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Learn From Near Accidents

When you're driving the speed limit down the highway and another car pulls out in front of you, it's necessary to hit the brakes or execute a quick maneuver to avoid an accident. Chances are you'll make a mental note to be more alert from that point on.

Close calls or near accidents on the job should also be considered lessons in safety. A near accident is an indication that something is wrong. It's a warning that a machine isn't operating correctly, materials aren't stacked properly, or someone has done something unsafe.

Warning Signs

If you notice a warning light on the dashboard of your vehicle, you know immediately not to ignore it. Unfortunately, unsafe actions on the job aren't always as easily detected.

Below are some typical accidents that could have been avoided if their "warnings" had not been ignored.

- A shop employee stumbles over a two-by-four lying on the ground, fracturing an ankle.
- An office worker slips on spilled water and grabs a metal file cabinet, which falls on him/her.
- A machine operator is injured when a hi-lo strikes the machine being operated.

The proper handling of near accidents could have prevented the real thing from happening in the cases mentioned above. The two-by-four and spill probably caused other employees to step aside to avoid slipping. Yet, nobody bothered to clean up the item or report it to a supervisor. And how many near misses did the hi-lo operator have with the machine? Chances are there were several. However, in all of these cases, nothing was done to correct the situation, resulting in an accident.

Keep Safety in Mind

Unfortunately, a near accident is often forgotten without any benefits resulting from the experience. For example, if you have wounded yourself at work in the past, you may have a scar – a visible reminder of the injury to tell you not to repeat the action that caused the wound. However, near-accidents are often dismissed as lucky breaks.

How can you turn a close call into a contribution to safety? Below are two ways that you may already be using.

- Be safety-minded; voice your concern over near-accidents.

Correct any dangerous situation and remove the hazard that caused the near-accident. If you can't handle it routinely, then report it to your supervisor.

Safety awareness is always important. It's a case of preparing yourself mentally to act in a safe manner and to recognize a close call as a warning. So, when a stack of books tips over or the handle on a tool snaps, pay attention to the warning and do something about it.

The above article was taken from the Connor Strong & Buckelew client portal, a client resource offered to the State of Delaware's Insurance Coverage Office.

First Aid Kit Contents

If you need to respond to a small accident, the first aid kit may be your first resource after calling for help.

Non-fatal injuries in the workplace cause about 11 lost workdays and $1,560 per year per worker, according to a 2020 survey published in Injury Prevention.

An adequately stocked first aid kit should contain the following:

- Gauze pads. Large size will be about eight by 10 inches. Smaller pads will be four by four inches.
- Adhesive bandages for small injuries.
- Triangular bandages.
- Wound cleaning agents, possibly a sealed pack of small moist wipes. These should be checked regularly to be sure they are still usable.
- Scissors.
- A blanket.
- Tweezers.
- Adhesive tape.
- Gloves, latex or latex-free. Vinyl or nitrile gloves protect those with latex allergies.
- Resuscitation equipment. A resuscitation bag, airway or pocket mask.
- Elastic wraps.
- Splint.
- Emergency directions.
- You might also find a break-open cold pack. If the emergency kit doesn't have one, consider adding it. This can be useful if someone sprains an ankle or incurs another soft tissue injury.

"All of our appliances are smart, except for the toaster."

FEBRUARY RIDDLES

1. In what month do people sleep the least?
2. What did the January calendar say to the February calendar?
3. Can you write down eight eights so that the total equals 1,000?
4. How do spell cow in thirteen letters?
5. Why is Europe like a frying pan?
6. Why are articokes the most loving vegetable?

ANSWERS ON PAGE 2

Safety Tips for Extreme Driving Conditions

The weather can be unpredictable and can create extremely hazardous conditions on the road. These extreme conditions make driving dangerous and require special safety precautions. Your safety is important to the State of Delaware, so whether you drive on the State of Delaware's time or simply during your commute, observe these safety tips when driving turns difficult.

Rain, Thunderstorms and Tornadoes

- Turn your headlights, wipers and defroster on to increase visibility.
- Drive in the tracks of the vehicle ahead of you and reduce your speed.
- Allow increased space between your vehicle and others, and leave extra time to stop.
- If you begin to hydroplane, hold the steering wheel straight and remove your foot from the gas pedal.
- If you are caught in a thunderstorm, pull off the road in an open area and away from trees (to avoid a lightning strike).
- If you are driving in a tornado, get out of your vehicle and find shelter. If there is not a building nearby, lie in a ditch and place your arms over your head.

Winter Weather

- Always remove ice and snow from your windows, hood and headlights before departing.
- Drive with extreme caution and at slow speeds. You will need 3 to 12 times the amount of stopping distance than you need without precipitation.
- If possible, avoid bridges and overpasses since they freeze first.
- Do not brake quickly as you may spin out of control.
- If you should get stuck, straighten your wheels and accelerate at a slow pace.

Fog

- Slow down before you reach a patch of fog in front of you.
- Use only your low beams or fog lights, and put on your defroster and windshield wipers to increase visibility.
- If the fog is extremely thick, roll down all of your windows to hear other vehicles around you.

QUOTATION OF THE MONTH

In real love, you want the other person's good.
In romantic love, you want the other person.
Margaret Anderson, American editor & publisher, 1886-1973

The above article was taken from the Connor Strong & Buckelew client portal, a client resource offered to the State of Delaware's Insurance Coverage Office.

IMPROVED HEADLIGHTS

Drive on an unlit road during the night and you are putting yourself in a unique danger zone.

About half of all fatal crashes in the U.S. occur in the dark and more than a quarter occur on unlit roads, according to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS).

That's why the institute adopted headlight ratings in 2016. Since then, automakers have responded to the goal of making good-functioning headlights standard equipment. In previous years, automakers offered superior headlights but usually as an option.

IIHS rates headlights on the distance their low beams and high beams illuminate on straight and curved roads, IIHS reports. On a straight road, safe low beams light up the right side of the road to at least 325 feet. Poor headlights shine 220 feet or less.

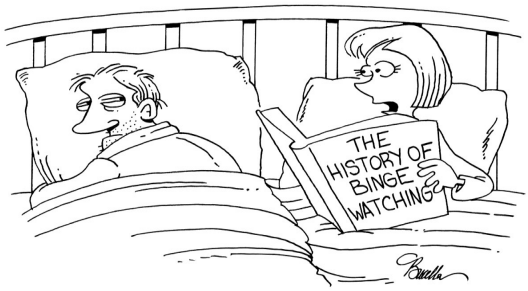
IIHS deducts safety points for headlights that produce glare so strong that it momentarily blinds oncoming drivers. Automakers get extra credit for high-beam assist. This is an automatic device that automatically switches between high and low beams. Research show that drivers don't use high beams enough.

In 2016, when the initiative was introduced, only two of the 95 IIHS tested models earned a good rating for headlights. For model year 2020, 85 out of the 185 models tested had good-rated headlights. In eight of the models, the safe headlights were standard. In 42 of the models, headlights were rated good to acceptable.

For 2021 at least 10 automakers improved their headlight offering by eliminating or modifying interior choices. Since 2020, vehicles have only been able to qualify for the highest Institute awards if they come equipped with good or acceptable rated headlights for all models.

FEBRUARY RIDDLES ANSWERS

1. February because it has the least number of days.
2. "I have more dates than you!"
3. 888 + 88 + 8 + 8 +8 = 1000
4. See O Double U
5. Because it has Greece at the bottom.
6. Because they have hearts.



"I can't put it down."