

Summer 2020

Pennsylvania



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To:

UPCOMING EVENTS

- ❖ *(postponed - tentatively to be held in September)*

PALICA Field Days at the Mercer County Conservation District Munnell Run Farm - (more details to come) Friday/Saturday July 31st-August 1st.

- ❖ *2021 ANNUAL LICA WINTER CONVENTION - February 9-13, 2021 Holiday Inn San Antonio Riverwalk (more details to follow-subject to changes)*
- ❖ *PALICA 2014 WINTER MEETING - March 5th & 6th @ Days Inn by Wyndham in State College PA (subject to changes)*

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hello PALICA Members,

Hope all is well with everyone with



a very different start to the season this year. I know in different parts of the state, things have not been the same for everyone and not all have been affected the same. I've heard about all different scenarios; some out of work still, some were out but are back now and some were never shut down. As we move forward in life and work, remember safety is key. Keep on keeping on - hope the best to everyone in the rest of the busy season.

ON BEHALF OF THE ENTIRE BOARD AND MEMBERSHIP, I'D LIKE TO THANK UFG & PRINS INSURANCE FOR ADDING FUNDS TO THE EDUCATIONAL ACCOUNT OF PALICA, IN THE AMOUNT OF \$12,552.98! WE WILL PUT THESE FUNDS TO GREAT USE ONCE WE ARE ABLE TO RESUME ACTIVITIES AND CLASSES! It will also help with the PA Winter State Convention. THANK YOU FOR ALL YOUR SUPPORT!

Christopher Moore

INSIDE THIS EDITION WE'RE FOCUSING ON COVID-19 AND THE IMPACT IT'S HAD ON EVERYONE WITH GUIDELINES AS WELL

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COVID-19 – HOW IT'S AFFECTED SO MANY IN THE INDUSTRY AND HELPFUL GUIDANCE ON HOW TO STAY IN COMPLIANCE (please read the following information and apply as needed to your company's daily work.



How/when to use cloth face masks to combat coronavirus spread on construction jobsites

Now that face masks are much more than dust-inhalation preventive measures on the jobsite, OSHA is now offering [guidance](#) on how best to use cloth face coverings to combat [coronavirus](#).

First, OSHA says that cloth face coverings are not PPE, nor are they an appropriate substitute for PPE such as N95 respirators or medical face masks required to protect the wearer. Basically, their primary use is to reduce the spread of the virus, if used in addition to social distancing.

Because cloth face coverings can easily become soiled, wet or otherwise contaminated in a construction environment, OSHA is urging contractors to provide readily available clean cloth face coverings or disposable face masks.

In addition to complying with any state or local requirements, cloth face coverings should:

- Fit over the nose and mouth and fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face;
- Are secured with ties or ear loops;
- Include multiple layers of fabric;
- Allow for breathing without restriction;
- Can be laundered using the warmest appropriate water setting and machine dried daily after the shift, without damage or change to shape (a clean cloth face covering should be used each day);
- Are not used if they become wet or contaminated;
- Are replaced with clean replacements, provided by employer, as needed;
- Are handled as little as possible to prevent transferring infectious materials to the cloth; and
- Are not worn with or instead of [respiratory protection](#) when respirators are needed.



(information obtained from the US DEPARTMENT OF LABOR)

Construction Work

COVID-19 Control and Prevention

This guidance is not a standard or regulation, and it creates no new legal obligations. It contains recommendations as well as descriptions of mandatory safety and health standards. The recommendations are advisory in nature, informational in content, and are intended to assist employers in providing a safe and healthful workplace. The Occupational Safety and Health Act requires employers to comply with safety and health standards and regulations promulgated by OSHA or by a state with an OSHA-approved state plan. In addition, the Act's General Duty Clause, Section 5(a)(1), requires employers to provide their employees with a workplace free from recognized hazards likely to cause death or serious physical harm.



Photo Credit: Courtesy of Turner Construction

This section provides guidance for construction employers and workers, such as those engaged in carpentry, ironworking, plumbing, electrical, heating/ ventilation/air conditioning/ventilation, masonry and **concrete work, utility construction work, and earthmoving activities**. This guidance supplements the general, interim guidance for all workers and employers of workers with potential occupational exposures to SARS-CoV-2.

Remain alert of changing outbreak conditions, including as they relate to community spread of the virus and testing availability, and implement infection prevention measures accordingly. As states or regions satisfy the **gating criteria** to progress through the phases of the Guidelines for **Opening up America Again**, you will likely be able to adapt this guidance to better suit evolving risk levels and necessary control measures in your workplaces.

Assess the hazards to which your workers may be exposed; evaluate the risk of exposure; and select, implement, and ensure workers use controls to prevent exposure. The table below describes construction work tasks associated with the exposure risk levels in OSHA's occupational exposure risk pyramid, which may serve as a guide to employers in this sector.

Construction work tasks associated with exposure risk levels

Lower (caution)	Medium	High	Very High
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tasks that allow employees to remain at least 6 feet apart and involve little contact with the public, visitors, or customers. <p>Note: For activities in the lower (caution) risk category, OSHA's <i>Interim Guidance for Workers and Employers of Workers at Lower Risk of Exposure</i> may be most appropriate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tasks that require workers to be within 6 feet of one another. Tasks that require workers to be in close contact (within 6 feet) with customers, visitors, or members of the public. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Entering an indoor work site occupied by people such as other workers, customers, or residents suspected of having or known to have COVID-19, including when an occupant of the site reports signs and symptoms consistent with COVID-19. <p>Note: Employers may consider delaying this work following the guidance below.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Category not applicable for most anticipated work tasks. <p>Note: Most construction work tasks are associated with no more than high exposure risk; see the work tasks associated with lower, medium, or high risk on this chart.</p>

Conducting a job hazard analysis can help you to determine whether work activities require close contact (within 6 feet) between workers and customers, visitors, or other members of the public. When a job hazard analysis identifies activities with higher exposure risks, and those activities are not essential, consider delaying them until they can be performed safely (e.g., when appropriate infection prevention measures, as discussed on this page, can be implemented or once community transmission subsides).

Engineering Controls

In the indoor construction environment, **when work is determined to be essential or emergency work, and a person (e.g., coworker, visitor, resident, subcontractor) suspected of having or known to have COVID-19 is present at the worksite in close proximity to where workers would be working:**

Use closed doors and walls, whenever feasible, as physical barriers to separate workers from any individuals experiencing **signs and/or symptoms** consistent with COVID-19.

- Consider erecting plastic sheeting barriers when workers need to occupy specific areas of an indoor work site where they are in close contact (less than 6 feet) with someone suspected of having or known to have COVID-19.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, periodically reassess engineering controls (as well as work practices and administrative controls) to identify any changes that can be made to decrease the need for N95 respirators (or other respirators with a higher level of protection) and other personal protective equipment (PPE) ordinarily used for work activities that involve exposure to hazardous substances. This can help conserve PPE that is in short supply or needs to be diverted to activities associated with higher SARS-CoV-2 exposure risks. For example, a reassessment of engineering controls may identify improvements to water delivery or dust collection systems that will further reduce ambient dust when cutting, breaking, jackhammering, or drilling.

Administrative Controls

Use administrative controls, when feasible, to reduce or eliminate the risk of exposure. Implement, and update policies to reflect:

- Standard operating procedures that follow the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#), OSHA, state/territorial, and local guidelines for preventing the spread of COVID-19 infection.
- Training for employees on the spread of the disease in the geographic areas in which they work.
- Screening calls when scheduling indoor construction work to assess potential exposures and circumstances in the work environment, before worker entry.

Below are sample questions for screening work assignments before sending a worker to perform construction activities in an *indoor* environment that may be occupied by a homeowner, customer, worker, or another occupant. Preface these questions with an explanation that they are being asked to protect workers and minimize the spread of COVID-19.

Screening Questions	Recommended Action
1. Is the construction work at an occupied work site essential, urgent, or emergency work?	If “yes,” proceed with a hazard assessment to determine how best to proceed while minimizing exposure for the worker.
2. Are there any individuals in the occupied site under quarantine or isolation due to a confirmed case of COVID-19?	Closely follow recommended infection prevention measures in the sections on Engineering Controls , Administrative Controls , Safe Work Practices , and PPE .
3. If the work is determined to be essential, urgent or emergency work, are there any individuals or contractors in the occupied site suffering flu-like symptoms to which your employees may be exposed?	Closely follow recommended infection prevention measures in the sections on Engineering Controls , Administrative Controls , Safe Work Practices , and PPE .

Train construction workers on:

- The signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and an explanation of how the disease is potentially spread, including the fact that infected people can spread the virus even if they do not have symptoms.
- All policies and procedures that are applicable to the employee's duties as they relate to potential exposures to SARS-CoV-2. It is helpful to provide employees with a written copy of those standard operating procedures.
- Information on appropriate social distancing and hygiene practices, including:
 - Avoiding physical contact with others and maintaining a distance of at least 6 feet from customers and other individuals, whenever possible, including inside work trailers.
 - Appropriate cleaning practices (i.e., washing hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or, if soap and water are not immediately available, using alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol and rubbing hands until they are dry; sanitizing all surfaces workers will touch).
 - The proper way to cover coughs and sneezes following CDC recommendations (i.e., sneezing or coughing into a tissue or into the upper sleeve).

- Alternatives to shaking hands upon entry, and the importance of workers not touching their own faces (mouth, nose, eyes).
- The benefits of driving to work sites or parking areas individually, when possible, without passengers or carpools.
- The types, proper use, limitations, location, handling, decontamination, removal, and disposal of any PPE being used.
- The importance of staying home if they are sick.
- Wearing masks over their noses and mouths to prevent them from spreading the virus.
- The need to continue using other normal control measures, including PPE, necessary to protect workers from other job hazards associated with construction activities.
- Using Environmental Protection Agency-approved cleaning chemicals from List N or that have label claims against the coronavirus for cleaning frequently touched surfaces like tools, handles, and machines.
- The need to report any safety and health concerns.

Implement standard operating procedures and employee training to ensure that, **before entry into home environments or areas where construction is ongoing in occupied buildings**, workers:

- Request that any individuals under quarantine or isolation who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 or are experiencing signs and/or symptoms of COVID-19 remain physically separated from the worker (e.g., in a different room, on a different level of the home or building, or outside if weather and applicable emergency orders permit) and communicate remotely with the worker (e.g., by cell phone, using internet-based payment systems and electronic signatures to confirm that work was completed).
- Ask individuals in the workplace to wear a cloth or other face covering, if available, and to cover coughs and sneezes.
- Request that shared spaces in the construction area have good air flow, such as by turning on an air conditioner or opening windows, weather permitting, consistent with [CDC recommended precautions for people in households](#).

Cloth Face Coverings in Construction

CDC recommends wearing cloth face coverings as a protective measure in addition to social distancing (i.e., staying at least 6 feet away from others). Cloth face coverings may be especially important when social distancing is not possible or feasible based on working conditions. A cloth face covering may reduce the amount of large respiratory droplets that a person spreads when talking, sneezing, or coughing. Cloth face coverings may prevent people who do not know they have the virus that causes COVID-19 from spreading it to others. Cloth face coverings are intended to protect other people—not the wearer.

Cloth face coverings are not PPE. They are not appropriate substitutes for PPE such as respirators (like N95 respirators) or medical facemasks (like surgical masks) in workplaces where respirators or facemasks are recommended or required to protect the wearer.

While wearing cloth face coverings is a public health measure intended to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in communities, it may not be practical for workers to wear a single cloth face covering for the full duration of a work shift (e.g., eight or more hours) on a construction site if they become wet, soiled, or otherwise visibly contaminated during the work shift. If cloth face coverings are worn on construction sites, employers should provide readily available clean cloth face coverings (or disposable facemask options) for workers to use when the coverings become wet, soiled, or otherwise visibly contaminated.

Employers who determine that cloth face coverings should be worn at a construction site, including to comply with state or local requirements for their use, should ensure the cloth face coverings:

- Fit over the nose and mouth and fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face;
- Are secured with ties or ear loops;
- Include multiple layers of fabric;
- Allow for breathing without restriction;

- Can be laundered using the warmest appropriate water setting and machine dried daily after the shift, without damage or change to shape (a clean cloth face covering should be used each day);
- Are not used if they become wet or contaminated;
- Are replaced with clean replacements, provided by employer, as needed;
- Are handled as little as possible to prevent transferring infectious materials to the cloth; and
- Are not worn with or instead of **respiratory protection** when respirators are needed.

Safe Work Practices

- To the extent possible, screen all visitors on all construction sites in advance of their arrival on the job site for signs and symptoms of COVID-19.
- Adopt staggered work schedules, e.g., provide alternating workdays or extra shifts, to reduce the total number of employees on a job site at any given time and to ensure physical distancing.
- Identify choke points where workers are forced to stand together, such as hallways, hoists and elevators, ingress and egress points, break areas, and buses, and implement policies to maintain social distancing.
- In elevators and personnel hoists, ensure 6 feet distance between passengers in all directions and equip operators with appropriate respiratory protection and other necessary PPE.
- Coordinate site deliveries in line with the employer's minimal contact and cleaning protocols. Delivery personnel should remain in their vehicles if at all possible.
- Institute a rigorous housekeeping program to reduce dust levels on the job site.
- Keep in-person meetings (including toolbox talks and safety meetings) as short as possible, limit the number of workers in attendance, and use social distancing practices.
- Ensure clean toilet and handwashing facilities. Clean and disinfect portable job site toilets regularly. Fill hand sanitizer dispensers regularly. Disinfect frequently touched items (i.e., door pulls and toilet seats) regularly.

Personal Protective Equipment

Most construction workers are unlikely to need PPE beyond what they use to protect themselves during routine job tasks. Such PPE may include a hard hat, gloves, safety glasses, and a face mask. However, under OSHA's PPE standards for construction (29 CFR 1926 Subpart E), employers must consider whether their hazard and risk assessments, including construction site job hazard analyses, indicate a need for the use of more protective PPE.

Make every effort to protect workers through measures other than PPE. When workers need PPE, employers must comply with OSHA's standards for PPE in construction (**29 CFR 1926 Subpart E**).

When other control measures are not sufficient to protect workers, equip those who must enter potentially hazardous homes or occupied work sites with adequate supplies of appropriate PPE. PPE ensembles may include gloves, eye protection, and/or face shields.

In limited circumstances, including situations involving close contact (i.e., within 6 feet) with someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19, respiratory protection may be needed and must be provided by the employer in accordance with the criteria below:

- When respiratory hazards exist, employers must comply with OSHA's Respiratory Protection standard (**29 CFR 1910.134**). OSHA is providing enforcement flexibility under the standard, see **enforcement memoranda**.
- When disposable respirators are used, employers must comply with the requirements of OSHA's Respiratory Protection standard (**29 CFR 1910.134**), including the requirement to train workers to don respirators before entry and to remove and properly dispose of respirators upon exit.



How contractors are required to meet new sick and family leave requirements under coronavirus law

(contributed from Equipment World Magazine)



Though contractors with fewer than 500 employees must provide paid sick and family leave for employees affected by the [coronavirus](#) – unless they have fewer than 50 employees and receive an exemption – the stimulus relief package signed March 27 provides some cash-flow help for businesses having to meet this requirement.

The amount contractors would have to pay in sick leave would be reimbursed through payroll tax credits. Associated General Contractors and others had been concerned that the tax-credit reimbursement, which could take up to 12 weeks, would lead to a cash-flow problem for some businesses.

The latest, \$2 trillion stimulus law signed March 27 addresses some of those concerns.

First, the Treasury Department can advance tax credits to employers in anticipation of employees taking paid leave. The law would also waive penalties on employers for failing to make deposits for payroll taxes in anticipation of the paid leave, AGC says.

The new law also allows employers and the self-employed to defer the employer share of the Social Security tax they would have to pay for their employees. The first half of the deferred payments would be due December 31, 2021, and the second half would be due December 31, 2022.

Another provision of the new law resurrects a program that contractors often used during the Great Recession, according to AGC. Contractors who suffer net operating losses can “carry back” those losses against taxes paid in the five previous years. The AGC provides the following example:

A company made \$10,000 in profits every year for five years. Then it faces a one-year \$50,000 loss. It could count the \$50,000 loss against the previous five years' \$50,000 gains and get refunded for the taxes it paid. A company can do this for net operating losses not only in tax year 2020 but also in tax years 2018 and 2019.

AGC also reports that the law increases the amount of interest expenses a business can deduct from 30 percent to 50 percent of its earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization (EBITDA). ■

Contractors must provide paid sick, family leave under coronavirus

(A RANDALL REILLY PUBLICATION REPRINT)



A coronavirus response bill signed into law March 18 by President Trump requires all employers with fewer than 500 workers to provide paid sick leave and family care leave.

Employers with fewer than 50 workers can file for a hardship exemption with the U.S. Department of Labor.

The paid-leave provisions of the law take effect April 1 and expire December 31.

The law requires up to 80 hours of paid sick leave for employees who have COVID-19 or are seeking preventive care for the illness.

For contractors and other employers, that will mean providing the paid leave at regular pay rates for not only full-time employees but part-time employees as well. Part-time workers are eligible for leave pay equal to their normal weekly hours.

The law also covers employees who are caring for a relative with the virus or to take care of children whose school or daycare has been closed because of the pandemic. Those caring for a relative are to be paid at two-thirds their regular rate for up to 10 days. Employees caring for children whose day care or school has closed can claim up to 12 weeks of family leave at two-thirds pay.

Employers who have to cover the paid sick leave and family leave time will be eligible for a payroll tax credit to reimburse them. Reimbursement will be up to \$511 a day for sick leave and \$200 a day for family leave.

Some groups, such as the Association General Contractors and the American Road & Transportation Builders Association, opposed the tax-credit reimbursement aspect of the legislation as being too much of a burden for small construction companies, because there would be a lag of several months before they could be reimbursed.

Instead, they proposed the paid time off be covered by federal employment-related programs or some other means that would prevent companies from facing cash-flow crunches.

The ARTBA hopes a third round of coronavirus emergency legislation being taken up in the Senate will address that concern. Of note for contractors, that legislation is expected to include \$300 billion for a new small-business loan program with 100 percent loan guarantees from the federal government, according to ARTBA.

The chart below from AGC breaks down the paid sick leave and family leave provisions:

Phase 2: Families First Coronavirus Response Act, Paid Sick Leave



	Covered Employers	Duration of Leave	Qualifying Reasons for Leave	Required Wage Replacement	Applicability of: Division G – Tax Credits for Paid Sick and Paid Family and Medical Leave
Division E – Emergency Paid Sick Leave Effective 15 days after enactment. Expires 12/31/2020	<u>Private sector employers with fewer than 500 employees.</u> Public sector employers with 1 or more employees. Good cause exemption for employers with fewer than 50 employees. Applies to reason #5 only. (DOL Rule)	<u>Employer must provide 2 weeks</u> of paid sick leave for full-time covered employees. Special rule for part-time employees.	1. Employee is subject to a Federal, state or local quarantine related to COVID-19. 2. Employee has been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine. 3. Employee is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 and seeking a medical diagnosis. 4. Employee is caring for an individual who is subject to quarantine pursuant to 1 and 2. 5. To care for a child or children whose school or care provider is unavailable due to COVID-19. 6. Employee is experiencing a similar condition as specified by HHS, DOL or Treasury.	<u>Reasons #1-3:</u> Employee's regular rate of pay. Capped at \$511/day and \$5,110 total. <u>Reasons #4-6:</u> 2/3 of employee's regular rate of pay. Capped at \$200/day and \$2,000 total. Special rule for part-time employees.	Private sector employers with fewer than 500 employees may obtain a credit for wage replacement: <u>Employers receive 100% payroll tax credit (refundable as needed)</u> for required paid sick leave wages plus certain health care expenses of the employer. Special rule for self-employed.

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How to safely buy, handle and store DEF this summer

As warm weather upon us, it is important for drivers to consider proper management of the diesel exhaust fluid (DEF) used in current diesel-powered trucks.

DEF, which is made from a mixture of technically pure and purified water, must be handled and stored properly to preserve its quality. Handling and storing DEF in warm weather requires special care to protect it from the impact of high temperatures that can decrease its useful life.

And now as we deal with the impacts of the pandemic, there is a need for added safety in public places and dispensing DEF at service stations will require extra care. The American Petroleum Institute (API) has developed the following tips to aid the DEF buying and handling process:

Purchasing DEF



On the road, one of the main challenges for drivers is knowing the actual brand of DEF they are being sold. While regulations in many states require identifying the manufacturer and brand on receipts, some locations do not. API recommends purchasing DEF that is clearly identified at the fill-up location.

If you buy DEF in containers, always look for the expiration date on the bottle. Because it has a limited shelf life, be sure to use DEF before this date. If an expiration date is not present, look at the traceability code for a date. This date is usually equivalent to the packaging date. As a last resort, ask for the most recently delivered DEF products. Storage conditions also have an impact on its quality. DEF can be expected to have a minimum shelf life of 12 months or even longer in optimum conditions.

Dispensing

While many gas station and truck stop owners around the country have taken steps to increase the cleaning frequency of the high-touch points, there are additional recommended practices to help everyone protect themselves at the pump. Consider the following when dispensing DEF or fuel:

- Follow the CDC's recommendations to clean your hands often, practice social distancing and wear face coverings.
- Consider using gloves or paper towels while touching surfaces.
- Carry hand sanitizer or sanitizing wipes with you and use them both before and after fueling.



urea
to

DEF storage in a vehicle

Check the label on the bottle for recommended storage temperatures and look for the API certification mark as well. API recommends that you don't store DEF for long in a truck, especially if the storage area in the vehicle is routinely hotter than the recommended storage temperatures displayed on the label. DEF stored at 86 degrees and above will only last about six months. Exposure to direct sunlight may also decrease the life of DEF.

In the shop

API has found that the biggest misconception by fleet managers is the belief that if the urea concentration of their DEF is on spec, then the DEF meets the required quality. While it is true that the concentration is very important, there are many other important quality characteristics built into the ISO 22241 specification in regard to DEF.

Fleet managers responsible for procuring DEF should confirm that their suppliers are providing DEF that meets the ISO quality standard. One way to do this is to ensure that their supplier is providing a Certificate of Analysis (or Quality) with every shipment that addresses all of the quality characteristics that the specification requires.

Purchasing API-licensed DEF is the best way to be sure your DEF meets the rigorous requirements of the specification, because these products are not only tested before they are released to the marketplace, but they are also subject to testing in API's Aftermarket Audit Program. Fleets and drivers can always check to see if the DEF they are buying is licensed by visiting API's real-time directory of licensees on the [API website](#).

For shops, the handling, storage and dispensing of DEF is an important way to ensure off-spec DEF doesn't get used. Temperature during transport or at the point of storage or sale can harm the shelf life of DEF sold in containers. Make sure the stock is rotated to use the oldest product first.

Proper storage temperatures in a shop is also vital. Storing in temperatures above 86 degrees Fahrenheit will limit the shelf life of the DEF over time. Some additional things to consider in storing and handing DEF include the following:

- Bulk storage tanks should be dedicated for DEF. Don't switch products in the bulk tank without thoroughly rinsing the tank with distilled or de-ionized water or on-spec DEF.
- A closed loop system for transferring DEF from a drum or bulk tank is recommended so contaminants don't get into the DEF. This is particularly important in a shop or construction site that has dust or dirt in the air.
- Use dedicated equipment for dispensing DEF. Don't use funnels, pitchers, hoses, etc. that are used for other fluids when putting DEF in a tank.
- Anything used for dispensing DEF should be cleaned with distilled or de-ionized water and followed by a DEF rinse. Don't use tap water for cleaning.

For shops and drivers, it's important to know what you are putting into your DEF tank. The quality of the DEF going into your vehicle is as important as the quality of the engine oils or fuels used in your vehicles. Use of API-licensed DEF will ensure that it meets the high standards required by engine and vehicle manufacturers.

Editor's note: The author, Jeffrey Harmening, is with the American Petroleum Institute.



NEWS AROUND PENNSYLVANIA LICA--please read info below

PALICA SCHOLARSHIP UPDATED INFO

The Board of Directors voted to increase the scholarship amount for this year to \$1,000.00, up from \$750.00, and that will go to the two applicants that are chosen from the committee, based on the submissions received.

The winners of the scholarships will be announced in the Fall Newsletter – they were going to be announced at the summer picnic but that was cancelled so they will be notified by mail. We hope to be able to award them in person next year.



PALICA IS PARTNERING WITH THE MERCER COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT TO PUT ON OUR SUMMER FIELD DAYS **TENTATIVELY RESCHEDULED FOR**

SEPTEMBER) at the Munnell Run Farm in Mercer, PA.

There will be displays of equipment, some projects being worked on by contractors, some educational events the Conservation District will put on and much more. As details come together, we will make sure they're on our website and watch your email as well! The Summer newsletter will have full details so make plans to attend!! Our first field day, two summers ago, was a great success and we're looking forward to taking a different spin on this event.



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Protect yourself

Using personal protective equipment can save you from a variety of injuries

The accident: A worker was installing pipe for a newly laid building foundation in a shallow trench while a fellow crew member used a skid steer to back-fill with sand. The dirt at the edge of the trench was wet, causing the machine to shift and then tip forward striking the worker's head. He was pronounced dead at the hospital from head trauma injury.

The bottom line: The worker was employed by a subcontractor who had signed a written contract with the general contractor that stipulated the sub would comply with all OSHA regs and specified that all workers wear hard hats. However, neither the victim nor the operator was wearing a hard hat. No representative of the GC was on site during the accident.

Although it is impossible to determine if personal protective equipment – including hard hats, safety vests and safety glasses – would have changed the outcome of this accident, hard hats have been shown to reduce the severity of injuries in a range of circumstances. Your employer will have a written policy on the use of PPE, and you should receive training on what items to use as part of your regular safety training program. Your employer is also required to have this equipment available for you, but it is your responsibility to use it properly and to understand the limit of the protection such equipment provides.

Head injuries – Using a hard hat will protect you from impact, penetration and some electrical injuries. If you have long hair, ensure it is covered and out of the way.

Foot/leg injuries – Foot guards and safety shoes will protect you from hazards such as sharp objects and hot surfaces, as well as helping you to maintain balance on wet surfaces.



Illustration by Don Lomax

Eye/face injuries – Goggles, helmets and shields will protect you from flying chips or fragments and from sparks, as well as keeping dust and dirt out of your eyes.

Respiratory injuries – When working in environments contaminated with vapors, fumes or gases, use a NIOSH-approved respirator. Make sure the unit fits properly and you have been trained on respirator use prior to work.

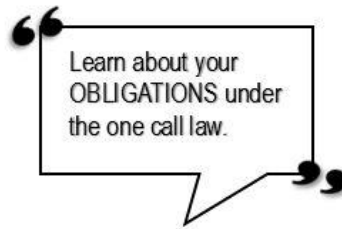
Hearing loss – Prolonged exposure to high noise levels can cause irreversible damage. Use earplugs made of a material that self-forms to the ear, such as foam, waxed cotton or fiberglass wool. Clean them regularly or replace with new earplugs.

Remember, PPE will not save you from every accident. Being aware of the hazards your current job presents and using a common sense approach is your best way to avoid injury. **EW**

Information for this Safety Watch was compiled from an accident report, the Center for Disease Control's NIOSH Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation Program and OSHA's

guideline on personal protective equipment. It is meant for general information only.

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PPE problems

When used incorrectly, personal protective equipment can create a hazard

The accident:

A backhoe operator jumped off his machine to assist another crewmember with a load of materials. As he jumped from the backhoe, the strap of his fall protection harness became entangled on the control levers, moving the loader bucket. The bucket moved, crushing another worker between the bucket and a concrete building. The worker was transported to a local hospital where he was pronounced dead.

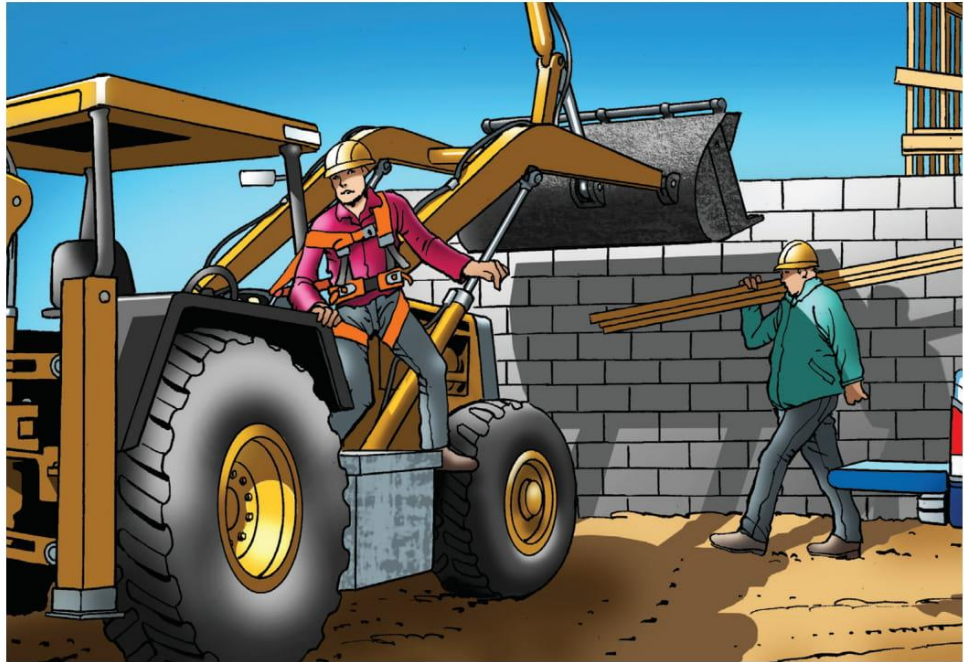


Illustration by Don Lomax

The bottom line: A post-accident investigation determined the operator was wearing a fall protection harness while inside the backhoe because company policy dictated it. The backhoe operator also did not exit the machine in a safe manner. The investigation further determined that, while a safety meeting was conducted on the morning of the accident, the topic was not aligned with the work the crews would be performing that day.

Using PPE safely

In this accident, an inappropriate use of personal protective equipment was more dangerous than using no PPE at all. Employers should not only provide your PPE,

they should also train you in how to use it correctly. Here are some tips to prevent a similar accident from occurring.

Tighten up – Loose or dangling clothing or items are a safety hazard than can be easily avoided. When you wear PPE such as a fall protection harness, make sure you have it tightened well enough so that no straps are hanging loose. Additionally, avoid loose-fitting clothing while operating equipment, as it can get caught in the machine and cause an injury.

Remember the basics – If the operator in the accident had exited the machine using the three-point contact system recommended, he would have been

facing the machine, which would have given him the opportunity to see the loose strap catch the lever before it pulled taut and moved the bucket. Always turn off the machine, then exit maintaining a three-point contact with steps and handrails, and never jump from a piece of equipment.

Get a refresher – If you discover your morning toolbox talk isn't on the scope of work you'll be doing that day, ask your crew leader to go over specifics related to the job at hand, particularly with respect to any hazards you may encounter. Take a walk around the area you'll be working in to familiarize yourself with any potential problems that may arise.

Information for this Safety Watch is from an accident report and from the Center for Disease Control's NIOSH Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation Program. It is meant for general information only.



Date of safety talk: _____ Leader: _____
 Attending: _____

If kids raised on the jobsite are any indication, more industry exposure will solve construction's worker shortage

A PUBLICATION OF RANDALL REILLY

I have a highly impractical suggestion to combat our [construction workforce](#) shortage: adopt.

This thought has recently been underscored by conversations I've had with five contractors, all under 30. Two of them are now partially out on their own, determined to grow companies that at the same time remain small. Three others are in positions of responsibility, working their way up from grunt to foreman to estimators and division leaders.

They all have one thing in common: they have been or still are part of a family construction business. Mostly it's father to son, but in one instance, it's uncle to nephew.



What is it about a family construction business that draws these young people in? As many contractors know, it's not always a given that the next generation will fall in line. Many older contractors acknowledge to me that they're mighty lucky when a son or daughter or another family member raises their hand.

If it's just a gene trait that's handed down, then my adoption suggestion is for naught. But in this particular heredity-versus-environment argument, environment wins. Think about what's learned just by being around parents or relatives who are in the midst of creating a thriving construction firm: how your word is your bond, how to muscle through a tough job, how to treat the people who are essential to your family's continued success.

Not to mention the cool toys. "I've been running machines my whole life and started working when I was 9," a 27-year-old told me. "I was making \$3 an hour doing odd jobs after school and that was a lot of money to a 9-year-old."

"I've been working outside with [equipment](#) my whole life," says a 28-year-old, who first had a stint with another company before coming back into his parents' firm. That sales job gave him great preparation for stepping back in. "I've always been close with my family and this gave me the opportunity to continue in sales," he says. "I like the smaller feel of the company and the future is bright."

"I just haven't done anything else that I enjoy as much," adds his 26-year-old brother. And this from yet another young gun: "I guess I was just born into it. I would be bored with doing the same thing every day."

Of course, these are young men who have the opportunity to take over when the present leadership calls it quits. And one of them is forging his own path, getting into site development while his parents remain in landscaping.

Still, out of all of the choices a young person has these days, they chose construction. They chose to forgo an 8-to-5 job and ride the market cycles that make this an uncertain business. They were raised in it, and they're staying. Now if we could just raise a few more...



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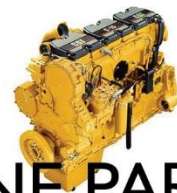


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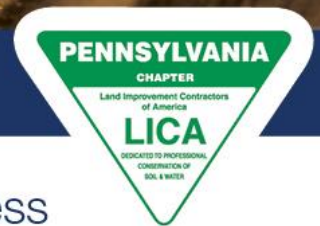
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