

SUPERVISOR

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Fall Protection Isn't Rocket Science, Says Expert

Drive around practically any residential neighborhood anywhere in Canada or the United States and you'll see them—workers pounding shingle nails or installing exterior siding— with either no fall protection gear, or wearing harnesses that aren't attached to anchorage points.

In a fall, a safety harness to nowhere would be about as effective as a seatbelt pulled across your chest and lap, but not clicked into its safety latch, during a collision.

Every day, as a result, workers fall from roofs and suffer serious, sometimes permanently disabling injuries or worse, and small construction companies— particularly residential roofers, framers and siding installers—are fined for violating fall protection regulations.

Tim Accursi, a fall protection expert with 28 years of experience under his harness, and chair of both the ANSI/ASSE Z359.12 subcommittee covering connecting components for personal fall arrest systems, and the CSA Z259.12 committee on fall protection connecting components, says failure to protect workers from falls on construction sites is a problem worldwide.

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Workplace Bullying Remains Alive and Unwell

In spite of legislation in many jurisdictions that promotes psychologically safe workplaces by prohibiting intimidation and bullying—such destructive behavior remains alive and unwell in the modern workplace.

So says Heather MacKenzie, a Vancouver, BC, lawyer who heads The Integrity Group: Education and Conciliation Ltd., with the goal of helping employers create and maintain workplaces free from harassment, discrimination, bullying and violence.

"It's a huge issue. I probably get five calls a day from new clients needing support for workplace bullying issues," she adds.

The Stereotypical Bully Isn't Typical

People have a certain picture in their minds about what bullying is and who is a bully. And that image usually involves a burly, imposing, red-faced and wild-eyed male who loudly chastises his targets in front of others.

While there are burly male bullies, MacKenzie says females are every bit as likely— perhaps even more likely— to be workplace bullies than males.

"Bullying is psychological violence. The reason that bullies do what they do is for the sole purpose of controlling their targets," she says.

"...The reason that bullies do what they do is for the sole purpose of controlling their targets."

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Picture This! Worker Rescued Nine Hours After Racking Falls Onto Forklift

We don't know how fond forklift operator Tomasz Wiszniewski is of cheese, but he could be forgiven for liking it a little less after becoming trapped under 55,000 tonnes of the stuff when 18-metre (60-foot) high shelving collapsed at a food distribution warehouse in Hinstock, England. Wiszniewski, seen at right, stayed inside his forklift's protective structure throughout the ordeal and was able to walk out of the plant without injuries. Investigators are trying to determine the cause of the racking collapse. (Daily Express, UK)

Siri Can Call for Help in Emergency

During a medical emergency where precious seconds count, it's pretty hard to summon help and provide cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) when you and the victim are the only persons present. But a recent case in Australia shows how a mother used Siri, Apple's voice-controlled personal assistant, on her iPhone to call for an ambulance while she worked to resuscitate her one-year-old daughter, Giana. She had seen on her baby monitor that Giana had stopped breathing and turned blue during a bout with bronchiolitis, a lung infection.

Stacey Gleeson dropped her iPhone 6S while turning the light on in her daughter's bedroom. While resuscitating the child, she yelled "Hey Siri, call the ambulance."

Gleeson was able to communicate with an emergency services worker while saving Giana's life. Her daughter has since made a full recovery. The iPhone 6S and 6 models allow Siri to be kept on all the time and voice activated. Other earlier iPhone models do not have this capability. Gleeson told 7News in Australia that she had played around with Siri and thought it was a fun feature, but, "Now I have that feature turned on all the time and it will never be turned off again."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

SEVEN STATISTICS: MANUAL MATERIALS HANDLING



Manual materials handling involves the lifting, carrying and moving of materials and things. These tasks are highly associated with musculoskeletal disorders among the workers performing them. Here are seven statistics relating to manual materials handling.

- 1. Manual materials handling is the number **one** cause of occupational fatigue and lower back pain. (Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety)
- 2. **Six** work-related factors associated with manual materials handling which can contribute to

back injuries include the weight of the load being carried; the size and shape of the load; the carrying distance; the location of the load in relation to the worker's body; lifting above the waist or below the knees; and the number and frequency of lifts performed by a worker during a shift.

- 3. Soft-tissue injuries, which are common among workers performing manual materials handling, affect **12** areas of the body: the lower back, shoulders, neck, elbows, arms, hands, wrists, hips, legs, knees, ankles, and feet. (US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
- 4. About **75** percent of Canadian workers whose jobs involve manual materials handling experience back pain due to an injury at some point. (Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety)
- 5. Workers' compensation costs for an average lost-time injury are **\$20,000** for a shoulder injury and **\$25,000** for a back injury. (US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
- 6. **Four** things employers can do to protect workers from the risks associated with manual materials handling are: designing and organizing tasks to completely avoid the need for manual materials handling; using automation and lifting equipment; organizing manual handling tasks in a safe way, such as splitting larger loads into smaller ones; and providing information and training to workers on tasks, use of equipment and correct handling techniques.
- 7. About **10** percent of jobs require extensive manual materials handling, such as lifting, holding, carrying, throwing, pushing or pulling. (US Office of Compliance)

SAFE SUPERVISOR

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SIRI CAN CALL FOR HELP IN EMERGENCY CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

Her husband, Nick, told 7News that Siri likely gave Stacey the precious moments she needed to save their daughter's life.

In another incident, an 18-year-old was able to voice-activate Siri to call for help after he became trapped under a vehicle that fell on top of him while he was repairing it. Pass this information on to your workers who have the latest iPhone models, to show them how Siri can help during a workplace emergency.

Widow of Murdered Worker Launches Awareness Campaign

The widow of a murdered convenience store worker has launched a program focusing on the dangers of retail clerks working night shifts.

Karanpal Singh Bhangu, 35, was one of two Mac's convenience store workers who were killed during robberies at two different Mac's outlets in Edmonton in the early hours of Dec. 18, 2015. He was shot in the stomach during a robbery and managed to sound the panic alarm before he died.

A second Mac's worker, Ricky Massin Cenabre, 41, died after being shot the same morning during another robbery. Colton Steinhauer, 27, Laylin Delorme, 24, and a young teenager who cannot be named have been charged with two counts of first-degree murder, plus robbery and weapons offences.

Kiran Bhangu has launched the Karan Project in her husband's memory, aimed at highlighting the dangers night workers face. She told reporters in Edmonton that she will be lobbying government and retail stores to improve security for overnight convenience store and gas bar workers through such measures as having them work behind bullet-proof glass partitions, having two workers on shift at one time, and improving emergency response when panic alarms are sounded.

"Night shift employees are at high risk of violence and crime. There has to be safer measures followed. I wanted to do something about this so nobody else would miss their father on Father's Day because of these avoidable events," she recently told the *Edmonton Sun* newspaper.

BC Offering Fentanyl Training for First Responders

Fentanyl, a powerful narcotic painkiller, is dangerous stuff, not only for people using it, but also for first responders handling it and dealing with people experiencing fentanyl overdoses.

Police leaders and drug experts in British Columbia recently held workshops aimed at safeguarding first responders dealing with fentanyl-related calls, along with those relating to another toxic opioid, W-18. Fentanyl overdose symptoms include shallow or labored breathing, extreme sleepiness and difficulty in walking and talking.

"For police officers, medical personnel and the public, it's concerning to know that, in a growing number of medical

emergencies, drug users don't necessarily know what they have ingested. We want to ensure that our first responders have the tools necessary to have a better understanding of these challenges," says Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General Mike Morris.

Fentanyl is frequently disguised in other drugs, including heroin, cocaine, ecstasy and even marijuana, to enhance the effects of these drugs and increase addiction to boost drug dealers' profits. Even a small amount of fentanyl can be fatal and it is easy for users to overdose, especially if they don't know that their recreational drugs have been laced with fentanyl.

It is also possible for first responders to be exposed to fentanyl, which can easily be absorbed through the skin, with fatal consequences. First responders, including medical personnel, paramedics, firefighters and police officers, who may end up handling fentanyl or handling patients who have overdosed on fentanyl, need to wear chemical-resistant gloves to prevent the drug from entering their bodies. When investigating drug labs, recommended PPE for police officers includes full hazmat suits and full face piece NIOSH certified self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA.)

WSCC Warns on Asbestos Exposure in Construction

The Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut (WSCC) has launched an asbestos awareness campaign for workers in the construction industry. It warns that there are buildings constructed after 1990 in the Northwest Territories and Nunavut which may have asbestos-containing materials. The WSCC's definition of asbestos is "any manufactured product or other material that contains one percent or more of asbestos."

Common construction materials that may contain asbestos include T-bar ceiling tiles; drywall jointing materials; vinyl asbestos tiles; stippled finishes; and pipe insulation. The WSCC says workers in building construction or renovations, including carpentry; construction work; insulation installation; plumbing, roofing; shipbuilding; textiles; and remediation and waste management; need to be aware of the possibility of asbestos exposure and understand how to protect themselves and others.

"Remember, you may not necessarily be aware that you have been exposed to asbestos. The long latency period of asbestos-related diseases—20 to 40 years—can lull you into thinking you were not affected," says the agency.

Diseases and fatalities associated with asbestos exposure are preventable. The WSCC urges construction supervisors to provide asbestos awareness training to their workers.

"If a worksite is at risk for asbestos, ensure that the inspection is conducted by a qualified person. Equip all workers with the proper personal protection equipment and understand proper handling procedures in the presence of asbestos," says the WSCC.

For additional information, visit the Asbestos Abatement Codes of Practice at <http://www.wsc.nt.ca/node/2576>

FOCUS ON: EXERCISE AND BACK PAIN PREVENTION

Cover Your Back, With Exercise

Exercise, either alone or in combination with education, is highly effective in preventing lower back pain among workers, according to a study conducted by researchers at The George Institute for Global Health in Sydney, Australia.

“Back pain has a high recurrence rate, with roughly 50 percent of patients experiencing a recurrence within a year,” says Prof. Chris Maher, director of the Musculoskeletal Division at The George. “That’s why these findings are so important. Exercise can potentially halve the risk of getting lower back pain.”

Dr. Daniel Steffens, a research fellow from The George Institute and the University of Sydney, says low back pain is a significant global health burden, yet there is a lack of clear guidelines for prevention.

“Interventions include everything from shoe insoles to education,” he says. “Our study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of current interventions.”

The researchers—who conducted a systematic review of 23 published reports, involving 30,850 participants in 21 different randomized clinical trials—found that exercise, with or without an education component, was effective in preventing back pain.

“In contrast, we also found that education alone, back belts, shoe insoles and ergonomic interventions do not prevent back pain,” says Dr. Steffens.

In addition to negatively impacting overall health, back pain also has economic implications for millions of people worldwide. Pain and risk of injury can force people to take leave from work, resulting in lost wages.

Exercises which are effective in preventing lower back pain focus on strength training, improving flexibility, and aerobics. They include upper and lower limb exercises and exercises targeting the spine.

“Walking alone is not enough,” says Dr. Steffens. “While a well-designed walking program can improve aerobic fitness, that’s only one component of the exercise programs shown to prevent back pain. You need to be doing a range of exercises that will improve strength, flexibility, skill and aerobic fitness.”

Before starting any type of exercise program, people should seek advice from a qualified health professional who is used to prescribing exercise and knows how to screen for health conditions that would make exercise unsafe or require a modified program.

“If you are guided by a health professional, there are actually very few people who cannot safely perform some form of exercise,” says Dr. Steffens. 🍁



FROM THE FATALITY FILES



Wife Remembers Late Husband as a Hero

The wife of a 30-year-old man killed when he became buried under phosphate rock at an Alberta fertilizer plant hopes her late husband is remembered as a hero.

Kenneth Goss was killed at Agrium’s Redwater Fertilizer Operations facility on June 2, 2016. Another employee who was working with Goss was not injured when the rock pile collapsed.

Shawna Goss told Global News Edmonton that her husband was also a volunteer firefighter in Redwater. She says he “lived and breathed firefighting” and had purchased a house just up the street from the fire station in order to be able to respond more quickly to calls.

His widow said that he was also passionate about safety, holding more than 20 safety certifications and even having a first aid and safety station in his basement.

“There was no part of his life where he was unsafe,” she said, adding that she is waiting for answers from Alberta Occupational Health and Safety about what happened.

“I don’t want anyone to feel the way I feel ever again, especially being 27 and being a widow.” The two had only been married for 10 months, but had been together for seven years. 🍁

Bullying at Work: What it is and how to Stop it

WHAT'S AT STAKE?

When most of us hear the term bully or bullying we probably think back to the school bully of our childhood, or the all too frequent news stories of kids being bullied at school or even cyberbullying. Unfortunately, some people never grow out of being a bully and bullying at work takes place more often than you might think.

WHAT'S THE DANGER?

Workplace bullying is repeated, unreasonable actions of a person or group, directed towards an employee or group of employees, meant to intimidate, degrade, threaten, or undermine performance. The bully can be a manager, a co-worker, or any other employee, vendor or even a customer. Bullying is disruptive behavior that can physically and mentally harm the victim and put the entire workplace at risk.

Examples of Bullying

- ✿ Persistent unjustified or invalid criticism.
- ✿ Spreading untrue rumors.
- ✿ Intimidation, physical or verbal abuse.
- ✿ Placing blame without any factual justification.
- ✿ Yelling at, swearing at, or humiliating the target, either in private or public.
- ✿ Exclusion, social isolation, or treating the target differently than other employees or members of their work group.
- ✿ Excessive monitoring or micro-managing.
- ✿ Unrealistic deadlines or goals or constant changing of expectations, guidelines and rules.

Effects of Bullying

- ✿ Reduced self-esteem.
- ✿ Increased depression and anxiety.
- ✿ Work withdrawal, sickness and increased absences which can lead to financial problems.
- ✿ Sleep and digestive problems.
- ✿ Tension and stress at work and at home; and even
- ✿ Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

Reclaim control:

- ✿ Recognize that you are being bullied.
- ✿ Realize you are **NOT** the source of the problem.
- ✿ Recognize that bullying is about control, and therefore has nothing to do with your performance.

Take action:

- ✿ Tell the person that his or her behavior is not acceptable and ask them to stop. Expect the bully to deny and perhaps misconstrue your accusations, so have a witness, your supervisor, union rep or HR contact, with you during any meetings with the bully.
- ✿ Keep a diary detailing the nature of the bullying—for example, dates, times, places, what was said or done, and who was present.
- ✿ Obtain copies of harassing / bullying paper trails; hold onto copies of documents that contradict the bully's accusations against you, such as time sheets, receipts, and audit reports.
- ✿ Report bullying behavior to your supervisor or human resources department. If you have to, take your complaint to the next level of management or seek legal help if necessary.

Don't:

- ✿ Ignore the problem. The bullying behavior will likely only escalate if it is left unchecked.
- ✿ Retaliate, instigate or get into a verbal or physical altercation with the bully. This can cause the situation to escalate leading to an injury or worse. It can also make it hard for management to determine who is the bully and who is the victim.

FINAL WORD

Bullying is unacceptable and disruptive behavior. It creates an unhealthy and unsafe work environment for targets of the bullying and those around them. Report bullying behavior immediately if it's happening to you, or you see it happening to one of your co-workers. ✿

Meeting material to go: Safety meeting materials such as presentation tips, PowerPoint presentations, quiz answers and more are downloadable at www.SafetySmart.com

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. Bullying behavior is about control and not about something you did or caused.
 True False
2. Which of these is not an example of bullying?
 - a. Exclusion
 - b. Unwarranted criticism
 - c. Inclusion
 - d. Excessive monitoring
3. Bullying can cause:
 - a. Anxiety
 - b. Depression
 - c. Increased absences
 - d. All of the above
4. The best way to stop a bully is to get into a fist fight with him or her.
 True False

What Would You Do?

You've missed a few meetings and several deadlines because your manager either didn't tell you about them or told you at a time that made it almost impossible to meet the deadline. You have also noticed that you have been excluded from group lunches and planning sessions with your work team. Could this be considered bullying and if so what would you do?

Quiz Answers: 1. True, 2. C, 3. D, 4. False

Repeat NS Safety Offender First to Get Jail Time

A Nova Scotia employer has been sentenced to a jail term, albeit a brief one, for OHS violations related to fall protection. This is the first such sentence ever imposed in the province.

Joseph Isnor, operator of Roof Masters and United Roofing in Dartmouth, NS, appeared in Nova Scotia provincial court and was sentenced to 15 days in jail, to be served on weekends, for three separate sets of charges.

The court heard that the 46-year-old Isnor had not paid previous OHS fines and had also failed to meet an earlier order to provide 180 hours of safety presentations for three convictions relating to failure to provide fall protection to his workers.

No workers were injured as a result of the lack of fall protection. 🍁

Ontario Electrocution Brings \$110,000 Fine

An Ontario power generation, controls and energy systems firm has been ordered to pay a \$110,000 fine, plus a \$27,500 victim fine surcharge, with regard to a worker's electrocution at a solar farm construction project.

Enerquest Services Inc. of Kingsville, ON, was contracted to provide electrical switchgear equipment, controls and communication equipment in a prefabricated electrical building at the solar farm in Sunderland.

On Dec. 12, 2013, two workers plugged a generator into an outside receptacle to provide lighting and the powering of tools. One worker then entered the building and turned the lights on while his co-worker unloaded tools from a van.

Upon returning the next day, the workers restarted the generator and began working. One worker was installing a door interlock in a high-voltage section of the building and accidentally came into contact with a transformer. The worker was pronounced dead at a hospital in Port Perry, ON.

On both Dec. 12 and Dec. 13, the workers had worked on or near energized exposed parts of electrical equipment or parts of an electrical installation or conductor. The power supply to the electrical equipment, installation or conductor was not disconnected, locked out of service or tagged in accordance with section 190 of Ontario Reg. 213/91.

Appearing in the Ontario Court of Justice in Whitby, ON, Enerquest was found guilty of breaching section 190, by failing to ensure that workers were adequately protected against electrical shocks and burns.

The company was also found guilty of failing to establish and implement written measures and procedures for

complying with the regulation and making a copy of such measures and procedures available to every worker on the project. 🍁

CNRL Fined \$500,000 for Hydrogen Sulfide Releases

Alberta Environment and Parks has fined Canadian Natural Resources Limited (CNRL) \$500,000 for breaching Alberta's Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act, after hydrogen sulfide gas escaped from its Horizon Oils Sands upgrader facility 70 kilometres north of Fort McMurray, AB, on two separate occasions.

In the first instance, a sulfur recovery unit failed on May 27, 2010, and an unknown quantity of the poisonous, corrosive and flammable gas escaped both from a flare stack and at ground level. The company was required to report that incident immediately, but it did not do so for several days. CNRL was fined \$350,000 for the leak, failure to report it and providing misleading information to both the Alberta government and the Fort McKay First Nation.

A subsequent unintentional hydrogen sulfide release of unknown size occurred on Aug. 2, 2012. It also was linked to the failure of a sulfur recovery unit. A \$150,000 fine was imposed for that breach. 🍁

Walmart Canada Fined \$75,000 for Tripping Fatality

The Ontario Court of Justice has fined Walmart Canada \$60,000, plus a \$15,000 victim fine surcharge, in connection with an employee tripping incident that turned fatal two weeks later.

On Sept. 20, 2013, a worker at a Walmart store in Brampton, ON, was asked to off-load a pallet of paper onto a pallet jack. The worker was walking backwards and tripped and fell over an empty pallet on the floor.

The worker complained about injuries to his or her hand and head and called in sick the following day. The employee did not return to work and passed away two weeks later.

Walmart Canada Corporation was found guilty of failing to ensure that a floor or other surface used by any worker shall be kept free of obstructions and hazards.

While the Ontario Ministry of Labour did not indicate whether or not the worker's death was a direct result of a head injury sustained in the tripping incident, this case should serve as a reminder that same-level falls can easily be deadly—and that leaving objects such as pallets on floors is unsafe and unacceptable in any workplace. 🍁

OFFICE SAFETY INSPECTION CHECKLIST

This checklist from the Pennsylvania government addresses responsibilities and possible safety hazards which may be present in an administrative work location. This form is to be completed by employees who have been trained to perform safety inspections. To complete the checklist, employee interviews and some records review will occur. Upon completion, the form is provided to all managers and supervisors at the work location and one copy is provided to the safety coordinator. For any items checked "Unsatisfactory", an explanation must be provided on an attached sheet.

Inspection Location			
Agency:		Organization:	
Address:			
Housekeeping	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	N/A
Floor and aisles are free of litter and spilled liquids (water, pens, paper, etc.)			
Aisles are free of cords, boxes, chairs and other tripping hazards			
Desks or file drawers are closed when not in use and only one drawer is used at a time			
Ergonomics	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	N/A
All office equipment is being used correctly			
Employees are properly positioned at their desks and maintain good neutral posture			
Employees are using their workstations efficiently and avoiding stretching or reaching for objects placed far away			
Electrical	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	N/A
Electrical devices have DGS approval			
All extension cords are in good condition and are not frayed			
Extension cords are not being used as permanent wiring			
Evacuation/Fire	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	N/A
All aisles are at least 36 inches wide			
Doors are labeled as exits			
Exit signs are installed and lit from an internal or external source			
Doors are not locked to prevent exit from the building			
Fire doors are not propped open			
An evacuation plan is posted			
Fire extinguishers and pull stations are in the locations noted on the evacuation plan			
Fire extinguishers are identified with signs and not blocked			
Fire extinguishers appear to be in good condition and have been inspected			
Other Inspection Items	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	N/A
All areas are well lit and lights are functioning properly			
Office equipment is kept at least 18 inches from functioning radiators			
There are no observable drips or signs of water damage			
Flooring is in good condition and the carpets are not ripped and tiles are not broken or uneven			
Employees are refraining from unsafe behaviors (standing on chairs, etc.)			
Warning signs are posted near hazards (wet floors, repair work, etc.)			
Inspector name(s)	Date		

While many people assume that bullies seek out the weakest targets, victims of workplace bullying are often far from weak.

“Targets are usually really good workers. They are well-liked. Often, from a bully’s perspective, competence is seen as competition,” says MacKenzie. “What a bully will get really worried about is that the target has the ability to reveal them for what they really are. The bully wants to maintain that position and optic of capability, power and strength.”

Government-mandated anti-bullying and anti-harassment laws demand that workplaces promote civil and respectful behavior.

“Bullying is not to be tolerated—full stop. It doesn’t do any good to say, ‘Oh, that’s just Joe. He’s old school’ or ‘Jane just calls it like it is. She has no filters.’”

How Does Your Garden Grow?

MacKenzie draws an interesting analogy between a workplace and a garden: “Bullies only exist in workplaces where it is safe for them to take root. It’s got to be a decision of the employer that they are not going to be that kind of garden. Having a good garden means choosing the right plants. You plant them in the right places. You nurture them. It always takes a little shaping, a little pruning, and sometimes it means you’ve got to pull out the invasive (bully) plants that might show up.”

She says supervisors or managers must feel confident in their leadership skills so that they are modeling acceptable behavior at all times and consistently with all employees. But part of good leadership means setting clear and legitimate workplace performance expectations and having firm, but respectful conversations with workers who make serious errors or are not doing their jobs well.

Supervisors need to treat such conversations with a sense of professionalism, sensitivity and thoughtfulness.

“A leader has to address hard conversations with a sense of humanity. Workers don’t like constructive criticism, but welcome to management. That’s part of what happens in workplaces,” says MacKenzie.

Bad Behavior Isn’t Necessarily Bullying

Everyone has off days when they will snap at others, say things they aren’t proud of later, or carry the burdens of what’s happening at home into work. But the difference between occasionally behaving inappropriately or abruptly and being a bully, is that the bully is relentless, never letting up on the target.

“If I have an off day and I bite somebody’s head off, the question is, do I have the capacity for accountability—to reflect on that (incident) and go and make it right with that employee, offering an apology and saying it won’t happen again?”

Not all bullies are yellors and screamers, she says. In fact, most aren’t. They frequently can get away with their destructive behavior for years by confronting their targets away from others and becoming masterful at finding ways to undermine them and their work efforts. If the target approaches the bully and tries to discuss the inappropriate behavior, the bully will



likely respond with a comment to the effect of: “You don’t get special treatment” or, “If you don’t like the way things are run around here, there’s the door.”

Death by a Thousand Cuts

“It is like death by a thousand paper cuts,” says MacKenzie, adding that targets will often put up with bullying for years, until they become physically ill or slide into severe depression.

The bullying doesn’t end when a target quits the job.

“The minute that a target goes, the bully is looking for his or her next target,” says MacKenzie.

If you are being bullied at work, the first thing to do is see if your workplace has a policy in place that gives instructions on what to do. If not, MacKenzie suggests talking to someone in human resources or meeting with someone two levels above the bully—but not the bully’s direct boss.

That’s because the bully will likely have complained to his or her immediate boss about the target being a whiner or an incompetent employee.

“I will guarantee you that the bully has already poisoned that well.”

Once a Bully, Always a Bully?

Can bullies change if they are called to task on their behavior and are offered professional coaching from a workplace bullying expert? MacKenzie says yes, change is possible.

“I find nine out of 10 people that I coach are not Big B bullies. A Big B bully does not have empathy. They don’t feel a need to change. They don’t see themselves as doing anything wrong.”

Like the invasive plant in the garden, a Big B bully can’t change and needs to be uprooted from his or her job. In contrast, the Small B bully does have the capacity to change, and can do so with professional coaching and training, according to MacKenzie. 🍁

Accursi estimates that fewer than 30 percent of smaller contractors are adequately protecting their workers against falls. Why? He says it boils down to a lack of knowledge and training about the whole issue of fall protection, coupled with the false belief that fall protection is a complex issue requiring unaffordable solutions.

Many of these contractors wrongly believe that it's cheaper to risk a fine, or even multiple fines for repeat fall protection violations, than to properly train and equip their workers.

"You get a lot of these guys hiring summer students. The employers just send them up onto the roofs (without any training)," says Accursi.

If they are given fall protection gear to use, they are often wearing it incorrectly, because of a lack of training, or the equipment is not in good repair and isn't safe to use.

Another reason many contractors give for shunning fall protection is that fall protection gear is "cumbersome."

"That really blows my mind. To have cumbersome equipment beats falling to your death," says Accursi, adding that a person falling even 10 feet (three metres) will hit the ground at 30 kilometres (20 miles) per hour.

Of course, many people are working without fall protection at two or three times that height, meaning that if they tumble off a roof, they'll be travelling that much faster when their bodies meet concrete or dirt.

The simple solution, according to Accursi, is to provide every worker with a roofer's kit, costing about \$160, and a handful of hours of fall protection training from a competent, certified trainer.

The roofer's kit contains everything a worker needs to avoid plunging to the ground if he or she trips, slips or falls. Here's how it works: First, an anchorage connector is screwed into wooden joists on the peak of the roof.

"You connect a vertical lifeline (for each worker) to that anchorage point. To that vertical lifeline you also connect what's called a rope grab. The rope grab is connected to the dorsal D-ring on a harness via a shock-absorbing lanyard. The



maximum length of that shock-absorbing lanyard is 2.5 feet. As a worker moves up and down the roof, the rope grab will move with him and if he slips and/or falls, the rope grab will lock on the vertical lifeline and prevent him from falling to the ground."

Just as with a bicycle helmet or hardhat that takes a blow, fall arrest gear cannot be safely reused once it has saved a worker. It needs to be replaced.

This equipment requires visual inspection for defects by the trained worker before each use. If the webbing is torn or has weld splatter on it, or if the hardware has rust on it, this gear needs to be discarded and replaced, says Accursi. A comprehensive annual inspection of all fall protection equipment also needs to be undertaken by a qualified person.

Accursi says anyone needing direction on providing adequate fall protection training and equipment to workers can contact their provincial or state workplace safety agency or the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) in the US for guidance. 🍁



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