



# Everyone Goes Home “SAFE”!

## WHY TAKE A CHANCE WITH SAFETY?

Have you ever made a decision to break a safety rule? How long did it take for you to reach that decision? What did you gain by taking a chance? It only takes a moment to decide to break a safety rule, yet that one moment could change your life forever. This week's Safety Topic offers you an opportunity to think about your personal safety behavior, both on and off the job. We'll talk specifically about taking safety risks, your personal commitment to safety, and what you can do to keep that commitment strong.

Do you always work safely? Are you 100% committed to the safety of yourself, your coworkers, friends, and family? Are there times when your commitment to safety is not as strong as it should be? Have you been taking safety risks and getting away with it? Don't expect your luck to hold. No one ever plans an accident. An accident, by definition, is an unplanned event. No one wakes up in the morning and drives to work thinking, "I will have an accident today so I'd better buckle up." No one ever climbs to the very top of a ladder and knows for sure they won't fall. That's why it's so important to have a personal commitment to safety; a commitment to do the right things to prevent an incident or minimize the damage done in case an incident does occur.

What is gained by taking a safety risk? Think about a time when you've risked your personal safety. Have you ever bypassed lockout-tag out procedures? Have you ever driven a car after you had too much to drink? Have you failed to use fall-protection equipment because it was just too much

trouble? What did you gain in that situation? A minute of time, an ounce of convenience? Now honestly ask yourself if those gains were worth it. Is a little bit of time or convenience really worth chancing electrocution, a car accident, or a bad fall? Don't sacrifice your healthy future by taking a safety risk. Every time you're tempted to take a chance with your safety ask yourself if it's really worth the risk. Your family and friends will thank you for making the right decision.

Keeping a strong commitment to safety is not easy. What interferes with your commitment to safety? Is peer pressure a problem? Do your peers think it's silly to take time for safety? You can set a safe example for your peers. Consider taking a stand for safety. By committing to safety 100% of the time, you can help reverse the peer pressure that sometimes causes unsafe behavior. Keep up this exemplary behavior. Someday you may find that the old peer pressure has given way to something new! The respect of your peers earned by setting a safe example.

It's normal for your commitment to safety to fluctuate. Sometimes it's strong, at other times it's weak. Unfortunately, it tends to be strong just after a close call, or perhaps for a few days after you hear of an incident. Then the commitment wanes, only to be strengthened again by another tragedy. Simply recognizing this pattern can help you avoid it. Think about your work habits. Have there been times when you're more likely to take a safety risk? How about those times when you've been extra careful? Did the strength of your safety commitment depend

on an outside event, like another person being involved in an accident?

You can keep your commitment to safety strong by remembering the commitment is for you. If you allow things that happen to other people determine the strength of your commitment, it is likely to fluctuate a lot. You can always learn from things that happen to other people, but to keep your commitment strong all the time, stay focused on your personal safety and those things you do that affect it.

Having a personal commitment to safety and keeping it strong are more important than any safety program, procedure, or rule. In fact, programs, procedures, and rules depend on a strong personal commitment to safety.

Ask yourself where you are with your own safety attitude and behavior. Are you 100% committed to safety, 100% of the time? You are? Great! Need some improvement? Promise yourself to work on it and keep that promise. You'll be glad you did!