

**The cost of worker's compensation due to construction accidents and injuries each year is estimated to be \$2.5 billion in the US.** Construction firms can save an average of \$32,000 for every medically consulted injury they prevent from happening.

Workers express significant concerns about the risk of injuries, with the alarming statistic that 1 in 10 workers sustain injuries annually. Their well-being and the potential impact it has on families is the primary concern for any project.

While these concerns are primarily rooted in human welfare, it's important to recognize that the costs associated with workplace injuries ultimately find their way through to investors and end users. This acknowledgment underscores the interconnected nature of worker well-being and broader economic considerations, emphasizing the importance of prioritizing safety measures to mitigate both human and financial costs.

It's exciting at the commencement of the year, to read of celebration events, acknowledgement of well-deserved promotions and numerous positive market initiatives.

Similarly, can we extend this enthusiasm to refocus on Health, Safety, and Wellness (HSW) as we rebound from the holidays, fostering an optimistic mindset toward minimizing injuries and reducing time off work?

As we embark on the new year, let's kick off events, meetings, and announcements with a robust combination of HSW communication and actionable steps. The array of topics and opportunities is vast, and the following points might inspire thoughtful behaviors:

- Winter Months – construction projects in regions with harsh winters may experience heightened risks. Cold weather can create slippery surfaces and icy conditions, increasing the likelihood of slips, trips, and falls. Adverse weather conditions may affect visibility and make certain tasks more challenging, leading to an elevated risk of accidents.
- Safe work practice – recognize the symptoms of cold stress? Cold conditions can result in hypothermia, stay dry/pack extra cloths, drink warm liquids.
- Social jet lag - the festive period often disrupts regular sleep and eating patterns, leading to social jet lag. This can induce sluggishness and clumsiness, potentially causing errors. Ensure fitness for work by checking in with remote colleagues who may be experiencing these effects.
- Safe work sites - prioritize a comprehensive review of site safety protocols. Regularly inspect work areas, equipment, and plant facilities. Familiarize yourself with specific winter working site rules. Maintain a vigilant mindset and prioritize safety at all times.
- Car care – regularly check tire pressure, coolant levels, window washer fluid, and oil levels for your vehicle. Carry essential supplies, and consider keeping cat litter on hand for unexpected challenges, providing traction in slippery conditions. These precautions contribute to safe winter driving.

Many individuals engaging with this knowledge share are likely well-acquainted with the subject, and I trust they are already well-versed in OSHA 10/30 safety fundamentals. January presents an opportune moment for a refresher course.

Preparedness for potential construction-related challenges is fundamental to success, and the implementation of a robust management plan coupled with vigilant monitoring is instrumental in problem avoidance. This approach not only averts issues but also contributes significantly to saving projects from potential complications. Nevertheless, it's important to emphasize that safety risk prevention and thorough planning take precedence above all else.

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