



Safety Message of the Day for IMEA Members



Situational Awareness Safety Message

Due to the dynamic nature of many workplaces, there can be many hazards present in a given moment that can injure employees. While pre-planning and implementing safeguards can mitigate many of the hazards involved in the work, it is still critical that employees maintain situational awareness to prevent injuries.

What is Situational Awareness?

Situational awareness can be defined in several different ways. One definition is: Situational awareness involves being aware of what is happening in the vicinity to understand how information, events, and one's own actions will impact goals and objectives, both immediately and in the near future.

Research has shown that lacking or inadequate situational awareness has been identified as one of the primary factors in accidents attributed to human error.

Examples of How Situational Awareness Can Prevent Injury

Having situational awareness can keep you and your coworkers safe. This is because you are aware of what is occurring around you and have the foresight to be able to recognize any issues as they arise. Some examples of situational awareness being utilized in the workplace:

- **Staying out of the line of fire.** Being in the line of fire means being in harm's way. A line of fire is present anytime the path of a moving object, or force intersects with a person's body. An employee with situational awareness does not put him/herself in these positions.
- **Speaking to a coworker about an unsafe action.** Everyone will not necessarily be directly affected by the decision of a coworker to take risks, but an employee with situational awareness can see what may occur if the behavior continues. Recognizing the negative possibilities resulting from the unsafe behavior and speaking up can prevent a serious injury from occurring.
- **Stopping work to make adjustments.** Things do not always go as planned. Adjustments are necessary to make work tasks safer and to get them done efficiently. Employees with strong situational awareness will recognize when it is necessary to stop work and make changes to improve the safety and efficiency of their work.