



Everyone Goes Home “SAFE”!

YOU CHOOSE

Just as you have the *choice* to wake up each day with a positive outlook, you can *choose* to do things safely, both at home, and at work. Unfortunately, some choices are made with considerable risk, and the activity results in a significant injury.

In the United States, the 14-year average for annual workplace fatalities is 6,030. However, only a small percentage of workplace events are fatal. Another 4,300,000 nonfatal workplace injuries and illnesses occur each year. Manufacturing, health care, and retail trade lead the industries contributing to these statistics.

These failures, and I don't know what else to call them, are the shared responsibility of governments, business owners and management, and workers. Each has to consciously choose safety.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) was created in 1970 to lead the charge for regulating and enforcing workplace safety and health for businesses engaged in interstate commerce. Since then, annual workplace fatalities are down by 60%, while annual occupational injury and illness rates have fallen by 40%.

Regulations create awareness that is otherwise diluted or missing, but the reduction in injuries is directly related to everyone choosing to take a safe approach with all activities. Strangely enough, the worker most likely to be harmed may choose to circumvent a safety system. Amazingly, more experienced workers, who should be completely aware of the danger of violating a safety rule, are entirely too often the ones to

think the safety system rules don't apply to them, at least not for a minute or two. They reach into a machine to get something. They decide not to follow the lockout/tagout procedure for a quick climb into a protected area. When newer employees witness those behaviors without subsequent harm, they've learned a false lesson about their own safety.

The decision to violate safety systems is a choice to be unsafe. Roofers working on pitched roofs are required to wear safety harnesses, yet many do not. Construction workers grinding or cutting stone are required to wear safety glasses, yet many do not.

While government, owners and management and workers all share responsibility for safety failures, it is the worker who gets hurt who pays the greatest price. Protect yourself. Choose safety. Every time. For others it may be a cost/benefit decision. For you, it's life, injury, illness or death.

(See photos below)

Did they choose to be safe?

You be the Judge.

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