

Chock and Block

A SAFETY TALK FOR DISCUSSION LEADERS

This safety talk is designed for discussion leaders to use in preparing safety meetings.

Set a specific time and date for your safety meeting. Publicize your meeting so everyone involved will be sure to attend.

Review this safety talk before the meeting and become familiar with its content. Make notes about the points made in this talk that pertain to your workplace. You should be able to present the material in your own words and lead the discussion without reading it.

Seating space is not absolutely necessary, but arrangements should be made so that those attending can easily see and hear the presentation.

Collect whatever materials and props you will need ahead of time. Try to use equipment in your workplace to demonstrate your points.

DURING THE MEETING

Give the safety talk in your own words. Use the printed talk merely as a guide.

The purpose of a safety meeting is to initiate discussion of safety problems and provide solutions to those problems. Encourage employees to discuss hazards or potential hazards they encounter on the job. Ask them to suggest ways to improve safety in their area.

Don't let the meeting turn into a gripe session about unrelated topics. As discussion leader, it's your job to make sure the topic is safety. Discussing other topics wastes time and can ruin the effectiveness of your safety meeting.

At the end of the meeting, ask employees to sign a sheet on the back of this talk as a record that they attended the safety meeting. Keep this talk on file for your records.

Chock and Block

Every year, workers are disabled or fatally injured because the wheels of a rig or trailer were not chocked and blocked. The majority of these accidents involve local drivers and dock workers in the trucking industry, and occur because of incorrectly handled freight, hazardous working conditions or unsafe equipment.

An essential part of a safe working environment is the proper design and maintenance of equipment, including chocks and blocks. Many roll-away accidents are caused by a failure to chock the wheels. In some instances, drivers are crushed by their own rigs, while in others lift operators are disabled because the trailer rolls from the dock, dumping the lift on them.

A unit at a dock should always be chocked. Lift operators should never enter a trailer without first verifying that it has been chocked.

The purpose of the chock is to pin the wheels and hold them stationary.

Therefore, the rearmost axle on a tandem-axle trailer should be chocked. The force of the lift entering the trailer exerts a downward force, helping to pin the wheels more than if the front axle is chocked. If the front axle is chocked, sometimes the forward motion of a lift entering a trailer can move the chock forward, allowing the trailer to pick up momentum and jump the chock.

Platform parking areas should be equipped with wheel chocks, which can keep vehicles from moving while being loaded or unloaded, especially if forklift trucks are used. Chocks should be available at all times, fastened to their respective dock, and stored properly.

Equally important is blocking freight inside the trailer; this lessens the chance of a load shift, which can cause a trailer to turn over or damage other cargo. The principle used in chocking, securing to prevent movement, is also used in blocking. To prevent any movement, it is necessary to block all four sides and to block each item separately. Cargo doesn't necessarily have to be round (such as reels or machinery on wheels) to move. How about a skid that rests on runners? Better toe it with nails to be sure.

The type of blocking material used is also important. Make certain that nails or spikes are long enough and the lumber is thick enough to prevent the cargo from shifting. Use only sound blocking materials, and never use other freight as a block, unless you are willing to pay a claim on the block.

Most importantly, be alert and remember to chock and block when you reach the dock.