic basis and after any occurrence that could affect their safe use.
- 1926.1412(d)(1) - Crane inspection. A competent person must begin a visual inspection prior to each shift the equipment will be used, which must be completed before or during that shift.

## NIGHTTIME DRIVING TIPS

As we reach the end of the year, it will keep getting darker and darker earlier each day. With the darker days, it's important to take extra caution while driving during the nighttime.

According to statistics from the National Safety Council, between September and November of 2020, there were almost 11,000 motor vehicle deaths.

To help you navigate nighttime driving, be sure to keep these tips in mind:

- Drive within the visual range illuminated by your headlights, not by what you think you see beyond them. At night, headlights limit our view to only 250 to 350 feet of the road ahead;
- Adjust your rearview mirror to the nighttime setting to dim any headlight glare coming from behind;
- Focus your eyes on the right edge of the road to avoid being blinded;
- Keep your windshield and headlights clean inside and out;



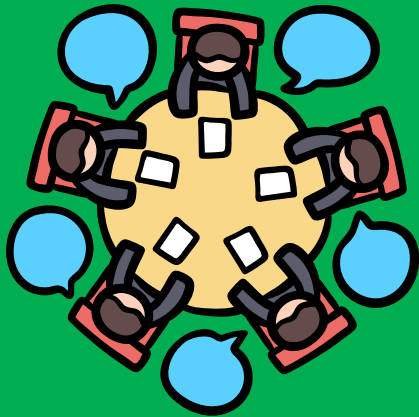
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- Shift your view between the road and your vehicle's rear and side mirrors;
- Turn your head from side to side to increase your peripheral vision; and,
- Use high beams when you can.

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## Tips to Improve Your Safety Committee

Safety and health committees are the backbone of a solid plan to prevent workplace injuries and illnesses. According to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, there are numerous benefits of a safety committee that include fewer accidents, promoting employee involvement, saving time with safety projects by delegation, increased productivity, and saving money from injury prevention. The goals of the committee should include increasing safety awareness throughout all departments, increasing the want to participate in safety, and reducing and preventing injuries as well as near misses.



### Here are some ideas for activities that you can plan to increase participation:

- Review new equipment, devices, and work procedures;
- Conduct site inspections,
- Perform job safety analysis,
- Develop, and revise safety rules,
- Conduct training programs for current and new hires;
- Conduct accident/near miss incident investigations; and,
- Participate as safety observers and safety coaches.

In building your safety committee, the composition of the group is very important. Members should be employee volunteers: a representative, and a backup representative from every department. Membership should not exceed 15, 5 to 10 employees would be optimal. Assigned roles should include time and note keeper (Secretary) and Leader (Chairperson). Each role should have assigned responsibilities. Do not forget to have a clear, laid-out agenda for your meetings.

Additional ideas to improve your safety committee include bringing food, guest speakers, videos and photos, recognition/awards, posters, contests, and a demonstration of safety equipment. Employee interactions are key.

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