

# *Safety Memo For: Maintenance Personnel*

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## **PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)**

### **A CASE HISTORY:**

The maintenance department had just received new hose reel equipment for dispensing oil and grease. This move toward efficiency would eliminate the various drums with pumps and spigots they were currently using. It would also free up some much needed floor space.

The maintenance supervisor instructed an employee to mount the hose reel bracket on a steel I-beam upright. This required drilling four 1/2 or 5/8 inch holes in the I-beam. The employee decided to use an air-powered drill.

At some point after drilling began, the supervisor happened to look out of his office window to see how the job was going. Much to his surprise (and shock) he noticed the employee was not wearing eye protection! He immediately ran to where the employee was working to stop the drilling and tell him to put on his eye protection. Just as the supervisor approached the area, he was struck in the right eye by several metal fragments!

The supervisor said, "I was very lucky!!". He had to have two operations on the eye to remove five pieces of imbedded steel fragments. He also had to wear a patch over the eye for six months. He has regained his sight in the right eye for which he credits the eye surgeon. The scars remain and he wears glasses. He most certainly is a lucky man!

**QUESTIONS:**

- Was this accident preventable?
- Who could have prevented it?
- How could it have been prevented?
- Would it be a violation of your company's policy?
- Could this have happened to you?
- What would you have done differently?

All PPE rules and policies are established to protect employees from recognized hazards. Employees who "forget" or choose not to wear the necessary PPE are playing a very serious game – perhaps with their lives. Sooner or later they will run out of luck.

How about you? Are you playing it safe or depending on luck?

## **SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT**

# *Instructor's Meeting Notes*

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**SUBJECT:** PERS. PROT. EQUIP.

**EMPLOYEES:** MAINTENANCE PERSONNEL

**INSTRUCTOR:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

This meeting's subject for maintenance employees is Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). The Safety Memo recites the case history of an eye injury, which from any point of view, could have been prevented. As you know, this is true of virtually every injury where proper PPE was not being used.

The Safety Memo should lead to some interesting discussion during your meeting – especially if you give a copy to each employee a couple of days before your meeting. Eye protection is just one of many necessary items used by employees to protect themselves from possible injury. It is management's responsibility to assess the various job hazards and make available the appropriate PPE. It is the employee's responsibility to follow company policy and utilize the appropriate PPE.

## **BEFORE YOUR MEETING:**

- 1) Distribute copies of the Safety Memo and Support Information two to three days before your meeting. Ask them to answer the questions and to be prepared to discuss the accident circumstances during your meeting.
- 2) Check your records for the past several months for injuries which may have occurred because PPE was not used.
- 3) Review your current company policy or rules regarding the use of PPE. Is it up-to-date? What are the consequences for violations? This may be a good time to remind employees of company PPE policy (your choice).

## **FOR YOUR MEETING:**

- 1) Read each of the six questions in the Safety Memo. Have individuals respond or get a group consensus on the answers.
- 2) If possible, use a chalkboard or flip-chart. Solicit input from employees as to what safeguards or procedures your company has which would prevent an accident of this type (write down).
- 3) Are there other rules, procedures or PPE which should be considered to ensure your shop is a safe work place?
- 4) Remember, if there are complaints about effectiveness, durability, comfort, etc., of PPE supplied to employees, OSHA requires the employer to address them.
- 5) Recommendations for management? Write down.