

Hidden Hazard Accidents

Have you ever bumped into another person or had a dinner tray cart pushed into you? Have you ever been hit by a falling or flying object? These accidents can result in more than bruises! They can cause serious injuries. In 1979, a total of 1,883 lost-time claims were filed with The Industrial Commission of Ohio by Ohio hospital employees. Of these claims, 211 were for injuries that happened when people were struck by moving objects. Lost work days because of these accidents in 1979 numbered 5,472. A few precautions will reduce your chances of becoming one of these statistics.

How would you like to have a big stack of linen tumble down on top of you? Of course you wouldn't, and neither would anyone else. The best way to prevent this is to avoid stacking materials too high; stack it in such a way that it absolutely cannot fall. Even if you take time to stack items properly, you can't depend on everyone else taking the same care. You should make a habit of inspecting the environment for this type of hazard; this can prevent an accident.

A door is another moving object that often strikes people. Most people know what it feels like to approach a door, perhaps with arms full, and have the door open suddenly from the other side. Some have learned the hard way that if windowless doors open toward you, it's best to approach them with caution. Never stand in front of such a door for an extended period of time. If you must work in such an area, prop the door open and secure it, or place a sign on the opposite side of the door. It goes without saying that you shouldn't use a ladder where a door opens toward it unless you can be sure, by locking the door or propping it open, that the door will not be opened. Of course, out of consideration for those on the other side, you should not push a door open rapidly or forcefully. When approaching double doors, follow signs indicating which door to use.

People, too, can be safety hazards if they do not watch where they are going. While walking, don't get so engrossed in a conversation that you don't notice threats to your safety that are right in front of you.

When approaching a corner or intersection in a hallway, walk in the center of the hallway instead of next to the wall where you cannot see or be seen by those traveling in other directions. Perhaps the employees in your work area can reduce the chances of bumping into each other by agreeing to walk only on the right sides of hallways. Think about how this type of accident can be avoided; the next person you bump into could be carrying hot coffee or sharp objects.

There is a possibility of bumping into or being bumped into by a cart of some kind. You may not be injured, but who wants to take chances? If you happen to be moving a cart, especially a large one that you cannot see over or around, don't push it, pull it. Never push a cart; it's too easy to accidentally push a cart into someone when you can't see where you're going.

People can also be struck by, and are frequently severely injured by, objects flying out of machinery, such as pieces of wood or metal. Whatever they are, they're likely to travel at a high velocity, which increases the likelihood of injuries. Proper machine guarding is one of the best protection against flying objects.

These safety suggestions must be followed by everyone to meet our goal of making the workplace as safe as possible for everyone. We should remember that our actions affect everyone in our department. Let's work together so everyone can be assured that our workplace is a safe one.