

## July Is UV Safety Month: The Best Ways To Protect Yourself From Skin Cancer

Lecia Bushak, Health Living, July 1, 2014



Getting severely sunburned is a risk factor for skin cancer.

Sunburns often occur when we're not paying attention. We don't notice them until the sun goes down and we're staring at a giant lobster in the bathroom mirror. Though sunburns are remarkably common during the summer they can also be dangerous. They're a huge risk factor for skin cancer.

July is UV Safety Month. It's time to be aware of the sun's good — and bad — qualities. Remembering to wear sunscreen is part of the equation that will help lower your risk of developing melanoma, a form of skin cancer.

According to the Department of Health & Human Services (HHS), "[t]he need to protect your skin from the sun has become very clear over the years, supported by several studies linking overexposure to the sun with skin cancer." But it's not only the sun that can be harmful — indoor tanning "sunlamps" are responsible for "many other complications besides skin cancer — such as eye problems, a weakened immune system, age spots, wrinkles, and leathery skin."

When out and about on a steaming hot day, be sure to avoid getting severely sunburnt. Sunburns can significantly increase your chance of skin cancer — particularly among children or people with pale or sensitive skin. In order to prevent sunburn, wear sunscreen, proper clothes, hats, and sunglasses, and always aim for the shade during the sun's peak hours between 10am and 4pm. The sun's damaging effects can also be compounded by reflective surfaces like sand, water, snow, and even windows — so be careful to avoid these things. The Food and Drug Administration also suggests using broad-spectrum sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) value of 15 or more.



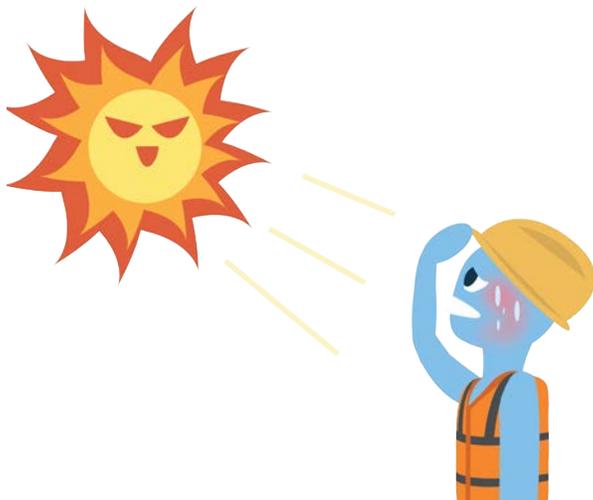
It's always **SAFETY FIRST**.

Austin employees have worked 1,594,174 hours without a Lost Time Accident through 6/2017.

Skin cancer is the most common type of cancer, but it's also the most successfully treated if it's found early. Over time, doctors have developed a list called the ABCDE's to help people identify any abnormal signs of melanoma. Be aware that a mole or part of your skin may change color or shape, and this might be a sign of cancer. To help you determine whether a mole is a warning sign, keep the ABCDE's in mind:

- A- Asymmetry:** One side looks different than the other.
- B- Border changes:** An irregular and uneven border.
- C- Color changes:** Having a variety of different colors.
- D- Diameter:** It's bigger than a pencil eraser.
- E- Evolving:** Any change in size, shape, color, or elevation.

It's hard to say what has made skin cancer prevalence increase in recent years. People aren't necessarily getting more sun: in fact, vitamin D deficiencies have increased significantly as well, meaning people actually aren't getting enough sunlight. You don't have to choose to live with or without the sun. Spending 10 to 15 minutes a day in the sun is enough to balance your Vitamin D levels, and not enough to get you severely sunburnt. Keep in mind that a moderate amount of time spent in the sun can be good for you, but don't let your sun exposure get out of hand. Keep the sunscreen in hand!



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**Pictured:** Gary Everett (top) and Bill O'Grady (bottom) received their safety certificates for successfully completing the Crystalline Silica for Construction and Confined Space in Construction training. **Congratulations!**

# This Email From Elon Musk to Tesla Employees Is a Master Class in Emotional Intelligence

Justin Bariso, MENU Inc, June 22, 2017

**When the going gets tough, true leaders take action.**

Tesla, the electric-automobile manufacturer led by famed CEO Elon Musk, has struggled greatly with safety over the past few years. California nonprofit Worksafe, a worker safety advocacy group, recently made headlines when it reported that the injury rate at Tesla's Fremont, California, plant was more than 30 percent higher than the industry average in 2014 and 2015.

Musk insists, however, that safety is the number one priority at Tesla. He claims that recent actions, like the company's hiring thousands of employees to create a third shift and reduce excess overtime, have made a major impact in lowering the injury rate.

A recent email Musk sent to employees indicates just how seriously he's taking the issue. Here's part of the email, as reported by news site Electrek:

*"No words can express how much I care about your safety and wellbeing. It breaks my heart when someone is injured building cars and trying their best to make Tesla successful.*

*Going forward, I've asked that every injury be reported directly to me, without exception. I'm meeting with the safety team every week and would like to meet every injured person as soon as they are well, so that I can understand from them exactly what we need to do to make it better. I will then go down to the production line and perform the same task that they perform."*

*This is what all managers at Tesla should do as a matter of course. At Tesla, we lead from the front line, not from*



Elon Musk. CREDIT: Getty Images

*some safe and comfortable ivory tower. Managers must always put their team's safety above their own.*

If Musk proves true to his word, it will be a remarkable example of a company leader who's willing to do what it takes to affect change — and show that he isn't afraid to get down in the trenches.

## **What you can learn from Musk's email.**

Emotional intelligence, the ability to make emotions work for you instead of against you, is an essential quality of effective leaders.

While Musk's opening words will prove touching to some, it's his promise to take action that is most powerful. To personally meet every injured employee and actually learn how to perform the task that caused that person's injury is remarkable for the CEO of any company.

Truly effective leaders know that to inspire their followers, they must practice what they preach and set the example. They aren't afraid to delegate, but they also know when they need to take matters into their own hands. When a serious problem

lingers, they increase their involvement and work tirelessly to make things better. Your people also need to know that you've got their back. Are you all talk? Or are you willing to put yourself out there for them?

Musk's offer is one of the best ways to do this. When a manager takes the time to work alongside a frustrated team member, with a goal of better understanding that person's perspective, good things happen. This exercise, although time-consuming, builds empathy and rapport, and can prove extremely motivating.

Unfortunately, few managers are willing to make that type of investment.

So, ask yourself today:

- What is my team's biggest challenge or pain point?
- What can I do to make things better?

If you can answer those two questions — and follow through — it won't matter what your job title is.

Your colleagues will be ready to follow.

# 58 Percent of Construction Workers Say Safety Takes a Backseat to Productivity

Sandy Smith, EHS Today, May 18, 2017



A National Safety Council survey found 58 percent of Americans working in construction — the industry that sees the most workplace fatalities each year — feel that safety takes a backseat to productivity and completing job tasks. What's more, 51 percent say management does only the minimum required by law to keep employees safe, and 47 percent say employees are afraid to report safety issues.

By contrast, 36 percent of the 2,000 full-time and part-time employees in the 14 industries surveyed by NSC feel their employers prioritize productivity over safety.

"Sadly, the results of our survey indicate that many workers still worry about whether they will make it home safely tonight," said Deborah A.P. Hersman, president and CEO of the National Safety Council. "We call on all employers to

renew their commitment to keep everyone safe, on every job, each and every day."

A total of 4,836 people died in workplace incidents in 2015, and 937 of those killed were construction workers. Falls are the second leading cause of death in the workplace, and more than half of fall-related deaths each year occur in the construction industry.

Gauging Americans' perceptions toward their safety at work may help provide further insight into workplace deaths. Other key findings from workers across all industries include:

- 32% feel management ignores an employee's safety performance when determining promotions.
- 62% say everyone is involved in solving job safety issues.

- 63% of employees feel they work in areas or at stations that are ergonomically correct.
- 48% of employees believe safety meetings are held less often than they should be.
- 47% believe performance standards are higher for job tasks than for safety. This percentage is higher among construction industry workers, where 67 percent feel this way.
- 33% of employees working in transportation and warehousing do not agree that management has a written policy that expresses their attitude about employee safety.

The survey is based on the council's Employee Perception Surveys.

## Crane Flips While Lifting Large Section of Viaduct

*Shane Hedmond, CONSTRUCTION JUNKIE, May 23, 2017*

Cranes collapse for a variety of reasons. Some are overloaded, some catch on fire, and others succumb to high wind loads. Regardless of the reason, a falling crane can cause tons of damage and have the potential to kill on-site workers and pedestrians walking near the job site.

A recent crawler crane collapse in Northern Italy could have been much worse, as the crane, carrying a large section of viaduct, crashed to the ground. Workers on both sides of the crane began to run as the crane began to tip. According to Vertikal, no injuries were reported. That includes the operator, who they report was able to jump from the crane before it collapsed.



## Company cited for exposing workers to silica and other hazards at S.C. marine terminal

*OSHA QuickTake — June 1, 2017 · Volume 16, Issue 11*

OSHA cited Cape Romain Contractors Inc. after discovering multiple safety and health violations during a scheduled inspection of a marine terminal construction site in Mount Pleasant, S.C. Inspectors found that workers faced overexposures to silica and noise due to a lack of respiratory protection and hearing conservation programs, as well as engineering and administrative controls. Cape Romain was also cited for crane, electrical and machine guarding hazards. Proposed penalties total \$81,489.



# Opinion: The Real Top Cause of Incidents

Dave Rebbitt, EHS OutLoud Blog, June 8, 2017



I often see posts, blogs and articles on the common causes of incidents or the top three, or top ten, causes of incidents. Many of these discussions revolve around unsafe acts, or errors, by workers. The unfortunate truth is far too many believe these are actual causes.

Other blogs, articles or discussions revolve around underlying causes or “root” causes. Root cause is a term that predates modern safety and has no specific meaning within the safety world. Since the safety lexicon lacks any real specificity in terms, these discussions often go off the rails as many demonstrate they do not even understand the principle of multiple causation or underlying causes in company systems or processes.

These two examples could summarize most of the discussions I see in online forums regarding safety incidents and investigations. All of these diverge into other areas as people argue over theories and their validity. As human beings, we feel the need to categorize things

— common causes or top three — but really never use specific language. That is something that continues to get us into trouble.

Now, I know you are reading this looking for subheads to explain the most common cause and could be secretly wondering if it really is unsafe employees. Well, let’s get past that — is just isn’t. It is not “unsafe acts” or “worker error.” You can even leave out “human factors.” It is not people, and it never has been.

To promote understanding, we humans need categories, and we often want to present the clearest picture we can. Incidents are complex because of randomness. There are so many variables that we cannot ever hope to control them all — that includes people. We look at people as the weakest part of a system, as they are responsible for many random factors that reasonably cannot be controlled. Many programs strive to control people’s perception and action. They see the obvious problem as people’s

behavior must be controlled. Strangely simultaneously people are what gives a system its resilience and strength.

There is an incident cause that absolutely is in my top three. It is one I never see mentioned. It is easy to understand why. It is not possible to know something unless you actively seek that knowledge. Ignorance, not only is bliss, but it also is instantaneous. We often only understand that which we seek to understand. These things confirm our place in the world and reinforce our view of things. Confirmation bias is very common. We see what we expect to see. Our amazing brain fills in the gaps with assumptions based on our experience.

So here it is — a top cause of incidents: poor investigations — poor investigative processes, techniques and investigators. I know that is three things, but they group together nicely. Now some are thinking they do a good investigation because they use some sort of tool. I would beg to differ. A tool only is as good as the person

wielding it. Being given a paintbrush does not mean you can replicate Michelangelo or Vermeer.

A poorly investigated incident means that an opportunity has been lost — an opportunity to fix the underlying issues and reduce the likelihood of a recurrence or similar incident. Interestingly, it is also an opportunity to demonstrate value. Safety people often conduct, or lead, most investigations. Yet, from my experience, the quality could be better.

Investigators usually fall into three categories: supervisors, safety people, and those assigned. Supervisors investigating themselves are not likely to find that the employee was not properly supervised or improperly trained on the job. Those assigned may include supervisors or may just be a manager or someone else. They usually lack training (like most supervisors) and focus on filling out the report. Most of the time, there is a real demand for a report to be done quickly.

Besides, this stuff is so easy. Once we gather a few facts, we automatically know what probably happened. Our amazing brain fills in the rest and assumptions become facts; the report almost writes itself. That is the focus after all right? Complete a multipage report to submit to someone (the author having no idea what happens to it after that). Job done.

Then there are the safety people. They may, or may not, have training. They almost certainly have some experience, and this makes them much more able than the other two groups to fill in the gaps and find a “story” (hypothesis) that matches the actual facts available. Could it be that some safety people are worse at investigations than someone untrained?

Well, it could be. If you believe in Heinrich

(88 percent of all incidents are caused by unsafe acts), behavior-based safety (90 percent of all incidents are caused by unsafe behaviors) or pyramids that tell the future (pyramid ratios, various authors), then you are probably not great at investigating incidents. There may just be some of the confirmation bias at work.

I get to see a lot of incident investigations most of them are not done well.

Some organizations do not have many incidents, so they get very little practice in investigations. Most still lack a good process for conducting, reviewing and analyzing incidents. When one occurs, they are unable to seize the golden opportunity to find and fix problems in their system.

The underlying cause of that may lie in a system that is focused on hazard rather than risk. Focused on compliance, rather than risk management. These sorts of systems tend to believe interesting things like “be careful” is a real control. If you check your hazard assessments and “situational awareness” is in the control column, chances are your incident investigations will do a great job of finding out that the employee involved lacked situational awareness. Such incident investigations contain actions like “remind the employee to be aware of surroundings” or “brief/rebrief employee on procedure and sign off.”

More sophisticated investigations may find that retraining is needed, since there was a “failure to follow procedure.” Retraining is a really popular one. Now a procedure is a real control (administrative), but isn't there a hierarchy? Is the problem that the employee did not get the training, the training is ineffective, or that the training is not relevant? More ineffective training is unlikely to solve any issues.

It is tough to rank your incidents by risk if you use a 3x3 risk matrix, as it lacks the specificity needed to really understand risk. 5x5 is the most common, because it is the most intuitive and gives almost three times the possibilities of a 3x3 matrix. It is true that how you manage risk and assess hazards will bias your incident reports in a positive or negative way.

In other cases, the pressure to produce a report makes the investigation cursory, since many do not differentiate between a report and an investigation. Reports are there to communicate to the organization and even external stakeholders the basic information about the incident. “We are investigating” ought to be an acceptable response to a query about substantive details. Differentiating between report and investigation is critical to success. Rushed by a deadline and carrying a good deal of confirmation bias, the result is a poor investigation completed on time. It is a missed opportunity to identify real gaps in company systems.

The truth here is that an investigation takes time, diligence and skill. Investigating is not really a natural process. Although we spend time training people, that only is simulation. The real thing is more complex. Tools and theories are available, but using them takes practice and a questioning attitude to override the natural confirmation bias. Practice is something we often do not get enough of — unless we are investigating near misses. Not every near miss is worth investigating, but it often takes a bit of time to even determine that.

The next time you have to investigate something, get out your report in the allotted timeframe and finish your investigation. In the end, you need to ask yourself if you have solved the system

or organization issue(s). Ask yourself whether you have seen past the immediate or proximate causes to something beyond focused on the involved employee(s).

Safety professionals can make a difference in the quality of investigation by helping others see what they would not normally see: to understand why something happened, rather than simply what and how. It is very easy to do a quick investigation and file it away. Do not waste the opportunity presented by an incident investigation to peer into company systems and actually address gaps. A more critical approach and deeper understanding of causation can lead us to solve issues that are not obvious and show value to the employer.



**Remember!**  
*Better Safe than Sorry!*

### SAFETY REMINDER

In case of SERIOUS injury or accident on the project (i.e., accident requiring hospitalization, near fatalities, etc.) you must notify Austin's Regional Management and Safety Director, Charlie Engel, at 256-289-4807.

Also, do you have safety information that you want to share? Contact Charlie.

