

Safety & Training Source Skilled.



DECADES OF EXPERIENCE
DEVOTED TO YOUR SAFETY.

A monthly resource for members of IMEA's Safety, Education & Training program.

October 2018

Winter Weather

Plan. Equip. Train.

Hazards/Precautions

Work Zone Traffic Safety

Workers being struck by vehicles or mobile equipment lead to many work zone fatalities or injuries annually. Drivers may skid, or lose control of their vehicles more easily when driving on snow and/or ice covered roads. It is therefore, important to properly set up work zones with the traffic controls identified by signs, cones, barrels, and barriers, to protect workers. Workers exposed to vehicular traffic should wear the appropriate high visibility vest at all times, so that they can be visible to motorists.



From the Desk of

Duane Richardson

Winter is just around the corner and if our fall weather is any indication of what's to come it will be a short corner. Every year we have one or two utility workers in the IMEA community that suffer cold weather-related injuries which include: injuries due to decreased temperature injuries, hypothermia, frostbite, and nonfreezing cold injuries.

With winter comes the inevitable risk of slipping on ice. And while many falls may just result in a bruised ego, they also carry with them significant potential for injury to your bones, muscle, ligaments or worse a life-threatening head injury.

Nationwide, there were 20,520 workplace injuries due to falls from ice, sleet and snow that resulted in a day or more away from work in 2017, and 28% of those resulted in more than a month off work, According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. The average winter slip and fall lost-time claim costs ranged from \$40,000 to \$45,000. The cost --- direct and indirect --- mount quickly and can't be ignored.



IMEA CALENDAR

November

- 15 IMEA Board of Director Meeting (Kona Grill)
- 16 IMEA Safety & Training Meeting (Lebanon)
- 16 IMEA Conference Planning Meeting (Embassy Suites, Noblesville, IN.)



December

- 20 IMEA Board of Director Meeting



Repairing Downed or Damaged Power Lines

Repairing and/or replacing damaged power lines in severe winter weather conditions are especially hazardous. A major hazard is snow, because the moisture can reduce the insulation value of protective equipment, and could cause electrocution. In these conditions de-energized work is safer, but if energized work must be done, workers and supervisors must first do a hazard analysis that includes evaluating the weather conditions and identifying how to safely do the job.

Other potential hazards include:

- Electrocution by contacting downed energized power lines, or contacting objects, such as broken tree limbs, in contact with downed energized power lines.
- Fires caused by an energized line or equipment failure.
- Being struck or crushed by falling tree limbs, collapsing poles, etc.

When working on downed or damaged power lines, electrical utility workers should use safe work practices, appropriate tools and equipment (including personal protective equipment (PPE)). Extra caution should be exercised when working in adverse weather conditions.

Working Near Downed or Damaged Power Lines

Assume all power lines are energized and stay clear of any downed or damaged power lines. Establish a safe distance from power lines and report any incidents to the responsible authority. Only properly-trained electrical utility workers can handle damaged power lines. Learn more at: Contact with Power Lines (OSHA Construction eTool) and Working Safely Around Downed Electrical Wires (OSHA Fact Sheet).



Thank You to Our Associate Members!!



WINTER DRIVING

Although employers cannot control roadway conditions, they can promote safe driving behavior by ensuring workers: recognize the hazards of winter weather driving, for example, driving on snow/ice covered roads; are properly trained for driving in winter weather conditions; and are licensed (as applicable) for the vehicles they operate. For information about driving safely during the winter, visit OSHA's Safe Winter Driving page.

Employers should set and enforce driver safety policies. Employers should also implement an effective maintenance program for all vehicles and mechanized equipment that workers are required to operate. Crashes can be avoided. Learn more at: Motor Vehicle Safety (OSHA Safety and Health Topic's Page).

Employers should ensure properly trained workers' inspect the following vehicle systems to determine if they are working properly:

- **Brakes:** Brakes should provide even and balanced braking. Also check that brake fluid is at the proper level.
 - **Cooling System:** Ensure a proper mixture of 50/50 antifreeze and water in the cooling system at the proper level.
 - **Electrical System:** Check the ignition system and make sure that the battery is fully charged and that the connections are clean. Check that the alternator belt is in good condition with proper tension.
 - **Engine:** Inspect all engine systems.
 - **Exhaust System:** Check exhaust for leaks and that all clamps and hangers are snug.
 - **Tires:** Check for proper tread depth and no signs of damage or uneven wear. Check for proper tire inflation.
 - **Oil:** Check that oil is at proper level.
- Visibility Systems:** Inspect all exterior lights, defrosters (windshield and rear window), and wipers. Install winter windshield wipers.