

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.