EMPLOYEE SAFETY NEWSLETTER

November 2021

Working Safely Around Conveyors

Conveyors are used in the workplace as an efficient way to move objects from one place to another without lifting. When used correctly, they are quite safe, but it's important to be cautious. When used unsafely, conveyors can be hazardous, just like any other piece of equipment.

Always follow these do's and don'ts when using or working near a conveyor:

- **Don't** climb, step, walk, or ride on a conveyor.
- **Don't** overload a conveyor.
- **Don't** load a conveyor while it's stopped.
- **Don't** touch the belt of a conveyor while it's moving.
- **Don't** clean the conveyor while it's running.
- **Don't** operate the conveyor if any guards or safety devices are missing or aren't working properly.
- **Don't** reach into conveyor mechanisms if something gets stuck or jammed. Turn off the power and find someone who is authorized to fix the problem.
- **Don't** try to repair or perform maintenance on a conveyor unless you have been specifically trained and authorized to do so.
- **Don't** wear loose clothing or jewelry when working near a conveyor.
- **Do** tie back long hair when working near a conveyor.
- **Do** position yourself so that you won't be hit by objects moving down the conveyor.
- **Do** make sure emergency shutoff switches are always within reach.
- **Do** watch your hands when you're loading materials onto a conveyor.
- **Do** ensure that all employees are clear of the conveyor before starting it up.
- **Do** wear a hard hat if you're working underneath an overhead conveyor.

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Preventing Occupational Skin Disease—Outdoor Environment

Causes of skin disease
Chemicals are the primary cause of occupational skin disorders. Chemical irritants may cause a reaction upon direct contact with your skin. Chemicals can also be sensitizers that may not cause an immediate reaction, but repeated exposure may cause an allergic reaction.

Other causes of skin disease include:

- Physical hazards such as overexposure to the sun and extreme temperatures, hot or cold, that can result in burns, frostbite, and cancer; *and*
- Biological hazards such as parasites and plants that can lead to rashes and diseases.

Common types of skin diseases
The most common occupational skin disease is contact dermatitis, which is an inflammation of the skin resulting from exposure to a hazardous substance. It is often itchy or painful. Allergic contact dermatitis is an immune system response triggered by skin contact to an allergen to which a worker has been previously exposed and sensitized. The response can be a rash at the point of contact, such as with poison ivy, but is often not limited to the site of contact and can be systemic. Typical causes include plants and agrochemicals, including pesticides and fertilizers.

Another skin disease common in outdoor occupations is skin cancer. It can develop from environmental exposure to ultraviolet light or radiation, including sunlight. However, symptoms may not appear for years or even decades after exposure.

Prevention
Fortunately, there are actions you can take to protect yourself against skin disease, with the most important being knowing the hazards associated with the job you are performing.

- If you are working with chemicals outdoors, review the chemical label and the safety data sheet (SDS). They will provide you with information on the hazards associated with the chemicals and appropriate precautions to take to avoid exposure, including necessary personal protective equipment (PPE).
- When you begin working outside, identify the physical and biological hazards of your surroundings. Wear appropriate clothing and PPE to protect yourself from extreme temperatures. Be sure to protect yourself from overexposure to the sun and use sunscreen when appropriate. Also, be sure you can recognize hazardous plants, such as poison ivy, so you can wear appropriate clothing and avoid contact.

Another thing you can do to protect your skin is maintain proper hygiene and wash your hands. Unless instructed otherwise by the SDS, gently scrub hands or other areas exposed to hazardous substances with soap and warm water for 20 seconds. Dry your hands thoroughly, and use lotion to prevent dry, cracked skin that is more susceptible to infection.

Finally, be aware that some of the things you use to protect your skin may irritate your skin. For example, your skin may be sensitive to certain soaps or sunscreens, or you may be sensitive or allergic to latex, which can be found in gloves and other types of PPE.

If you experience any type of skin condition that you believe to be work-related, report it to your supervisor.

Selecting PPE For Women

Many women in the workforce, particularly in the construction trades and other male-dominated professions, often encounter improperly fitting personal protective equipment, more commonly referred to as PPE.

Fortunately, there are many safe practices you can follow on the job to make sure your PPE fits properly and provides you with the best protection:

- Test your employer-provided PPE. If it's uncomfortable, fits improperly, is damaged from wear or another defect, or is otherwise unsuitable, report the condition to your supervisor to find an appropriate replacement.
- Try on more than one size of each type of PPE that you are required to wear to find the best fit.
- Do not select PPE designed for men and try to modify it to fit a woman's body.
- For hearing protection, use disposable, foam earplugs.
- For head protection, add a chin strap.
- For eye protection, beware of safety goggles that are "one size fits all."
- For safety gloves, make sure all of your exposed skin is covered; that the gloves allow for a safe grip so tools will not easily slip out of your hands; and that the finger length, width, and palm circumference of the gloves match those of your hands.
- For safety footwear, make sure the boot or shoe fits comfortably but snugly around the heel and ankle areas when laced. It should also fit comfortably at the ball of the foot.
- For protective clothing, make sure it is specifically designed for women. The area's most important for consideration include torso length, shoulders, chest, waist, and hips.

Aerial Lift Safety—Preventing Falls

When you are working in the platform of an aerial lift, you must use fall protection. There are two types of fall protection you can use: travel restraint systems and personal fall arrest systems.

Travel restraint systems prevent you from reaching the edge of the platform. A travel restraint system uses a body belt or harness with a lanyard, or another means of connection that is attached to an anchorage point. Lanyards and other connections on travel restraint systems must be short enough so that you cannot reach the edge of the platform.

Personal fall arrest systems stop your fall once it happens. These consist of a full-body harness attached to an anchorage point with a connector such as a lanyard. If you fall while wearing a personal fall arrest system, the system will stop your fall within a safe distance and protect you from injury.

Whether you are using a personal fall arrest system or a travel restraint system, it must be properly attached to the boom or bucket of the aerial lift. Never tie off to nearby poles or structures outside the lift.

Regardless of which kind of fall protection you use, inspect all parts of it before each work shift, including your harness or body belt, lanyard or connector, and anchorage point. Make sure it is in good condition and free from excessive wear and tear, mildew, tears, cracks, and other issues. If you find a defect, don't use the equipment; tell your supervisor so that he or she can remove it from service.

Aerial Lift Safety—Preventing Falls: QUIZ

1. You must use fall protection when you are working in the platform of an aerial lift. TRUE or FALSE.

2. A personal fall arrest system uses a body belt or harness with a lanyard, or another means of connection that is attached to an anchorage point. TRUE or FALSE.

3. When using a personal fall arrest system or a travel restraint system, it must be properly attached to which of the following? Choose all that apply.

A. Boom of the aerial lift

B. Bucket of the aerial lift

C. Nearby pole outside the lift

D. Nearby structure outside the lift

4. Which of the following parts of your fall protection system should you inspect before using it?

A. Harness or body belt

B. Lanyard or connector

C. Anchorage point

D. All of the above

ANSWERS

1. **TRUE.** 2. **FALSE.** 3. **A. & B.** 4. **D.**

America Recycles Day

Celebrated annually on **November 15**, America Recycles Day educates people on where and how to properly recycle and encourages them to be more conscious of what they consume and pledge to recycle more in their everyday lives. America Recycles Day was launched in 2010 by Keep America Beautiful, a nonprofit organization whose mission is to educate people and inspire them to take action every day to improve and beautify their community environment. Although November 15 is the official America Recycles Day, recycling events happen throughout the fall and through December.

- Recycling has many benefits, including:
- Reducing the amount of waste sent to landfills and incinerators;
- Conserving natural resources such as timber, water, and minerals;
- Preventing pollution by reducing the need to collect new raw materials; and
- Saving energy.

You can participate in America Recycles Day by visiting www.kab.org/programs/ard and taking the #BeRecyled pledge to:

- Learn and find out what materials are collected for recycling in your community.
- Act to reduce the amount of waste you produce, recycle more, and buy products made with recycled content.
- Share the information with family members or friends and encourage them to take the #BeRecyled pledge.

In addition to the #BeRecycled pledge, people can be part of the recycling solution by participating or hosting their own America Recycles Day event. If organizing or attending an event, be sure to follow state and local health COVID-19 guidance.

Handling Universal Waste Lithium Batteries

When you manage lithium hazardous waste batteries as universal wastes, you must follow very specific universal waste requirements. This means, first of all, that these batteries cannot be thrown in the trash.

Management standards

Universal waste lithium batteries must be properly managed at a facility before being sent for recycling. Here are some best practices:

- Place the batteries in the containers that you've chosen to store them.
- It's a good practice to use separate containers for each type of battery, as some types of batteries that have other battery chemistries may be incompatible with lithium batteries and could react when stored together.
- Keep the container closed unless adding or removing batteries, but be sure containers are not airtight.
- Label or mark the containers holding the batteries with these words as soon as the first spent battery is placed in the container:
  - "Universal Waste—Battery(ies)"
  - "Waste Battery(ies)"
  - "Used Battery(ies)"
- Lithium batteries generally do not leak or corrode, but they can swell (which evidences a buildup of gas inside the battery) and possibly rupture and catch fire. If the swollen battery is in a device, remove it according to the manufacturer's instructions. Be sure to avoid storage at too high a temperature. Follow the manufacturer's guidance regarding storage temperature.
- Prevent batteries from short-circuiting and potentially causing a fire by using one of these methods:
  - Protect exposed terminals or connectors with nonconductive tape, nonconductive caps, or another appropriate means.
  - Package each battery or battery-powered device in fully enclosed packaging made of nonconductive material so that terminals cannot come into contact (for example, place each battery in a separate plastic bag).
- Wear protective clothing when handling any damaged batteries that may be leaking. This would include chemical-resistant gloves and chemical-resistant eye protection such as safety goggles or a face shield.
- As long as the individual battery cell is not breached, batteries or battery packs may be sorted, discharged, regenerated, disassembled into individual batteries, or removed from consumer products.
- Periodically check the containers or inventory log to make sure the batteries aren't past the 1-year storage time limit.
- Time limit

- Universal waste batteries have a storage time limit of 1 year at a facility. The 1-year time period is measured from the time the waste is generated—in other words, from the date a battery becomes a waste. This requirement is met by:

- Placing the batteries in a container that is marked or labeled with the earliest date that any universal waste in the container became a waste,
- Marking or labeling each individual battery with the date it became a waste, or
- Maintaining an inventory system that identifies the date each battery became a waste or the earliest date that a battery in a group of batteries became a waste.

Handling Universal Waste Lithium Batteries: QUIZ

1. Lithium batteries are not considered a hazardous waste.

TRUE or FALSE.

2. Which of the following are good practices for managing lithium batteries? Choose all that apply.

A. Place the batteries in the containers that you've chosen to store them.
B. Use the same container for all types of batteries.
C. Be sure that containers are airtight when closed.
D. Mark the container holding the batteries with the words "Used Batteries" or similar phrasing.

3. Which of the following is most likely to happen to lithium batteries?

A. Leaking
B. Corroding
C. Combusting
D. Swelling

4. If a battery is breached, it can be removed from consumer products. TRUE or FALSE.

5. What is the storage limit for lithium batteries?

A. 1 month
B. 6 months
C. 1 year
D. 2 years

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Handling Universal Waste Lithium Batteries: ANSWERS

1. **FALSE.** Lithium batteries are considered a hazardous waste.

2. **A. Place the batteries in the containers that you've chosen to store them. & D. Mark the container holding the batteries with the words "Used Batteries" or similar phrasing.** Some good practices when managing lithium batteries are placing the batteries in the containers that you've chosen to store them and marking the container holding the batteries with the words "Used Batteries" or similar phrasing.

3. **D. Swelling.** Lithium batteries generally do not leak or corrode, but they can swell and possibly rupture and catch fire.

4. **FALSE.** If a battery is breached, it cannot be removed from consumer products.

5. **C.** The storage limit for lithium batteries is 1 year.

Chemical spotlight: Butylamine

Butylamine is a clear, colorless liquid with an ammonia or fish-like odor. It is used in making rubber, drugs, dye stuffs, insecticides, and pharmaceuticals.

Butylamine vapors may form explosive mixtures with air. Store butylamine in tightly closed containers in a cool, well-ventilated area away from heat or flame. Ground and bond containers and receiving equipment. Use explosion-proof electrical, ventilating, and lighting equipment. Use only non-sparking tools. Take precautionary measures against static discharge. Avoid all sources of ignition where butylamine is used, handled, or stored.

If butylamine is spilled or leaked, avoid breathing vapors, mist, or gas, and ensure adequate ventilation. Remove all sources of ignition and evacuate personnel to safe areas. Use personal protective equipment (PPE), including goggles or safety glasses, gloves, flame-retardant protective clothing, and respiratory protection.

Prevent further leakage or spillage if safe to do so, and do not let the product enter drains, sewers, underground or confined spaces, groundwater, or waterways or discharge into the environment. Contain the spillage and soak it up with an inert absorbent material. Then place the spillage in a sealed container. It may be necessary to contain and dispose of butylamine as a hazardous waste. Contact the federal and local Environmental Protection Agency for specific recommendations.