

START WITH SAFETY

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LIVE EVENT

2023
SAFETY
ACADEMY

New Session Coming
Soon – Keep an Eye
on Your Inbox

ONLINE EVENT

2023
VIRTUAL
TRAINING

**Building/Facility
Security**
March 9 (English & Spanish)

**Management Series:
Accident
Investigations for
Employers**
March 21 (English)

PREVENTING FATIGUE AND ACCIDENTS

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), nearly 15 million Americans work irregular schedules, including full-time evening shifts, night shifts, and rotating shifts. These kinds of shifts have been associated with safety and health risks, and certain jobs (such as disaster response) are at higher risk. This is because an irregular sleeping pattern disrupts your circadian rhythm. A circadian rhythm is a 24-hour, internal cycle that controls when you feel alert and when you feel sleepy. Disrupted circadian rhythms lead to worker fatigue. Fatigue can also be exacerbated by long work hours or insufficient rest during the workday.

Effects of Fatigue

- Decreased ability to focus for extended periods of time.
- Increased chance that you will not pay full attention to the task at hand, such as operating a machine or a vehicle.
- Increased errors that could cause accidents or injuries
- Decreased ability to perform tasks effectively.
- Decreased physical and mental health.

Fighting Fatigue During the Day

- Adjust lighting or temperature (or request that they be adjusted) if either is impairing your alertness at work.
- Eat nutritious meals at regular times.
- Exercise regularly (but not close to bedtime).

Managing Your Workload

- Moderate your workload as much as possible. If shifts are long, try to choose lighter tasks. If the work is intense, try to work shorter shifts.
- Schedule heavy or demanding work at times when you are more alert to decrease the risk of an accident.
- For demanding work, take frequent rest breaks every couple of hours.
- Get at least 10 consecutive hours per day of off-duty time so that you can get 7 – 8 hours of sleep. This is the recommended amount of sleep for adults.

Improving Sleep Quality

- Go to bed and get up at the same time every day.
- Find a schedule that works for you. Some experimentation may be required, especially if you work a night shift.
- Circadian rhythms are affected by light, so make sure your room is sufficiently dark.
- Assure there will be no noise or distractions or block out noise that will keep you awake.
- Regulate the temperature.



- Assess your bed's comfort level and make improvements if needed.
- Use your bed only for sleep.
- Do not eat large meals before bedtime. Especially avoid greasy foods and alcohol.
- Avoid caffeine in the afternoon and evenings.
- Avoid using amphetamines or other stimulants, as well as sleeping pills, which can affect your performance the next day.
- Monitor any medications which may affect sleep or work abilities.

What Management Can Do

- Investigate every incident and near miss for root causes including fatigue. Communicate these findings and correct any deficiencies.
- If any safety procedure is difficult to follow, analyze and modify the procedure or task as needed so that employees will not be tempted to work unsafely if they are fatigued.

FMCSA PROPOSES CHANGES TO SAFETY MEASUREMENT SYSTEM

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) has announced proposed changes to the Safety Measurement System (SMS) methodology used to prioritize motor carriers for Agency intervention.

The proposed changes include:

- Reorganized "BASICS"
- Reorganized roadside violations
- Simplified severity weights
- Improved intervention thresholds
- Proportionate percentiles
- Greater focus on recent violations
- Updated utilization factor
- New segmentation
- Accounting for not preventable crashes

The Agency is asking motor carriers and other stakeholders to preview how the new methodology impacts their prioritization results by logging in to the CSA Prioritization preview website.

LAWSUITS PILE UP TWO YEARS AFTER WINTER STORM URI

Lawyers representing storm victims are working to file the final lawsuits related to the disaster as its two-year anniversary arrives this week — and the two-year statute of limitations for filing suit begins to expire. Thousands are accusing power companies, distribution companies, electric grid operators and others of failing to prepare properly for it, creating a catastrophe that caused property damage, countless injuries, and hundreds of deaths. One expert estimated the cost of the freeze was as high as \$300 billion.

When the storm struck just before Valentine's Day, sending temperatures plunging across Texas, electric grid operators had to order power cuts to millions as demand for electricity rose while people tried to keep their homes warm. Power generators failed to keep up with the need. Some power plants went offline altogether as production of the natural gas that fuels power plants faltered due to the frigid temperatures or power outages.

The disaster prompted calls to reform the system. Legislators required power generators and natural gas producers to prepare their infrastructure better for the extreme cold, among other fixes. And lawmakers are now looking at whether to allow a major change to the way the state's electricity market works, which involves a controversial attempt to send money to the types of power generators — such as those powered by natural gas, coal and nuclear — that can come on no matter the weather (unlike wind and solar energy).

The various lawsuits are being directed to one judge in Harris County who will handle all of them. The plaintiffs include a person whose house caught fire when power was restored, another who had both feet amputated after getting frostbite and a disabled person whose ceiling collapsed on him while he was in bed. "This catastrophe was not caused by an act of God, but instead was caused by intentional decisions by individual Defendants made both before and during Winter Storm Uri that were known to other Defendants and caused multiple operational failures which combined to cause the failure of the ERCOT grid," one lawsuit states.

Meanwhile, the Texas Supreme Court is weighing whether the Electric Reliability Council of Texas, which operates the state power grid, should be immune from lawsuits. The outcome of that case, which is expected this year, could allow ERCOT to remain a defendant in the lawsuits. For now, the district judge in Harris County has decided ERCOT is not liable. A spokesperson for ERCOT declined to comment.

CONFINED SPACES: WORKING IN PERMIT SPACES

A confined space is any space large enough for a person to enter, has restricted means of entry or exit, and is not designed for continuous occupancy. Work involving permit spaces must be viewed as a process; safe entry is just a start. A permit-required confined space is any space with:

- potentially hazardous atmospheres (asphyxiating, flammable, or toxic), or
- conditions where engulfment, entrapment, or other serious hazards may exist or develop, or
- an internal configuration such that an entrant could be trapped or asphyxiated by inwardly converging walls or by a floor which slopes downward and tapers to a smaller cross section, or
- any other recognized serious safety or health hazard.

What must be done? Before entering or working in a confined space, you must first obtain an entry permit. An entry permit must include:

- Identification of the space.
- Purpose of the entry.
- Date and duration of the permit.
- List of authorized entrants.
- Names of attendants and supervisor.
- List of hazards in the permit space.
- List of measures to isolate the space and eliminate or control the hazards.
- Acceptable entry conditions.
- Results of tests initiated by the person(s) performing the tests.
- Rescue and emergency services available and the means to summon them.
- Communication procedures for attendants and entrants.
- Required equipment.
- Other necessary information.

- Additional permits (e.g., for hot work).

Before anyone enters: Once the entry permits have been prepared check for:

- Atmospheric hazards.
- Energy hazards.
- Other physical hazards.

For hazards in the atmosphere, you must:

- Test the air.
- Ventilate the space.
- Use an air-supplied respirator under certain conditions.
- Lock out sources of hazardous energy (mechanical, electrical, etc.).

The entry supervisor will verify that entry conditions are acceptable by signing the permit. The permit, and test results, must be available to the entrants. Continue to monitor air quality during entry operations. Work being done may change the air quality while you work. Affected employees can observe all air monitoring tests. Use locks and tags to prevent accidental startup of equipment while you are working in the permit space. Use only safe, grounded, approved equipment.

Safety requirements for permit spaces:

- When workers enter a permit space, at least one person must remain outside to summon help or provide assistance.
- The entrants need to wear chest or full body harnesses with retrieval lines to make non-entry rescue attempts easier.

The attendant needs to communicate with the entrants to monitor their conditions. If a situation arises that requires emergency rescue, the attendant should summon the rescue service and stay outside of the permit space entrance.

An attendant can be a trained member of the rescue service but cannot enter the permit space until the rest of the team has arrived to start proper rescue procedures.



Mainstays 3-Wick Candles

Hazard: Fire & Laceration

LumaRails Portable Bed Rails

Hazard: Entrapment & Asphyxia

Lancaster High Chairs

Hazard: Fall

Harbor Freight Miter Saw Blade Guards

Hazard: Injury

COSORI AirFryers

Hazard: Fire & Burn

Wicked Lights Hunting Headlamps

Hazard: Burn

Textron E-Z-GO PTVs

Hazard: Fire

LiftMaster myQ Garage Door Control Panels

Hazard: Fire

IKEA Odger Swivel Chairs

Hazard: Fall & Injury

Fabuloso Multi-Purpose Cleaners

Hazard: Risk of Bacteria Exposure