

Safety Topics

Volume 02, Issue 7

July 2002

Special points of interest:

Summer Sun Protection & Obituary

For what it is worth!

This month's *Safety Topics* articles are courtesy of the **Concrete Connection** a monthly publication of the Ohio Ready Mixed Concrete Association.

Sorry, I only made it about half way through the Obituary for Mr. Common Sense before I ran out of space. I will finish that up next month.



Take Steps to Protect Against Sun Damage!

Once again, summer has arrived. People working and playing outside need to take precautions to protect their skin and eyes from the damaging effects of the sun. It is important to protect your skin all year long, but the sun's rays are strongest in the spring and summer.

The number of new cases of skin cancer and the number of deaths caused by skin cancer are rapidly rising in the United States, according to the OSHA. This is particularly bad news since the numbers of cases for most cancers have been declining in recent years.

Exposure to sunlight can cause cancer at any age. The eyes and the skin are the most susceptible to sun damage. While sun exposure can cause cancer, it also causes premature aging of the skin, wrinkles, cataracts and other eye problems. People need to be especially careful in the sun if they fall into any of the following risk categories:

- Numerous moles, irregular moles, or large moles;
- Freckles or burn before tanning;
- Fair skin, or blond, red, or light brown hair; or
- Spend a lot of time outdoors.

Exposure to sunlight and its ultraviolet radiation is the number one source of damage to the skin and the cause of skin cancer. For people who work outdoors, five important steps to protect themselves against UV radiation and skin cancer include:

1. Wear protective clothing to cover as much skin as possible. Be sure that the clothing does not transmit visible light by holding your hand behind the fabric and in front of a light source. If you can see your hand the fabric does not offer enough protection.
2. Use a sunscreen with a SPF of 15 or higher and one labeled as broad spectrum (effective against both UVA and UVB). Apply sunscreen at least 15 minutes prior to going outdoors and reapply every two hours.
3. Wear a wide-brimmed hat. Baseball caps do not

protect the back of the neck or the tops of ears where most skin cancers commonly develop.

4. Wear sunglasses that block UV rays.
5. Limit direct sun exposure especially between 10 AM and 4 PM.

While it is very important to protect against developing skin cancer, it is also important to monitor damage already done to skin. Early detection is important in the cure for skin cancer. Warning signs include a spot on the skin that is changing in shape, size or color, over a month to a year.

You can learn more about skin cancer with a visit to the American Cancer Society web page at www.cancer.org.

Obituary for Mr. Common Sense

Today we mourn the passing of an old friend, by the name of Common Sense. Common Sense lived a long life but died in the United States from heart failure on the brink of the new millennium. No one really knows how old he was, since his birth records were long ago lost in bureaucratic red tape.

He selflessly devoted his life to service in schools, hospitals, homes, and factories helping folks get jobs done without fanfare and foolishness. For decades, petty rules, silly laws, and frivolous lawsuits held no power over Common Sense.

He was credited with cultivating such valued lessons as to know when to come in out of the rain, why the early bird gets the worm, and that life isn't always fair.

Common Sense lived by simple, sound financial policies (don't spend more than you earn), reliable parenting strategies (the adults are in charge, not the kids), and it's okay to come in second. A veteran of the Industrial Revolution, the Great Depression, and the Technological Revolution, Common Sense survived cultural and educational trends including body piercing, whole language, and "new math". But his health declined when he became infected with the "if-it-only-helps-one-person-it's-worth-it" virus.

In recent decades his waning strength proved no match for the ravages of well intentioned but overbearing regulations. **(To Be Continued)**

Safety Topics - What's no fun in the Sun?

Volume 02 Issue 7 - July 2002

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These Safety Topics are an attempt at continuing education. Please read the information and let me know if you have an idea for future Topics. Your input is appreciated!

Plant Location: _____

Supervisor/Foreman/Plant Manager Signature:

Names of those who reviewed this information:

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