

The Safety & Health Advisor

Summer 2007



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Auto Dealership Safety Issues

Automotive Lift Safety

Automotive lifts are essential to the efficiency of automotive service operations. Vehicles weighing thousands of pounds are lifted into the air while highly-skilled, well trained and valued mechanics work underneath them. According to Bob O'Gorman, President of the Automotive Lift Institute (ALI), the number of lifts used in the automotive industry has exploded in the past 20 years, and while the lift industry has a strong safety record, accidents do happen and can have catastrophic results both for the service technician and for the business. The following is a link with several automotive lift accidents that involved fatalities.

[http://www.osha.gov/pls/imis/AccidentSearch.search?acc_keyword="Auto%20Lift"&keyword_list=on](http://www.osha.gov/pls/imis/AccidentSearch.search?acc_keyword=)

To help prevent unnecessary injuries:

- Shops should purchase lifts that have certifications by the American National Standards Institute ANSI/ALI ALCTV - 1998. Having this certification ensures that the lifts has been tested to perform up to its listed specification. See the following link for more information.
<http://www.autolift.org/>
- Establish a planned service regimen that include following the lift manufacturer's recommendations for service, inspection or in the absence of manufacture information, follow the standard.
- Ensure that only trained employees be allowed to use the lift (if you have several types of manufactured lifts, employees must be trained on each type of lift they will use. Training should include:

- Use of operating controls
- Proper spotting of the vehicle
- Understanding the lift capacity
- Proper use of jack stands
- Proper use of safety devices
- Reviewing the safety rules
- Proper housekeeping procedures (lift area should be free of grease, oil, tools, equipment, trash, and other debris)

- A daily inspection of the lift should be completed prior to its use. Safety devices, operating controls, lift arms and other critical parts should be inspected prior to using the lift.
- All maintenance and repair of the lift should be completed by following the manufacturer's requirements. Repairs should only be completed by a qualified lift technician.
- Prior to working under the lift, check to make sure that the lift's safety devices are engaged.
- Some vehicle maintenance and repair activities may cause the vehicle to shift. Follow the manufacturer's guidelines when performing these operations. The use of jack stands or alternate lift points may be required when completing some repairs.

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Lifting It Right

The National Safety Council, in collaboration with the Automotive Lift Institute, is proud to offer the new Lifting It Right program. This DVD Kit and Safety Manual are intended for the automotive service technician who operates an automotive lift and covers the most common in-ground and surface mount lifts and what you need to know to operate each safely and effectively.

<http://www.nsc.org/onlinecart/>

Automotive Lift Safety Tips

- Start every shift with a lift inspection.
- Never lift an occupied vehicle.
- Don't exceed the lift maker's rated capacity.
- Follow spotting and lifting recommendations.
- Check stability at knee-height before completing a lift.
- Clear tools and bystanders before lowering a lift.
- Reposition arms and supports before removing vehicles.
- Follow the maker's maintenance guidelines.
- Only qualified repair technicians and parts.

Best Practices for Preventing Asbestos Exposure Among Brake and Clutch Repair Workers

Automotive technicians and home mechanics who repair and replace brakes and clutches may be exposed to asbestos dust because some automotive brakes and clutches available or in use today may still contain asbestos. Brake and clutch dust can be seen when a brake disc, drum, clutch cover, or the wheel is removed from a car, truck, or other equipment. There are also many small dust particles that cannot be seen with the eye. If the brakes contain asbestos, the dust may contain asbestos fibers, which could be inhaled.

You cannot tell whether brake or clutch components contain asbestos simply by looking at them. For newer vehicles and parts, auto manufacturers, auto parts retailers and packaging information, such as labels or Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS), may be able to tell you whether or not your brake or clutch components contain asbestos. For older vehicles, or vehicles that have had brakes replaced, you may not be able to easily find out if the brake or clutch components contain asbestos.

As a best practice, OSHA states that mechanics should assume that all brakes have asbestos-type shoes. If you work in a commercial automotive shop that performs work on more than five brake or clutch jobs per week, OSHA regulations require the use of one of the following work practices or an equivalent method such as the spray can/solvent system:

- **Negative-Pressure Enclosure/HEPA Vacuum System Method:** This type of enclosure and vacuum system has a special box with clear plastic walls or windows, which fits tightly around a brake or clutch assembly to prevent asbestos exposure.
- **Low Pressure/Wet Cleaning Method:** This specially designed low-pressure spray equipment wets down the brake assembly and catches the runoff in a special basin to prevent airborne brake dust from spreading in the work area.

If you work in a commercial automotive shop that performs work on no more than five brake or clutch jobs per week, OSHA regulations allow the following method instead:

- **Wet Wipe Method:** This method involves using a spray bottle or other device capable of delivering a fine mist of water, or amended water (water with a detergent), at low pressure to wet all brake and clutch parts. The brakes can then be wiped clean with a cloth.

For more information go to

<http://www.epa.gov/asbestos/pubs/brakesbrochure.html>

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Spotlight on Teen Worker Safety

This is the time of year when teens “spring” into action searching for summer employment. Often, these jobs are a teen’s first work experience. In addition, teens often have limited training and work as seasonal/temporary employees. These facts partially explain why teens experience a higher risk of injury, illness and fatality in many industries, including the construction industry. In 2004, 35 youth under 18 died from work-related injuries. In 2003, an estimated 54,800 work-related injuries and illnesses among youth less than 18 years of age were treated in hospital emergency departments. As only one-third of work-related injuries are seen in emergency departments, Therefore it is more likely that approximately 160,000 youth sustain work-related injuries and illnesses each year.

The Teen Employees Web page on OSHA’s Web site serves as an important resource to help employers further prevent teen injuries, illnesses and fatalities in the workplace. Go to <http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/teenworkers/employers.html> for further information. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has published a summary of Child Labor Laws at:

www.mass.gov/Eeohhs2/docs/dph/occupational_health/under18_laws.pdf

In general, persons under age 14 may not work.

Numerous federal agencies, collectively known as the Federal Network for Young Worker Safety and Health (FedNet) have joined together to educate teens, their parents, counselors and employers on how young people can stay safe on the job. FedNet’s new web-based product, Teen Summer Jobs: Safety Pays is available at www.osha.gov/SLTC/youth/summerjobs/index.html. It provides teen worker safety and health materials in English and Spanish.

OSHA - Newest “SHARP” Certifications

Visit OSHA’s “Who’s Newly SHARP” Web page to see the latest list of companies recently certified as Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program (SHARP) sites

www.osha.gov/dcsp/smallbusiness/sharp_approvals.html.

The SHARP program recognizes small employers who operate an exemplary safety and health management system. Acceptance into the SHARP by OSHA is an achievement of status that will single out companies among their business peers as a model for worksite safety and health. Upon receiving SHARP recognition, the worksite will be exempt from programmed inspections during the period that the SHARP certification is valid.

To participate in SHARP, companies must:

- Request a consultation visit that involves a complete hazard identification survey;
- Involve employees in the consultation process;
- Correct all hazards identified by the consultant;
- Implement and maintain a safety and health management system that, at a minimum, addresses OSHA’s 1989 Safety and Health Program Management Guideline;
- Lower your company’s Lost-Workday Injury and Illness rate (LWDII) and Total Recordable Case Rate (TRCR) below the national average; and
- Agree to notify your state Consultation Project Office prior to making any changes in the working conditions or introducing new hazards into the workplace.

After you satisfy all SHARP requirements, the Consultation Project Manager in your state may recommend your worksite for final SHARP approval and certification. The state and OSHA will formally recognize your worksite at a SHARP awards ceremony.

As a certified SHARP site, you will be granted a 1 – year exemption from OSHA’s scheduled inspections for the first year of your SHARP participation. After one year of certification, you may request renewal for 1 or 2 years, provided that you:

- Apply for renewal during the last quarter of the exemption period;
- Allow a full service comprehensive visit to ensure that your exemplary safety and health management system has been effectively maintained or improved;

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- Continue to meet all eligibility criteria and program requirements; and
- Agree, if requesting a 2-year renewal, to conduct an interim-year self-evaluation based on the elements of the 1989 Safety and Health Program Management Guidelines (available online at <http://www.osha.gov>) and includes OSHA's required injury and illness logs.

Not Quite Ready for SHARP

If you meet most but not all of the SHARP eligibility criteria and are committed to working toward full SHARP approval, you may be recommended by your state Consultation Project Manager for an inspection deferral of up to 18 months if:

- You have had a complete hazard identification consultation visit at your worksite and you have corrected all hazards;
- You are in the process of implementing an effective safety and health management system; and
- You can meet all SHARP requirements during the deferral period.

Healthcare – Safety and Health Information Bulletin

OSHA and NIOSH announced on April 11, 2007 that they jointly published a safety and health information bulletin (SHIB) designed to help protect surgical personnel from needle stick injuries while using suture needles. "Surgical personnel are at risk of occupational exposure to bloodborne pathogens from injuries caused by sharp surgical instruments," said Assistant Secretary of Labor for OSHA Edwin G. Foulke Jr. "We strongly encourage the use of blunt-tip suture needles when feasible and appropriate to reduce this risk."

"The effectiveness of blunt-tip suture needles for preventing needle stick injuries has been widely reported," said NIOSH Director John Howard, M.D. "We are pleased to partner with OSHA in

offering guidance to protect the safety and health of medical professionals."

The SHIB describes the hazards of sharp-tip suture needles and presents evidence of the effectiveness of blunt-tip needles in decreasing injuries. It also emphasizes OSHA's requirement to use appropriate, available and effective safer medical devices.

Sharp-tip suture needles are the leading source of penetrating injuries to surgical personnel, causing 51 percent to 71 percent of these incidents. These injuries potentially expose staff and patients to bloodborne pathogens.

The American College of Surgeons issued a statement in 2005 supporting the use of blunt-tip suture needles where clinically appropriate. This statement has been endorsed by the six organizations that, along with the ACS, make up the Council on Surgical and Perioperative Safety.

The SHIB can be accessed at the Web site of OSHA at www.osha.gov/dts/shib/shib032307.html or NIOSH www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2007-132. OSHA's Bloodborne Pathogens and Needlesticks webpage can be viewed at www.osha.gov/needlesticks.

Manufacturing & Related Industries

Machine Safeguarding Guide

On March 15, 2007, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) issued a revised guide called [Safeguarding Equipment and Protecting Employees from Amputations](#). The guide is connected to OSHA's [National Emphasis Program on Amputations](#), released Oct. 27, 2006 to help employers promote safe workplaces with particular focus on small businesses that typically do not have the necessary resources to address workplace safety needs. The following is from the recent news release.

"Amputations are among the most severe and

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disabling workplace injuries that result in permanent disability. They are widespread and involve various activities and equipment," said Assistant Secretary of Labor for OSHA, Edwin G. Foulke, Jr.

"These injuries result from the use and care of machines such as saws, presses, conveyors and bending, rolling or shaping machines as well as from powered and non-powered hand tools, forklifts, doors, trash compactors and during materials handling activities.

The revised OSHA guide identifies eight mechanical motions and eight hazardous actions that present possible amputation hazards. The guide also sets forth steps employers can take to reduce these hazards.

The material in *Safeguarding Equipment and Protecting Employees from Amputations* is appropriate for anyone responsible for the operation, servicing, and care of machines or equipment -- employers, employees, safety professionals and industrial hygienists. Topics covered in the latest document include hazard analysis, safeguarding machinery, awareness devices and hazardous energy (lockout/tagout).

Printed copies of OSHA's revised guide are available by calling (202) 693-1888, or by writing U.S. Department of Labor, OSHA Publications, P.O. Box 37535, Washington, D.C. 20013-7535. It is also available on OSHA's Web site at www.osha.gov/pls/publications/pubindex.list.

Eye Protection

A number of different work tasks require the use of proper eye protection. Tasks could include handling chemicals, cutting, sanding, drilling, grinding, using compressed air, welding, using lasers or working under vehicles where foreign materials could be dislodged during servicing. It is not always as simple as wearing "safety glasses".

There are situations when a secondary face shield is needed or goggles must be used instead of safety glasses such as working in dusty environments or where there is a potential for a chemical splash when an adequate seal around the eye is needed.

Eye protection must meet ANSI (American National Standards Institute) guideline Z87 for both lenses and frames and this should be clearly indicated on the safety eyewear along with the manufacturer name. In addition if there is a potential for flying particles there must be adequate side protection. Those being used for welding must have the appropriate shade rating and eyewear used in laser work must attenuate the proper light wavelengths and power densities.

The OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) general industry standard for eye and face protection is 1910.133 and for construction is 1926.102 (1926.54 for laser use). OSHA provides eTools on the subject matter that can be accessed by the Internet at <http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/etools/eyeandface/index.html> and specifically for laser safety at <http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/laserhazards/standards.html>.

Each organization should review its operations and work tasks to determine if there are potential hazards requiring eye protection, ensure that the proper protection is selected, employees have been trained on its use and supervisors enforce its use.

Off-the-Job Injuries

According to a March 2007 article, the National Safety Council estimates that **off-the-job** injuries and fatalities cost U.S. businesses almost \$200 billion annually in lost productivity. In fact, 9 out of 10 unintentional injury deaths and two-thirds of disabling injuries occurred off the job in 2005. As the No. 1 cause of death for people up to 44 years old and the fifth leading cause of death overall, unintentional **off-the-job** injuries are a major concern regarding employee health and safety.

The five leading causes of injury death in 2005 (the most recent year data is available) were motor vehicles, falls, poisoning, choking, and drowning. Below are some revealing statistics:

Motor vehicles

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- 45,800 motor vehicle-related deaths
- 2.4 million disabling injuries resulting from motor vehicle accidents.
- The majority of motor vehicle-related deaths occurred among 15 to 24 year olds

Falls

- 17,700 fall-related deaths
- Of those, 17,000 took place off the job
- The highest rate of occurrence was among those 75 and older

Poisoning

- Off-the-job poisoning deaths numbered 20,700
- 19,176 of the victims were male; 6,281 were female
- The highest rate of occurrence was among people aged 25-44

Choking

- 4,600 choking deaths
- Of those, 4,500 occurred off the job
- The highest rate of occurrence was among those 75 and older

Drowning

- 3,600 drowning deaths
- The vast majority of those deaths – 3,400 – occurred off the job
- The highest rate of occurrence was among people aged 45-64

Atlantic Charter has purchased a copy of the NSC Off-The-Job Safety Program and CD that includes these and other statistics on off-the-job injuries. It outlines the elements of a successful program, discusses motivating employees and creating the right workplace culture, and offers tips and tactics for communicating your off-the-job safety program. The Companion CD includes tools to help companies establish an off-the-job safety program.

Please contact your Safety & Health Consultant if you would like assistance with putting such a program together.

If you need assistance in evaluating your ergonomics or safety and health program, please contact Neal Freedman, John Cotnam, Margie Lobaton, or Mark Hickox from Atlantic Charter's Safety and Health Department at (617) 488-6500.