



CONSTRUCTION  
**SAFETY WEEK**

# WHAT IT TAKES TO WORK SAFELY

TOOLBOX TALK CONTRIBUTED BY CIANBRO



# SAFETY FOCUS



## What It Takes To Work Safely

*"It is better to be careful 100 times than to get killed once." (Mark Twain)*

We are committed to the health and safety of our team. We have many systems (i.e. activity planning) and policies (i.e. Zero Energy) in place to help us accomplish this. These systems and policies are not enough by themselves. It also takes managers who are committed to ensure we not only follow these policies, but also exceed them. Most importantly, it takes every single team member to look for what could go wrong and to speak up so that we have each other's backs.

There are pitfalls in our day-to-day work that lead us to accepting unnecessary risk and can get in the way of working safely:

- **Taking Shortcuts** — Never let tight schedules or a desire to get the job done justify taking shortcuts that increase risk.
- **Being Overconfident** — Confidence is a good thing. Overconfidence is too much of a good thing and easily becomes complacency. Never stop looking for what could go wrong.
- **Starting a Task with Incomplete Instructions** — You need complete information to do the job safely. Don't be shy about asking for explanations about work procedures and safety precautions. It isn't a weakness to ask questions; it's a weakness to avoid asking them.
- **Poor Housekeeping** — Poor housekeeping creates hazards of all types. Good housekeeping involves both pride and safety.
- **Ignoring Safety Procedures** — Choosing which procedures to follow and which procedures to ignore increases the risk to the whole crew. When you choose to not follow a policy, it sets an example for those around you and increases their risk of injury.
- **Mental Distractions at Work** — Having a bad day at home and worrying about it at work is a hazardous combination. We all have items in our backpack from what is going on in our life. We must recognize and help team members when their backpack is heavy to help them go home safely.
- **Failure to Plan the Work** — Activity plans allow us to figure out the smartest ways to work safely and effectively with input from the entire team. Pause and re-plan when things change.
- **Just This Once** — Unsafe practices that are justified as exceptions to the rule can result in serious injuries or worse. It can happen on the first time as easy as on the 100<sup>th</sup> time.
- **Believing That This is Overkill** — Some unsafe practices can occur when team members bypass precautions that they consider excessive. Policies are developed because someone somewhere got injured. Never bypass a policy that you think is unnecessary.
- **Being a Team Player** — Never justify unsafe practices for the good of the team, company or customer. Following a safety policy demonstrates respect and care for your coworkers.
- **Not Speaking Up When You See Risk** — In addition, we all have an obligation to speak up when something does not seem right. You might be the only person that notices something wrong. We call this Stop Work Obligation. Speak up when the situation at hand does not feel right and listen when someone else speaks up.
- **Not Reporting Near Misses or Injuries** — Reporting an injury (no matter how minor) or near miss is a gift for the rest of our team because it gives us the opportunity to learn and to possibly prevent another team member from being injured. Reporting prevents bad outcomes:
  - Increased pain and suffering for the team member
  - Potential hazards not recognized and corrected that could injure coworkers