RECOMMENDED SAFETY MEETINGS
DOTD LOSS PREVENTION: LOUISIANA TRANSPORTATION RESEARCH CENTER

MAY 2 - 6: MAKE SAFETY AN EVERYDAY ROUTINE

Don’t wait for an accident to happen. Make these five things a part of your everyday routine:
1. Focus on the present task. How well are you concentrating? Boredom or exhaustion can lead to accidents.
2. Take time to do the job right. It takes a little longer to put on the extra protective equipment, but it may prevent a painful injury. Manage your time well. Make a list numbering the jobs from most important to least important. This way, you will know you are doing the most important things and are less likely to rush.
3. Have the strength to do what is right. Don't get caught up in taking short cuts or fooling around.
4. Take responsibility even when a certain task “isn’t your job.” Care about yourself and others. Be part of the team.
5. While you can’t avoid ALL risks, you can weigh the risks of doing a job in a certain way. Even if it is a one in a thousand risk, it's not worth it.

MAY 9 - 13: MAINTAINING GOOD HEALTH

“Lifestyle” refers to personal behaviors and habits such as exercise, eating habits, cigarette smoking, alcohol and drug use, safety, and stress management. Experts say that a person's lifestyle helps him or her resist the negative effects of stress and prevents stress from becoming a problem. Listed below are a few lifestyle guidelines for maintaining your health and preventing stress:

• Avoid cigarettes. Cigarette smoking is the single most important preventable cause of illness and early death. The effects of smoking can be reversed.
• Exercise regularly. Regular exercise helps people of all ages look and feel better. Different kinds of exercises provide specific health benefits.
• Eat sensibly. A nutritious diet is essential for maintaining good health and proper weight. If you drink, drink only in moderation. Alcohol is frequently used to reduce stress because it has a relaxing effect. Regular heavy use of alcohol leads to disease. Drinking and driving often leads to fatal or crippling accidents.
• Use care in taking drugs. Although drugs may provide temporary relief from stress symptoms, they may not solve ongoing problems and tensions. Excessive or continued use of either prescription or illegal drugs may cause physical and mental problems.
• Be safety-conscious. Living safely at home, work, and on the road prevents accidents and injuries.
• Learn to manage stress. Stress is a normal part of living. Three major steps to keep daily stress from becoming a problem: take time to relax, talk with a friend, and learn to keep a positive outlook.

Mother's Day is May 8th.
BUCKLE UP FOR SAFETY

More than 40,000 people are killed each year in traffic collisions. One-half of those killed would be alive today if they had taken time out to fasten their seat belts. People who don't wear seat belts not only double their chances of not ever making it home, but they also risk an expensive traffic ticket. The law requires that all drivers and their passengers wear safety belts while vehicles are moving. Why not take a few extra seconds to buckle up?

PAY ATTENTION TO CLOSE CALLS

A "close call" or accident without injury is easy to shrug off and forget. But brushing off accidents that don't hurt, harm, or damage is dangerous. When a "close call" happens, it should immediately send up a red warning flag that something was wrong, unplanned, unexpected, and could happen again. The next time it happens, it could result in serious damage, injury, or death.

Every accident usually has several contributing factors, most of which can be controlled. The best way to prevent the reoccurrence of an accident is by looking at those "close calls." By investigating the root causes of an accident, steps can be taken to eliminate the hazard and improve the work system.

Workers should inspect the work area daily for unsafe conditions or unsafe actions and, if found, report them to the supervisor. Hazard awareness is the key to preventing accidents before they happen. Take steps to eliminate hazards as soon as they are discovered. Learn the real lesson from close calls. They can happen again and again until they cause injury, so tell your supervisor about every accident, no matter how minor it may seem at the time. You never know when an incident may be repeated and result in an injury or even death.

POISON OAK

“IF YOU NOTICE LEAVES OF THREE, LET THEM BE”

Thousands of workers seek medical treatment for poison oak dermatitis every year. While some individuals are less susceptible than others, no one is completely immune. There are some simple things you can do to prevent or minimize the unpleasant and often-disabling effects of poison oak exposure. Learn to recognize, avoid, and prevent exposure, and get rid of it when possible.

If you must work in an area where there is poison oak, take the following precautions:

1. Wear protective clothing such as long-sleeved shirts, long pants tied around the ankles, and leather gloves with gauntlets.
2. Several protective creams can form barriers to protect against the toxic oil found in all parts of the plant.
3. When removing clothing, take shoes off first and leave them outside. Wash shoes to decontaminate them.
4. Remove all clothing and wash it separately.
5. Any object you touch after having been exposed to poison oak can act as a carrier to contaminate others.
6. If you come in contact with poison oak, wash the affected area immediately or take a shower using strong soap or detergent. Do not take a bath.
7. When dressing, put shoes on last so that any poisonous substance remaining on shoes does not contaminate the inside of trousers.
8. For severe inflammation and itching, consult a physician.