

Healthy Mind and Body Helps Assure Safety Performance

By Dr. Lister - Plant Physician

Safe performance is a top priority goal. A healthy body and alert mind will help each of us achieve this goal. I've done some deep thinking about advice and instructions I might offer on how you can keep both healthy and safe. Here are some of my thoughts.

Good physical and mental conditioning for safe performance means: a proper attitude, good mental and physical reflexes and reactions, clear concentration on the task being performed, and good judgement, all under possible changing circumstances. These basic conditions are dependent upon your alertness, emotional state, and clearness of mind.

Alertness

Your alertness is lessened by too little rest or the use of drugs, prescribed or not prescribed.

A person needs adequate rest to be wakeful and alert. Not everyone requires the standard eight hours of sleep but each person should sleep long enough to feel rested.

Drugs have a profound influence on alertness. For example, many tranquilizers (mood modifying preparations), analgesics (pain medication), muscle relaxants and anti-histamines (allergy medication and decongestants) may all cause drowsiness. Even medication for diarrhea, intestinal spasm, high blood pressure, and some types of dizziness (vertigo), may have a sedative effect. Obviously, sleeping pills are sedatives. When a person stops taking stimulants such as diet pills or some preparations for asthma, a rebound lethargy develops.

Alcohol, which is a drug in any form, is a depressant of alertness, reflexes and judgement. One may feel stimulated by alcohol, but this is due to the depression of certain inhibitions or intelligence.

I would advise everyone not to take a drug unless it is prescribed and then, not without carefully reading the label. All medication should be taken only as directed. Each person may react differently to any drug and differently at times to the same drug. Any individual taking medication should report any unexpected effect to the prescribing physician. Employees on medication at work should report it to the plant physician. Drugs that have any effect on one's sensorium (brain function) should prohibit the user's exposure to moving or energized machinery. Alcohol in any form or amount should be avoided several hours prior to scheduled work.



Emotional State and Clearness of Mind

One's emotional status may affect his judgement or ability to concentrate. Problems that a person may have in any walk of life (personal, social, domestic, occupational or with his image of himself) may distract his attention from what he is doing as well as distort his actions and reactions so that the danger of an accident may not be anticipated or recognized. Tension and anxiety (fear) are examples of such abnormal emotional states. Depression may make an individual lethargic or disinterested so he is not conscious of consequences of certain actions that may result in an accident. These conditions may vary in degree from mild to severe but all have an effect on performance.

Medical Help

Any person who is uncomfortable due to emotional stress or is troubled in any way may visit the medical department to relate their problems in strict confidence for help, counseling, and direction. In this way, many physical illnesses (psychosomatic), serious mental illness and careless accidents might be prevented. If the plant physician feels an employee may be a danger to himself, or to others, a disposition of light, limited or modified duty can be designed without need to reveal any details to anyone, including supervision.

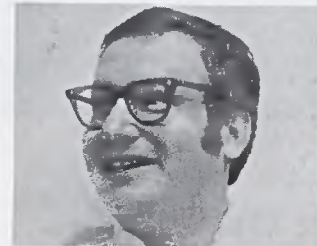
The medical department's major interest is to help every employee to be healthy and emotionally comfortable through constructive action and to prevent illness and injuries. Only in this way can employees continue to produce acceptably. It is not the intent of the medical department or plant management to criticize or punish anyone because of a medical problem like those previously described. For the sake of emphasis, let me repeat, professionally ethical confidence is maintained with strict assurance whenever you come to the Medical Department with a problem, physical or mental.

Casting Safety is Success

By Keith Harbin - Training Supervisor - Casting Area

On February 28, 1977, the Casting Area will reach a 300% goal of no off-the-job lost time injuries. This will be a record of 864 injury-free days, which is quite a feat for the 233 Casting Area employees. The entire area is proud to be leaders among employees who feel safety is important enough to take home.

What is the story behind this safety accomplishment? How did we achieve this record?



We feel extra emphasis on safety awareness in the Casting Area has carried over from the jobsite to all off-the-job activities. Since a large number of our experienced personnel have been promoted to other areas of the plant, this extra emphasis has had to come from the small group of remaining experienced personnel and exceptional dedication and effort of newer employees. Casting personnel have come to realize that safety is a necessity on-the-job and also a way of life. As a result, they have developed a safety attitude as a second nature.

On the plant, we examine a new task before we begin work. We check for possible hazards then we do the job safely. With this constant dedication toward safety, we will continue to improve and expand our on-the-job safety performance and this will lead us to a continuing record of no off-the-job injuries.