



Staying Safe on the Job

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Remind employees to be aware of common hazards they might find around the store and to be safe at work.

ESTIMATED COMPLETION TIME: 3 to 5 minutes to work through the worksheet. For a longer lesson, use the “For Further Discussion” section.

HOW TO USE: The lesson includes a worksheet with a list of scenarios, each with the potential of causing injury. For each scenario, employees will list two ways they can prevent injury while dealing with the situation. The trainer’s notes will list several possible responses, but those may not be the only correct responses. The answers listed for the worksheet are some common answers, but be sure to include your own insights or other answers from students. Always take into account information you may have presented in your store’s safety manual.

OPENING COMMENTS: Staying safe on the job is something we should think about every day. It’s important that our store be a safe place to work so we can all go home healthy. Much of that safety is up to you. You can prevent many of the common accidents by following our store’s safety procedures and by being vigilant to correct unsafe working conditions when you find them. Read each of the scenarios listed on your worksheet and then list two possible ways to deal with the situation.

WORKSHEET INSTRUCTIONS: Have students complete the worksheet, then discuss.

SCENARIO: The weekly truck has arrived and it’s time to unload it. You are assigned to the boxes that must be stacked on racking in the warehouse, including several large boxes.

KEEP IT SAFE

- Stretch muscles before lifting large items to avoid muscle strain. Use proper lifting techniques, such as lifting with your legs and not your back. Wear a back support if needed. If you don’t think you can lift a box on your own, ask someone else to help you.

SCENARIO: The weekly truck has arrived, and this time you’ve been assigned to open the boxes and restock the shelves.

KEEP IT SAFE

- One of the most common causes of cuts on the job relates to the improper use of box cutters. Use box cutters with retractable blades. Always cut away from yourself, never toward your body. Wear sturdy gloves when working with blades and knives.

SCENARIO: After you finished unpacking the truck, there were a lot of customers in the store, and most of the packing boxes got left in a pile near the entrance of the warehouse.

KEEP IT SAFE

- Loose boxes can get scattered and cause a tripping hazard. Take the boxes outside to the dumpster or recycling bin. You could also break them down and store them out of the way of traffic.

SCENARIO: While helping a customer in the paint aisle, you notice a can of paint thinner lying on its side. There is a leak around the cap and there is a puddle on the floor.

KEEP IT SAFE

- Chemical spills can be dangerous and there are several ways we can deal with them, depending on what was spilt. In this instance, clear customers from the aisle and report the situation to a manager. Wear rubber gloves when handling containers that may have been affected by the spill. Refer to the Material Safety Data Sheet for the paint thinner to understand the best way to clean up the spill. Ventilate the area to avoid breathing hazardous vapors.



SCENARIO: It's raining and customers are tracking in a lot of water with their shoes and umbrellas. The welcome mat at the entrance now has a big wrinkle in it.

KEEP IT SAFE

- A wet floor and a wrinkled floor mat pose tripping hazards to both customers and employees. Put up a wet floor warning sign. Mop up water frequently to keep the area as dry as you can. Readjust the welcome mat so it is flat and will not pose a tripping hazard.

SCENARIO: A customer comes in with a lawn mower blade that needs sharpened. You decide to do this task yourself while the customer waits.

KEEP IT SAFE:

- You should always have proper training on any of the store service equipment before using it. The customer should not be in the same area while you sharpen the blade. Always wear personal safety protection while sharpening, including gloves and eye protection.

CLOSING COMMENTS: There are, of course, many more scenarios we encounter everyday where we need to be aware of safety. This has been a reminder of those of the issues we might commonly encounter. Remember, your safety on the job is our top priority, and it should be yours too.

FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION:

- Talk about other areas or potential hazards employees may identify in the store. How could they fix them?
- If your store has a lumberyard, discuss potential hazards to customers picking lumber.
- When a customer does have an accident, what should employees do? Review the store's emergency response plan.

ADDITIONAL TRAINING: Have your employees take NHPA's Store Safety module in the Loss Prevention course for a more in-depth discussion of store safety.