



# MAFES Dawg Tracks

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Common Sense &  
Accident Prevention



Generally, common sense isn't an inherited trait. We may be born with the undeveloped trait and, as we grow older, we cultivate it through experiences from other people and our own experiences.

Maintaining an awareness of our environment, self-preservation, and a genuine concern for our fellow workers are all factors that help us to cultivate good common sense. Contrary to popular opinions, all workers can pretty much prevent themselves from getting involved in accidents by observing others - observing their risk taking and trying to learn from others' mistakes, as opposed to you being the one that learns by an injury.

The statistics and the experts say that 80 percent of all accidents are caused by unsafe acts on the part of employees - not by unsafe conditions. By law, we are required to furnish a safe and healthy workplace. It is still our responsibility to be aware of our work environments and to follow safe work practices. Obviously, if we stay focused on our work projects and practice good common sense, the work will progress smoother and we will greatly reduce the potential for an accident.

According to statistics, most accidents are caused by unsafe acts, including:

### **Being in a Hurry:**

Sometimes our concentrations are to do a job quickly, rather than safely and rationally. It's more prudent to do a good job and work at staying safe. Staying safe is "pretty" good insurance that we will make it back home every night.

### **Taking Chances:**

Daring behavior or intentional disregard for safe work practices can put our whole workforce in jeopardy or risk. We should follow all established safety rules and watch out for our fellow workers.

With regards to this subject of taking chances, I refer to the common "horseplay" that always leads to someone getting hurt and/or ending up in a disciplinary situation.

### **Being Preoccupied:**

I believe that this is one of the biggest problems that exists with workers in general today - that is daydreaming, thinking about what they will be doing after work or during the upcoming weekend. In my opinion, the worst of all these negative traits is abuse of cell phone use during regular working hours. Generally, many employees continuously talk or text during regular work hours. When questioned, they become indignant and think that we are infringing on them. Old "common sense" or "horse sense" will tell you that if you have outside problems at work or distractions, you can't do your best work. Non-focusing work habits can mean two things, which both are bad: (1) the quality of your work will be inferior and (2) you inherently will be putting yourself at risk to get hurt.

### **Having a Negative Attitude:**

Anger and other negative attitudes always rule over rationale or caution. Coach "Bear" Bryant used the phrase, "He wanted kids that were agile, mobile and hostile and arrived on Saturdays in a bad mood." That works for football players, but not too good for farm and other workers. Having a "short fuse" or "flying off the handle" can be very dangerous and potentially hazardous at work but is also true for situations outside of the workplace as well. Bad moods need to be kept in check; they not only affect you, but others around you. We used to say in the apparel industry that when you have one of these attitudes to go outside and "kick a bush" to level your emotions.

### **Failing to Look for Hidden Hazards:**

*Safety is everyone's responsibility* is our MSU "Bulldog" safety slogan. As we go about our daily tasks, we should be aware of the hazards that potentially lurk around us. We might save an injury to a fellow worker or ourselves.

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