DOTD requires Safety Meetings to be held weekly (for field gangs) and monthly (for administrative units). They must be properly documented on the DOTD Safety Meeting Record. Some suggestions are:

**Jan. 31 - Feb. 4 USING A PORTABLE FIRE EXTINGUISHER SAFELY**

*Use your judgment* — When you see smoke or a fire, use your own good judgment before you decide to extinguish the blaze. Ask yourself these questions:

- Is the fire limited in size and spread?
- Will you have an escape route if something goes wrong?
- Do you know the location of the nearest fire extinguisher?

*Communicate* — Once you have decided to extinguish the blaze, make every reasonable attempt to tell at least one other person what you are doing. This person should report your activity to someone else as soon as possible.

*Ready the extinguisher.*

**February 7 - 11 USING PORTABLE ELECTRIC-POWERED TOOLS SAFELY**

- Verify that the tool bears an electrical test label to indicate it successfully passed inspection and tests for electrical safety within the previous six months.
- Know the application, limitation, and potential hazards of the tool. Operate according to the manufacturer’s instructions.
- Ensure that the cord is the proper type. Electric-powered tools must either have a three-wire cord with ground or be double insulated. Never use a plug that has its ground prong removed.
- Inspect the tool for frayed cords, loose or broken switches, and other obvious problems. Tools that fail this inspection must **not be used**. Remove them from service.
- Do not use electric-powered tools in damp or wet locations.
- Keep guards in place, in working order, and properly adjusted. Safety guards must never be removed when the tool is being used.
- Avoid accidental starting. Do not hold a finger on the switch button while carrying a plugged-in tool.

(Fortune 2005)
February 7 - 11 USING PORTABLE ELECTRIC-POWERED TOOLS SAFELY

- Safety switches must be kept in working order and must not be modified. If you feel it’s necessary to modify a safety switch for a job you’re doing, use another tool.
- Work areas should have adequate lighting and be free of clutter.
- Observers should remain a safe distance away from the work area.
- Be sure to keep good footing and maintain good balance.
- Do not wear loose clothing, ties, or jewelry when operating tools.
- Wear appropriate gloves and footwear while using tools.

February 14 - 18 USING PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE) SAFETY HEAD GEAR – Should be used for protection from falling or flying objects, moving machinery, sharp corners, heat and fire, electrical shock, dripping chemicals, and unseen dangers.

HEARING PROTECTION – When noise is above acceptable levels and it is impossible to reduce noise output, personal hearing protectors such as ear plugs, ear muffs, or molded ear plugs must be used. Hearing equipment must be worn properly and kept in good condition to be effective.

HAND PROTECTION – Several examples of work gloves are cloth, leather, metal mesh gloves, insulated gloves, neoprene and plastic gloves, and rubber gloves. Gloves should be worn when handling sharp, rough, greasy, and hot materials and during operations in which the hands are directly involved with lifting or moving objects.

SAFETY FOOT WEAR – Safety shoes offer soles with puncture protection, instep protection, anklesnugs to ward off sparks, non-slip soles, and steel caps that protect the toes from falling objects. Many of today’s safety shoes are comfortable, fashionable, and effective.

RESPIRATOR – Respirators should be worn if inhalation hazards are present in the workplace. Respirators are used where there is dust, paint spray, fumes, smoke, and mists. In hazardous working conditions, self-contained breathing apparatuses are required.

February 21 - 25 PREVENTING FALLS

Good housekeeping is the starting point. Falls result from objects left in walkways, in corridors, in aisles, or on floors. Certain apparel can also contribute to falls. Worn soles and heels, high heels, or untied laces can cause falls. Ensure walkways and working surfaces are clear.

Cables, hoses, ropes, and wires should not be stretched across walkways. When such equipment must be run along the floor, it should be straight, flat, and preferably shielded. Floor and manhole covers should always be promptly and correctly put back in place. When they are removed, the temporary opening should be roped off, boarded over, or shielded with barriers to prevent a co-worker from stepping into it.

Immediately reporting and cleaning up spilled liquids is an on-going responsibility of all employees. No job function or work location is complete until the area has been cleaned up and excess materials, used parts, and debris have been removed. Avoid taking shortcuts through work areas where you might have to walk on equipment, conveyors, rollers, or piles of material. With everyone making a concerted effort at work and at home, falls can be prevented.

Feb. 28 - March 4 PREVENTING SPRAINS & STRAINS

Before starting a work function, examine ways to eliminate or reduce lifting, lowering, pushing, pulling, and carrying whenever possible. Get help when the load is heavy, awkward, or unstable. Make sure your working area and home are free of slipping or tripping hazards. The sudden jerk caused by a slip or trip can cause a sprain or strain. Don't overextend yourself—use a step stool or ladder when lifting objects above shoulder height. Try to keep yourself in good condition. Don't rush into a job cold. Warm up your muscles first. Hold the load close. Avoid twisting your body while handling a load. Work smarter, not harder – it's easier and safer.