

Tailgate Training Sheet

Landscape Safety



Per (OSHA) Occupational Safety and Health Administration, landscaping and horticultural service workers are at risk of injury from a wide variety of potential hazards in this industry, including exposure to chemicals, noise, machinery, lifting, construction, and weather related hazards. Here are some of the potential hazards, within our industry.

Cuts and Amputations:

Amputations are some of the most serious and debilitating workplace injuries. They are widespread and involve a variety of activities and equipment. Amputations occur most often when workers operate unguarded or inadequately safeguarded mechanical equipment or are too rushed to follow established safe operating procedures (Short Cuts). Areas that one must be aware of when operating equipment are:

- Point of operation-the area of a machine where it performs work on material.
- Power-transmission apparatuses- flywheels, pulleys, belts, chains and other machine components that transmit energy.
- Other moving parts- machine components that move during machine operations as well as auxiliary parts.

You should be able to control amputation hazards, by safeguarding equipment with guards or devices that prevent contact with points of operation and replace or supplement existing guards.

Electrical:

Every year thousands of workers are electrocuted when they accidentally contact live electrical wires. Before working in areas near electrical equipment or energized power lines you should:

- Ensure that a minimum clearance of 10 feet is maintained when working near energized power lines.
- Employers should conduct a job hazard analysis to identify and correct potential hazards prior to start of work.
- Employer should make aware to employees the dangers of drugs and alcohol.
- Employer should train employees on electrical hazards and document training.
- Contact the public utility when you are going to trim trees near energized power lines.

Ergonomics:

Both work-related and non-work related conditions can either individually, or by interacting with each other, give rise to musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs). There are several approaches that may be used to determine whether conditions in the workplace might be contributing to employees developing MSDs.

- Review and analyze your injury and illness records to determine whether there is a pattern of ergonomic-related injuries in certain jobs or work tasks.
- Analyze the jobs or work tasks to identify potential ergonomic problems before employee injuries occur.
- Analyzing tools may help in analyzing jobs.
- Seek employee input about the existence of ergonomic problems related to particular jobs or work task.
- Be aware of common contributing conditions within your industry or job classification. If other companies in the same industry have ergonomic-related problems, then it is possible these potential problems are also your concern.

Heat Stress:

Many landscape workers spend a great deal of their time working in an outdoor environment. Many of these workers often face hot or cold conditions which pose special hazards to safety and health. From a heat rash, also known as prickly heat, to a Heat Stroke the most serious health problem for workers in a hot environment is caused by the failure of the body's internal mechanism to regulate its core temperatures.

There are ways to prevent or reduce the risk of developing heat-related problems.

- Engineering controls, including general ventilation and spot cooling by exhaust ventilation.
- Work practices such as providing plenty of drinking water and training workers to recognize and treat heat stress.
- Alternating work and rest periods with longer rest periods in a cool area

Cold Stress:

When you work in an environment that is less than your body temperature, you are exposing yourself to a cold challenge and are susceptible to a cold illness such as hypothermia or frostbite.

Things you should look out for in cold weather are; outside temperatures, wet freezing rain, snow and wind (chill factor). Wear warm layer clothing which you can remove as the temperatures rises.

Lifting and awkward postures:

Type of lifting injuries that are common in our industry:

- Lifting or moving heavy material—as well as working with a shovel, can result in injury to your back, shoulders, knees, or other body parts.
- Heavy material may include trees, shrubs, and other plant material; cement blocks; flagstone; and bags of fertilizer or seed, to name a few.
- Lifting-related injuries can be costly, painful, and last a lifetime.

But you can reduce your risk of injury through, proper training, correct equipment and proper lifting techniques.

Motor Vehicle Safety:

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), more than 2,000 deaths a year result from occupational motor vehicle incidents. That number is more than 30 percent of the annual number of fatalities from occupational injuries. These deaths include drivers and passenger deaths in highway crashes, farm equipment accidents, and industrial vehicle incidents.

Make sure all drivers are trained and authorized before letting them get behind the wheel.

Noise and Hearing Conservation:

The U.S. Department of Labor states that every year, approximately 30 million people in the United States are occupationally exposed to hazardous noise. Fortunately, the incidence of noise-induced hearing loss can be reduced or eliminated through the successful application of engineering controls and hearing conservation programs.

Pesticides and Chemicals:

When used properly, pesticides offer a variety of benefits to society. However, pesticides also have the potential for causing harm. The Environmental Protection Agency estimates that 10,000-20,000 physician-diagnosed pesticide poisonings occur each year among agricultural workers.

Surveillance for occupational pesticide-related illness and injury is designed to protect workers; it also serves as an early warning system of any harmful effects not detected by manufacturer testing pesticides. Make sure all workers are trained in Worker Protection Standards (WPS) and that all applicators are trained properly.

Preventing Injuries from Slips, Trips and Falls:

The National Ag Safety Database and the University of Florida state that over one million people suffered a slip, trip or falling injury and over 5,100 workers died from falls in 1999.

- That is why good housekeeping is an important to prevent slips, trips and falls.
- All workers should wear proper foot wear, with soft rubber soles and heels with rubber cleats for friction.
- Ensure all walking surfaces are clean, level and clear of objects.

Other Potential Hazards Associated with Landscaping:

Soil preparation and grading—Equipment accidents, uneven terrain, cuts and amputations

Irrigation—Glue, primer, amputation, and electrocution

Hardscape Construction—Hearing loss, lifting-related injuries, struck by, and Trenching/Excavation

Planting – Trees, Shrubs, Lawn—Lifting-related injuries, heat stress, cuts, hand injuries, vehicle accidents

Lawn and Landscape maintenance—Cuts, amputation, hand injuries, chemical exposures, eye injury, Ergonomics

Tree care—Slips, trips, falls, cuts, amputations, eye damage, ear damage, electrocution, struck by

Make sure all supervisors and employees understand and follow company rules.

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