8 - Horseplay Is No Laughing Matter: Safety Training

EH&S – MGA

Goals: This safety session should teach you to:
A. Realize that fooling around on the job can be dangerous.
B. Understand the need to take safety responsibilities seriously.

OSHA Regulations: General Duty Clause Sec. 5 (b)

1. Horseplay and Fooling Around Are the Opposites of Safe, Responsible Work
   A. According to the dictionary:
      1. Horseplay means rough fun.
      2. Fooling around means doing foolish, useless things.
      3. Fool is a person with little or no judgment or common sense.

2. Workplace Rules Ban Horseplay Because It’s Dangerous
   A. Horseplay is usually a friendly, physical way to let off steam. But that type of fooling around is dangerous on the job because:
      1. When you’re fooling around, you’re not concentrating on your work.
      2. Directing your horseplay at others is even more dangerous. They’re not expecting the distraction and could easily have an accident such as falling into a moving machine part, slipping on the floor, dropping a tool, etc.
      3. Giving less than full concentration and attention to safety procedures makes you less likely to notice or account for hazards until it may be too late.
      4. Most accidents are caused by unsafe acts—and horseplay itself is an unsafe act.

3. Horseplay Creates Unnecessary Risks
   A. You can prevent most workplace accidents by being alert to hazards and following safety rules. You can’t do either when you indulge in horseplay. That creates risks. For example:
      1. Running, chasing, or pushing can cause slips, trips, falls, and other accidents. You may:
         a. Not notice spills or items lying on the floor
         b. Lose your footing
         c. Crash into, or push someone else into, heavy equipment or moving parts
         d. Knock boxes or materials on to a person
         e. Knock over open containers of hazardous substances
      2. Throwing tools is a frequent cause of injuries. They may:
         a. Stab someone with a sharp edge.
         b. Hit someone in the head, eye, foot, etc., and cause an injury.
         c. Bounce off a wall, table, or other surface and hit someone.
         d. Fall from a height and hit a person below with tremendous impact.
B. Fooling around with PPE can damage it and expose you or another worker to a hazardous substance.

1. Speeding or stunt driving with a forklift can cause it to tip over or hit people or objects, possibly injuring the driver or pedestrians.
2. Climbing on or under forklift forks or moving crane parts can cause you to get crushed or pushed. It’s against the law.
3. Running with a hand truck could spill the load on someone or run over feet.
4. Pushing, teasing, or otherwise distracting people working with machinery could cause pinch point or other injuries.
5. Practical jokes like “hiding” someone’s PPE, dropping your half of a load, turning out lights, etc., are not funny— they’re dangerous.

4. Take Your Job, Your Responsibilities, and Safety Seriously

A. You’re responsible for performing your job safely.

1. Safety rules and procedures are designed to protect you.
2. Everyone must follow safety rules.
   a. Failure to follow the rules is dangerous—for you and for others.
   b. Horseplay and other safety rule violations can lead to disciplinary action.
3. Don’t indulge in horseplay or accuse those who won’t go along of having “no sense of humor.”
   a. Think how bad you would feel if your horseplay injured or sickened someone else— maybe seriously.
   b. Think how foolish you would feel if with your horseplay you injured or sickened yourself.
4. Don’t allow other people to engage you in horseplay.

Summation: Horseplay Causes Accidents and Is Banned on the Job

Physical fooling around on the job is a serious hazard. Don’t do it.