



Service Branch

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At Your Service

Safety 2012 in Denver, CO, this past June was a success for the Service Branch. We had our annual face-to-face open meeting and networking event. We also sponsored two sessions.

Matt Krell was recognized as the 2012 Service Branch Significant Contributor at the Council on Practices & Standards (CoPS) awards luncheon. Matt is our Membership Development Chair and he has been a professional, dedicated and reliable volunteer. Congratulations, Matt!

Visit www.asse.org/ps/awards for more information on the awards program. Also, visit www.safety2013.org for developments on next year's conference. Safety 2013 will be in Las Vegas, NV, from June 24-27, 2013. Please plan to attend as the branch will hold its annual networking event and will sponsor several sessions.

Practice Specialties Scholarship

The practice specialties sponsor a PDC Scholarship. This scholarship provides a full Professional Development Conference experience including airfare, hotel, meals and registration. Currently, two awards of \$1,200 are given each year.

Please consider making a personal tax-deductible donation to the scholarship fund. If your company has a matching donation program, you could double your contribution. To contribute, click "donate now" below and note "PDC Scholarship" in the "Other" field.

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Checks can also be made payable to the ASSE Foundation marked "PDC Scholarship" in the memo section and mailed to ASSE Foundation, Attn: Mary Goranson, 1800 E. Oakton St., Des Plaines, IL 60018.

A New Era in Class C Hospitality Industry Pool Safety Signs

Reducing Risk & Protecting People Through a Systems Approach to Pool Safety Warnings

By *Geoffrey Peckham*

Every day, 10 people die from unintentional drowning. Among the leading causes of accidental death in the U.S., drowning ranks fifth. These [data](#) from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention show that, year after year, the number of people who are injured or drown in water is substantial. Water presents a very real potential hazard. Just as with any risk in a facility, when a property has a pool, hazards and avoidance procedures must be communicated to help keep people free from harm. Pool safety signs are a critical component in a comprehensive water safety program (Figure 1). Yet, nearly all pool safety signs in use today do not comply with the latest standards-based best practices to effectively communicate safety information. This increases the likelihood for accidents, which often end in heavy costs to victims and families, as well as to pool owners who can be left defending multimillion-dollar premise liability lawsuits. The two questions aquatic facility owners and hospitality industry risk managers need to ask are do the pool signs in use at your facility measure up to the latest best practices to communicate safety and will they reduce your liability risk in court should an accident occur?



Figure 1. Pool safety signs are a critical component in a comprehensive water safety program and best practice pool safety sign system.

Meeting Your Legal Duty to Warn: Understanding Safety Sign Best Practices



Photo 1. Example of a typical “list of rules,” text-only pool safety sign. There are better ways to stand out, to concisely convey its message, and to communicate the hazard, its consequence, and how to avoid the hazard.

State and municipal codes and regulations often define the safety messages to be displayed in and around pools intended to be used by the public or on private property by communities of people, resulting in long “list of rules” signage (Photo 1).

It is important to be aware of these state and local building codes as a minimum compliance requirement. But when it comes to improving visual safety communication, it is necessary to go beyond this minimum requirement and to use the latest warnings technology: the U.S. and international best practice standards.

The American National Standards Institute (ANSI) Z535 standards establish a “national uniform system for hazard recognition,” while the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) establishes global best practices for safety signs and their components. The ANSI Z535.2 *Standard for Environmental and Facility Safety Signs*, the primary standard for the workplace and public areas, has evolved over the years to include principles derived from human factors research on how people comply with visual messages and from case law for what constitutes adequate warnings. More than just “identifying the hazard,” the newer ANSI formats define the hazard and how to avoid the hazard, better accommodate symbols and use a risk-based, severity-level matrix for choosing the proper signal word

(“Danger,” “Warning,” “Caution,” etc.). At the same time, the use of ISO-formatted symbols is important in calling attention to the sign and in allowing a portion of the sign’s message to be conveyed across language barriers. In the U.S., both the ANSI and ISO standards serve as the foundation on which a new system of water safety signs has been built—a system that sets a higher bar for those responsible for warnings. The goal is to better provide people with the information needed to make good decisions to avoid potential hazards.

Putting Standards & Semiotics into Practice: A New Era in Pool Safety Signage

The challenge for pool and facility owners lies in putting these best-practice safety standards into effect. Most signage available and widely used today conforms to 1940s guidelines for safety signing, without regard to the newest standards. As such, signs are often ineffective because their messages are incomplete, text-only and do not fully convey the nature of the hazard and how to avoid it.

As a tool to better protect guests from water-related accidents and to help shield pool facilities from liability lawsuits, systems of signs are now available to better communicate aquatic safety hazards. Building upon expertise in safety standards and semiotics (the science of how signs and symbols communicate), the system shown was developed with the Aquatic Safety Research Group headed by Tom Griffiths, Ph.D. The system of signs is compliant with the latest version of the ANSI Z535 standards and uses ISO-formatted graphical symbols to communicate core safety messages—the messages that are meant to alert people to the most serious hazards (Figures 2-3).

To communicate safety effectively, it is necessary to think of your facility safety signs as a “system” of signs that work together to keep employees, visitors and guests informed of potential hazards and how to avoid those hazards. The process begins with a risk assessment to define core messages, and then each sign becomes part of a planned system to communicate those messages. Then, the system uses placement and measured repetition to reinforce the messaging (Figure 4).



Figures 2-3. These pool safety signs use ISO-formatted graphical symbols and ANSI layout and content principles to bring attention to the most critical pool safety messages.



Figure 4. Using carefully chosen content and well thought-out placement location, pool safety signs work together as a system to explain, reiterate and reinforce the most important water safety messages.

In terms of meeting your legal duty to warn, good signs can provide property owners with “adequate warnings.” The signs can do this because they successfully went through comprehension testing to prove their effectiveness at conveying the intended messages. The testing was designed by a third party, Applied Safety and Ergonomics, Inc., a group of human factors experts. Testing was conducted on numerous demographics in the U.S. by the National Drowning Prevention Alliance, a nonprofit group dedicated to preventing drowning. The testing results provide key legal documentation for pool owners who implement the pool safety sign system, demonstrating that adequate warnings were posted, should an accident and lawsuit occur.

Your Opportunity for a Better Way to Warn: Collaborate for a Facility Assessment & Case Study

There is a better way to warn than what is currently in use at most aquatic facilities. By using a standards-compliant, best-practice safety sign system in your facility, it is possible to achieve:

- Better safety communication, including reach of a global audience, to prevent accidents
- State-of-the-art compliance with the latest standards
- Litigation tools to better prevent and defend lawsuits, reducing liability risk

For aquatic facility owners or risk managers in the hospitality field, let us know about your current situation and we can highlight “before” and “after” examples of how the pool safety sign system was used at your facility. As a follow-up piece, we will then publish the results, giving readers a view of how ASSE member companies in the Service Branch have adopted this new safety sign system to better protect guests from potential hazards associated with pools.

Images courtesy of Clarion Safety Systems ©2012.

Geoffrey Peckham is a longtime member of ASSE and president of Clarion Safety Systems. He is chair of both the ANSI Z535 Committee and the U.S. Technical Advisory Group to ISO Technical Committee 145-Graphical Symbols. Over the past 2 decades, he has played a pivotal role in the harmonization of U.S. and international standards pertaining to safety signs, colors, formats and symbols.

Safety Issues, Impact & Its Consequences in Retail Business

By Shafik M. Shovik

In today's business environment, a good safety reputation is a valuable asset for any company. Business reputation is defined as the perception of how business is seen by its stakeholders, customers, regulators, suppliers, investors and the media. The safety reputation of mostly all companies ranks among the most important of all assets. Certain future uncertainties make reputation difficult to protect. As Warren Buffet (2005) said, "It takes 20 years to build a reputation and 5 minutes to destroy it." Even the most well-established companies with apparently impenetrable reputations can suffer from unforeseen reputational damages. "Negligence of safety" costs business owners and property managers adverse publicity, huge liability awards, insurance rate hikes and even exposure to criminal prosecutions. In retail business, safety reputation is important in hiring and retaining good employees, repelling competition in the market, engendering a receptive attitude for regulators, bankers, various pressure groups and generating goodwill. According to one study, annual shareholder price losses from one "reputation-sensitive" occurrence are estimated to be around 7%. The retail industry needs to educate its workers as well as safety inspectors and emphasize its importance and monetary benefits. In addition, industries need to explain to its workforces the consequences that result when workplace safety is compromised.

Retail workers sell a variety of products in storefronts ranging from department and grocery stores to quick-stop marts and specialty shops. While the products and the environment may vary, retail owners or managers must keep their mind on the safety environment for their workers, customers and suppliers while they are doing business. A primary hazard for retail workers is injury due to slips, trips and falls. Maintaining good housekeeping around the worksite will avoid tripping hazards. Retailers have the dual responsibility of protecting both their workers and their customers. Major retailers are open relatively long hours during the week and even on weekends. Inevitably, something can go wrong. Certain systems must be in place to create optimal personal safety in retail stores. Emphasizing safety issues in retail business is not a choice but a priority.

Safety Issues & Injury Prevention

Retail safety issues include hazards in the workplace involving slips and falls, back injuries and much more. Ergonomic injuries are an example of a retail work hazard. Retailers need to know the signs and symptoms of ergonomic injuries, such as numbness, tingling or pain. Employees may rotate their job tasks throughout their workday to avoid repetitive motion injuries. They may change their working, standing and seated positions throughout the day by using anti-fatigue floor mats and footstools to prevent staying in the same position all day. Stores should use pads or hard work surfaces to prevent contact stress to workers' wrists, arms and elbows. Workers may take 30-second microbreaks every 20 to 30 minutes of work time to give their body a rest and to change positions.

A retailer needs to be aware of workplace violence hazards. They should prepare and practice how to handle violence, robberies and shoplifting should they occur. To discourage robbery and shoplifting, employees need to greet people as they enter the store and to ask lone shoppers if they need help. Most importantly, the facility must be clean and well-lit at any given time. Retailers need to teach and train their employees about their worksite's security features, such as panic alarms and surveillance cameras. They need to know that the store has accurate lighting inside and outside. They must ensure that the facility's landscaping does not obscure their view outside or provide a place for trespassers to hide. They should use proper cash management policies and should avoid making deposits alone or at night.

Retail workers can often change job assignments or jobs frequently. A retailer should provide proper training for its employees' work assignments along with the materials, equipment and tools they will use. Workers must use safe work practices for power tools and cutting tools to avoid cuts, punctures and other injuries. They should know the hazards and properties of any chemicals used or stored in the facility and how to use an MSDS. Workers need to wear proper and comfortable clothing for their job task and any required PPE. Every employee in the facility needs to be familiar with his or her worksite emergency plans, including exits and evacuation routes. They must know the first-aid location so in case of an emergency, they can help themselves, coworkers and the public if needed.

A retail owner or facility manager never wants to be faced with blackouts while they are operating their business. However, due to acts of nature, mechanical problems and other emergency situations could result in power failure at their facility. Retailers always should be prepared for a power loss procedure before it happens. Usually, every facility has a plan. The owner or manager needs to communicate the plan with all store personnel. Having a solid plan in place can help ease the hassle of doing business without power. In Wal-Mart, the code is black (for power loss, bad weather). It always ensures that all service departments (electronics, sporting goods, jewelry, one-hour photo, etc.) have flashlights and that all salary members of management in are place. The flashlights can be used to provide security for customers and staff.

In the event of a power failure, employees should immediately lock the front door and place a sign on the door explaining why the store is closed during regular business hours. If any customers are in the store when the power goes out, finish checking out the customers as quickly as possible. Cash registers and systems run on a backup uninterrupted power supply, which will give employees enough time to finish the transaction properly and then shut the system down.

Safety Training & Its Importance

Safety procedures are an important internal control. Retail businesses use safety procedures to ensure that employees do not injure themselves or customers during business operations. Proper retail training is vitally important to ensuring the continued growth and success of retail departments, stores and companies. Among the many benefits of proper retail training are consistency of performance, employee confidence, increased productivity and increased customer satisfaction and sales.

Creating and maintaining a safe environment for workers and consumers are a primary concern of a retail store operation. Following proper procedures, awareness of hazards and maintenance are some of the key ingredients for achieving this.

Personal Injury: Tripping, falling or slipping in retail stores can cause injuries. Stores can prevent these hazards by identifying spills and cleaning them up immediately, keeping aisles clean and clear, using ladders properly and reporting flooring that is damaged or uneven.

Safely Open Cartons: To avoid injury or damage to inventory, retail workers should use caution when opening boxes and checking in freight. Use the following guide to safely open a carton with a box cutter.

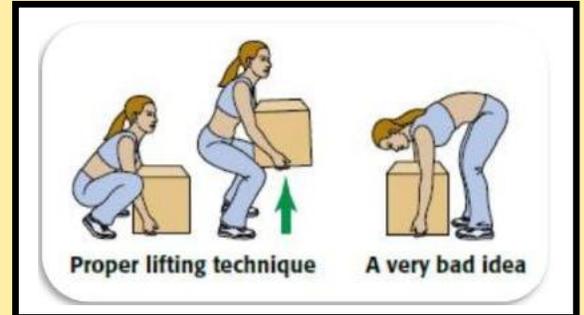
- When working with freight and opening boxes, always keep a box cutter with a sharp blade handy.
- Set the carton on a flat, steady surface.
- Examine the box to determine the thickness of the cardboard. Thin cartons require less pressure to cut, and caution should be taken not to damage the contents with the box cutter.

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- Place one hand on the box and use the other hand to firmly hold the box cutter.
- Begin cutting with the box cutter blade angled slightly upward and away from the merchandise. Cut away from your body and as close to the top of the box as possible.

Properly Lift & Carry Safely: Improper lifting of heavy items is a major cause of injury to retail workers. By taking just a few precautionary measures when handling product, employees may avoid serious sprains, strains or back injuries. Waters suggest the following procedures:

- Employees should examine the size and weight of the item(s) needing to be moved. They should not assume a small box will move easily. They need to stretch their legs and back before lifting anything. If possible, they should ask another employee for help in lifting or shelving products or other items.
- Use a hand truck, cart, dolly or other equipment if needed. Be sure the load is balanced well before moving and remember to push, not pull, the load. Employees should clear the path they plan to take of any obstacles or hazards.
- When lifting, use slow movements and face your body toward the object. Bend your knees and firmly grasp the item with your entire hand. Keep your back straight as you lift straight up.
- Center the load in the space between your shoulders and waist. To set the item down, bend your knees and slowly lower it to the ground. Do not let go until it is securely on the floor.



Customer Service: In retail, customer service is everyone's responsibility. Training should include the basics of greeting a customer, building rapport, identifying needs and providing relevant and valuable solutions to those needs. One of the most difficult customer service situations is facing an angry customer. With proper training, the retail employee can learn not to take anything personally, how to acknowledge an angry customer and how to ask the right questions to get the customer out of his or her upset state of mind. More happy customers mean more sales and profit for any business.

Hazardous Liquid Products Cleaning: Retailers must know the hazardous products they sell and where they are in the store. Manufacturers of hazardous products are required to supply retailers with MSDSs. These information sheets provide details about chemical ingredients, chemicals that should be stored separately and how to protect employees if a spill occurs. Businesses should keep MSDSs easy to reach in case they need to clean up a spill. Maintaining proper procedures while cleaning hazardous materials is a must.

Safety Training: Another essential technique is training. Employees receive information on using and cleaning hazardous materials, first aid and how to do their work in the most efficient and safe manner. For example, staff is taught how to lift objects appropriately to avoid back injuries.

Crime: Robbery is one hazard with which retail stores must contend. Being safe in retail stores encompasses dealing with theft, violence and shoplifting incidents. Stores should be kept lighted and clean, and doors not used for public entrance should be secure. Employees are encouraged not to take trash out at night by themselves. Employees should be present around the store and should know proper procedures for dealing with incidents.

Other Injury Prevention: Preventing injuries, such as muscle strains, tendinitis, carpal tunnel syndrome and related problems, involves changing the environment and the way work is done. Stores should design work areas so they minimize these types of injuries, make tasks more efficient and rotate the jobs that employees do. Examples include using keyboard supports, anti-fatigue mats and adjustable work surfaces and keeping things stored where they can be easily reached.

Identification of Potential Problems: Retail stores also promote safety by evaluating work areas for problems, assessing procedures for doing tasks and getting employees' input. They also follow federal and state government guidelines that outline certain requirements, such as MSDSs, proper storage of chemicals and related regulations for workplace safety.

How to Handle Product Recalls

Regardless of the number of employees a retail business has or the amount of hours it operates each week, if a retailer sells any type of consumer product regulated by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), then that business must abide by CPSC laws. CPSC is a federal regulatory agency whose mission is to protect the public from unreasonable risks of injury and death associated with consumer products. It has jurisdiction over more than 15,000 consumer products used in or around homes, schools and in recreation, including toys, household appliances, furnaces and sporting equipment.

The key to accident prevention in retail begins with awareness of basic safety.

Any business with information of potentially hazardous products must report those to CPSC immediately. The agency will then determine if that product fails to meet its consumer product safety rule or standard or whether or not it could create an unreasonable risk of serious injury or death. If a recall is issued, a comprehensive plan that reaches the entire distribution chain to consumers who have the product is put into action. Advance notice of the recalled products will then be passed to participating retailers. After receiving recall notice, most retailers follow the following procedures:

- **Pay Attention to Recall Announcements:** Retailers usually receive notice of the recall before the official public announcement is made. Information in the notice includes the product being recalled and all identifying information, such as UPC codes, model numbers, date codes and other details. This recall announcement also details the action retailers must take, how to account for recalled inventory and the disposition of consumer returns.
- **Stop Sale Immediately:** Once the recall notice has been received, retailers should stop sale of the recalled product at once. The recalled inventory should be removed from the shelves and isolated from the other merchandise. The recall notice will have instructions on how to return the products or dispose of them so they are not released for sale.
- **Post-Recall Notifications:** Retailers will receive recall posters with the announcement to post for the consumer and should hang these as soon as all of the recalled products have been pulled from the selling floor. The recall posters should be placed in a conspicuous location. For example, Wal-Mart places recall posters in three different locations (customer service area, product's original shelf-home and product recall board).
- **Assisting Consumers With Recall:** If the retailer has records of past sales of recalled products through extended warranties, credit card purchases or other customer history, that information will need to be given to the recalling firm. Refer to the original recall notice to understand how to direct consumer returns and whether the retailer should provide replacements or refunds.

- **Internet Sales & Recalls:** If the retailer sells merchandise online, the website should have a Recall Safety Information page linked directly from the homepage. This recall page should consist of the product recall information only. All text from the recalling firm's press release and a color photo should be posted immediately and should remain through the duration of the recall. If possible, this page should be interactive to allow consumers to register to participate in the recall through the retailer's website.

Importance of Safety Meeting

The key to accident prevention in retail begins with awareness of basic safety. It is also a great topic for management meetings. During store meetings, point out the Job Safety and Health Protection poster and any emergency contact numbers posted in the break room or other work area. Store management needs to plan safety demonstrations and to provide basic workplace safety guidelines to the group. This topic may be simple common sense for most employees, so it will require a little creativity to keep the meeting interesting and informative. Stores may use any video training aids or may consider inviting a safety expert to speak. Wal-Mart management demonstrates many safety tricks during their store meetings. They talk about customer and associate accidents during store meetings and also emphasize how to grow profit-sharing each day just by being accident-free. Every accident that occurs involves the store's bottom line.

Negligence of Safety & Its Consequence

The consequences of workplace accidents are manifold. The nature of accidents varies according to the nature of the job and subsequently, consequences also vary depending on the nature of the injuries sustained. Common causes of injuries at retail facilities are handling of heavy merchandise or exposure to dangerous chemical handling or slipping and falling because of a wet floor. As a result of lifting and handling heavy merchandise, employees might sustain serious back injuries. Back injuries are common in the workplace, and such injuries could be avoided by replacing men or women with handling machinery. For instance, Wal-Mart uses an electric power jack or forklift to move heavy pallets or merchandise. Some of these back injuries might be serious in nature and might lead to permanent disability. One major consequence in case of a permanent disability is a substantial loss of earning capacity, which might be a great setback to the victim and his or her family. The victim's family would be the worst affected as a result of the loss of pay. The financial instability might lead to plenty of problems. The emotional and physical agony suffered by victims and their families cannot be described in words. Apart from injuries, exposure to dangerous chemicals also has bad side effects. It could lead to respiratory and other chronic diseases, which could prove dangerous to workers' health. The law has made safety measures mandatory in a workplace to ensure worker safety. Despite rules imposed by health and the safety departments, workplace accidents have become unavoidable in nature.

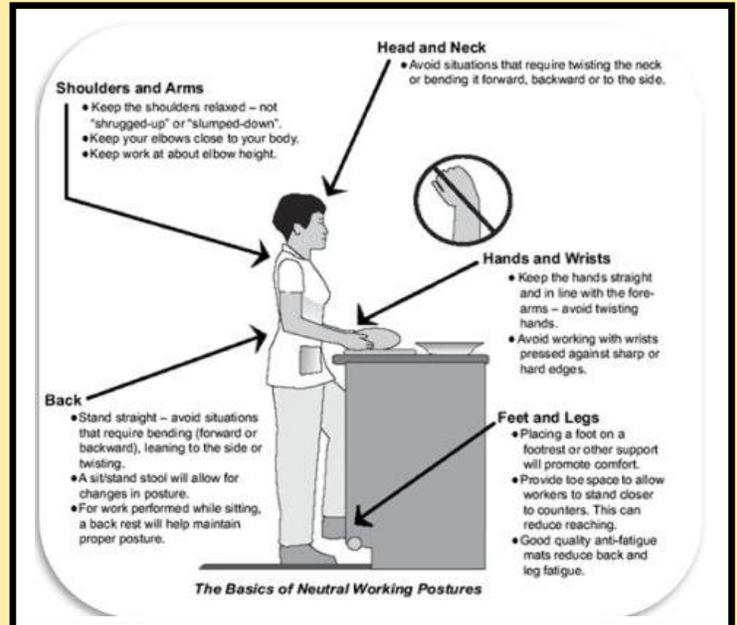
If the employee is able to prove that the accident occurred due to the employer's negligence, s/he can make a claim for the losses suffered. Even though the victim can receive financial compensation for the personal injuries s/he has sustained, the consequences of accidents at work are serious in nature. The victim must grapple with health issues and physical and emotional trauma that money may not be able to heal. Workplace accidents can lead to serious consequences for the victim as well as the negligent employer. The employer could be accused of not complying with mandatory health and safety regulations. The employer could end up in prison due to their negligence. This is in addition to the personal injury claim amount the employer must sell out to compensate the victim of the workplace accident. Consequences of accidents at work are serious for victims too. If the victim is the main breadwinner in the family, his or her family's financial status could be affected. In case the victim becomes permanently

disabled as a result of the accident at work, s/he must deal with physical and emotional stress on a daily basis. The emotional trauma that permanent disability brings to a victim cannot be explained in simple terms.

OSHA's Ergonomics Guidelines for Retail Business

OSHA provides practical recommendations to help retail store employers and employees reduce the number and severity of injuries in their workplaces. According to OSHA, "Many of the work-related injuries and illnesses experienced by retail store workers are musculoskeletal disorders, such as back injuries and sprains or strains that may develop from various factors, including lifting, repetitive motion disorders, such as carpal tunnel syndrome, or injuries resulting from overexertion."

Retail stores that have implemented OSHA's injury prevention efforts have successfully reduced work-related injuries and workers' compensation costs. Many times, these efforts have reduced injuries and have led to increased worker efficiency and lowered operating costs. For example, designing check stands to reduce ergonomic risk factors, such as twisting or extended reaching, can improve cashier effectiveness and productivity. OSHA's guidelines build on the progress that the retail industry has made in addressing the cause of work-related injuries and illnesses. OSHA realizes that small grocery stores may need assistance to implement an appropriate ergonomics program. That is why OSHA emphasizes the availability of its free consultation service for smaller employers.



To develop its guidelines, OSHA reviewed existing ergonomic practices and programs in the retail industry and conducted site visits to observe existing programs in action. In addition, the agency reviewed available scientific information regarding work activities that may benefit from ergonomic improvements and specific solutions. OSHA also conducts one-on-one and group meetings with major stakeholder groups to gather the best available information on typical workplace activities, practices, programs and processes that have been used successfully in the retail industry.

Safety in Practice

Every Wal-Mart supercenter has a salary member of management called an Asset Protection Coordinator (APC) who oversees store safety and loss prevention. The APC has a safety team of 6 to 8 employees. In the author's store, the safety team meets every Tuesday at 9:30 am. Attendance at this safety meeting is mandatory for all salary members of management. During the meeting, everyday safety issues are discussed, such as checking all power equipment on a daily basis. Also, having two spotters is mandatory during scissor lift or forklift operation. Since last year, Wal-Mart's home office has used its paging announcement system for safety sweeps three times a day at 8:00 a.m., 2:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. Store meeting attendees discuss how many days the store has been accident-free and how to maintain the facility. Also, employees receive 30, 60, 90 or 150 days accident-free rewards, which can include a free

lunch or dinner and other fun activities. In the author's role as a facility co-manager, he is responsible for preventing injuries, protecting employees and customers and protecting the company's bottom line.

Facility training and meeting tips include the following:

- Hold meetings in a quiet place with limited distractions.
- Use newsletters, articles, case studies and near misses to generate discussion.
- Start the meeting by telling employees why they are there. Define the topic and its relationship to safety, accident prevention and company policy.
- When presenting the topic, try to keep it short (10 minutes), positive and fun.
- Always allow time for encourage and reward questions—such feedback is essential.
- End the meeting by thanking employees, congratulating them on accident-free productivity and make sure they sign the attendance sheet.

Conclusion

It often seems like there is not enough time in the day to devote to proper retail training. The truth is that with a well-trained staff, productivity can increase dramatically and operational costs can be reduced. Too many benefits are to be gained from retail training to ignore it or to underestimate its importance. A company's reputation is hard-earned and easily lost. It is the most valued asset of all. One of the most important aspects of a reputation is the company's relationship with its customers. Retail business must not fail to deliver its minimum standards of service and product quality to customers. One of those standards that all retail businesses must deliver is customer safety in their stores. The great news is that more than 90% of accidents are preventable. Preventing them saves the company money by reducing out-of-pocket costs and by improving reputation. Furthermore, taking stronger safety measures in a workplace is not a matter of choice. It is a mandatory act that saves human lives, the environment, property and, of course, money.

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Food Safety: Preslaughter Interventions Could Reduce E. coli in Cattle

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and university researchers identified several treatments administered before cattle are slaughtered, or preslaughter interventions, that could reduce Shiga toxin-producing *Escherichia coli* (STEC) in cattle. Such preslaughter interventions include bacteriophages (viruses that infect and kill bacteria), probiotics (live bacteria that can benefit the digestive system), vaccines (biological preparations that alter the immune system) and sodium chlorate (chemical that kills the STEC O157:H7 strain). However, few manufacturers have submitted applications for preslaughter intervention products to target STEC, according to officials from USDA and the Food and Drug Administration. One exception is for vaccines to reduce STEC O157:H7.

For preslaughter interventions, USDA exercises responsibilities for licensing and regulating STEC vaccines. However, USDA's approval requirements for these vaccines are unclear, according to some industry representatives. Specifically, USDA's general guidance does not address some of the unique challenges faced by manufacturers of animal health products seeking STEC vaccine approval. For example, the guidance does not explain that, if studies conducted in the laboratory are insufficient to demonstrate efficacy, the manufacturer would also need to demonstrate that the vaccine is effective in a field setting, such as a feedlot. In contrast, the Canadian Center for Veterinary Biologics provides more specific guidance about when it requires the use of laboratory or field studies to demonstrate efficacy for vaccine license applications. Without guidance that gives manufacturers clear and more specific information they need to submit for an acceptable application, the approval process for STEC vaccines could face potential delays.

In addition to STEC O157:H7, which it stated in 1994 was an adulterant—a substance that renders food injurious to human health, USDA determined that six other STEC strains were adulterants in raw ground beef and beef trim (meat left after steaks and roasts are cut from beef). USDA had tests for these six strains and planned to use them in slaughter plants starting in June 2012. However, it may be difficult and time-consuming to confirm positive test results because certain test components are either not commercially available for all strains or do not always provide clear results. USDA is working to improve the tests and to find a commercial supplier for one key test component. Also, a few companies voluntarily test for these strains.

Some foreign governments have practices that could be relevant to U.S. efforts to reduce STEC in cattle such as the following:

- The European Parliament and the Council of the European Union require certain measures, such as verification of cleanliness by an inspector, to ensure that the cattle going to slaughter are clean. In contrast, USDA assesses the health of cattle but does not inspect for cleanliness.
- At least 12 European Union member countries collected and reported data on STEC in live cattle in 2009. USDA has conducted STEC testing in live cattle but has not tested since 1999.
- When a person becomes ill from E. coli in Sweden, government officials try to determine the specific farm that sold the contaminated cattle so that other carcasses from the farm can be tested for STEC. USDA does not trace the STEC source back to the farm.

Since 2006, the U.S. beef industry has recalled more than 23 million pounds of beef owing to contamination from pathogenic strains of STEC bacteria. These strains do not harm cattle but may contaminate meat during slaughter. If humans eat contaminated meat without properly cooking it, STEC can cause illnesses, including bloody diarrhea and hemolytic uremic syndrome, which is characterized by

kidney failure and can be fatal. The Departments of Health and Human Services (HHS) and of Agriculture (USDA) play a role in reducing STEC. USDA stated that interventions to reduce STEC before slaughter offer a significant opportunity to improve food safety.

GAO reviewed 1) interventions before slaughter that may help reduce STEC in cattle; 2) USDA's role in approving STEC vaccines; 3) the extent to which STEC strains have been determined to be adulterants in beef and the status of tests to detect them; and 4) practices, if any, other countries have employed that could reduce STEC in cattle and may be relevant to U.S. efforts. GAO reviewed documents, visited cattle feedlots and a slaughter plant and interviewed agency officials, researchers, and industry and consumer group representatives with expertise in STEC in cattle.

GAO recommends, among other things, that USDA provide more specific public guidance on the license approval requirements of STEC vaccines. USDA neither agreed nor disagreed with this recommendation. For more information, contact [Lisa Shames](#).

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Q&A

Is research or data available on missing tread or broken structure of footwear causing increased incidents, such as slips, trips or falls (e.g., X% of tread missing from footwear causes a X% increase in incidents)?

No noteworthy research has been published focusing on those factors in particular. However, a 2006 paper in *Applied Ergonomics* by Li, Wu and Lin correlated shoe sole tread depth and groove orientation with slip risk. Still, that was not about missing tread blocks. Many other studies have compared worn shoes with new shoes, but they generally did not use amount of wear/tread presence as a variable.

A long-term employee has developed carpal tunnel syndrome from scooping ice cream for more than 50 nursing home residents every day. We receive hard ice cream in large, 5-gallon containers and serve them into sundae dishes using a standard ice cream scoop. Any suggestions to help prevent similar injuries?

- Job rotation.
- Serve light ice cream, soft serve or individual servings.
- Use a Teflon-coated scoop for quick release or a Zyliss 71372 metal ice cream scoop with an ergonomic plastic handle.
- Dipping the scooper in hot water prior to every scoop will soften the ice cream around the scooper and make it easier to scoop. This means the ice cream must be served with an additional hot water container that should be emptied and cleaned often and refilled with hot water. Using an “easy to wheel” cart with enough surface space makes this doable. Also, a roll of paper towels to wipe the scooper between dips into hot water will help preserve the water’s integrity.
- Allow the ice cream to soften prior to scooping.
- Purchase scoopers that bend the handle and not the wrist.
- Use scoopers designed with a pointed rather than round scoop for easier entry.



Virtual Learning

[The Politics of Safety & Managing Up](#)

November 7, 2012, 11:00 am-12:30 pm (Central)

Brought to you by the [Young Professionals in SH&E CIG](#)

[Assessing & Developing Your Safety Culture](#)

November 14, 2012, 11:00 am-12:30 pm (Central)

[ANSI/AIHA/ASSE Z10-2012: Standard for Occupational Health & Safety Management Systems](#)

November 20, 2012, 11:00 am-12:30 pm (Central)

[Higher-Level Safety for Both Aging & Younger Workers: Mindsets & Skillsets for a Sustainable Workforce](#)

January 23, 2013, 11:00 am-12:30 pm (Central)

On Demand Offerings

[Workplace Wellness Web Fest](#)

Brought to you by the [Health & Wellness Branch](#)

[Rethink Safety](#)

[Changing Behaviors](#)

[ASSE Global Safety Conference](#)

[The CSP Experience](#)

[Convergence: The Role of Safety in Sustainability](#)

[Best Practices in Fire Safety Virtual Symposium](#)

Brought to you by the [Fire Protection Practice Specialty](#)

[“Watch Out!” for Your Organization: A Virtual Law Symposium for Safety Professionals](#)

Viewable for 30 Days
.2 CEUs

In the News

New Study Looks at Slip-Resistant Shoes in Food Service Industry

NIOSH has begun a randomized controlled trial to study the effectiveness of slip-resistant shoes in reducing slips and falls injuries in the food service industry. ARAMARK, a company in the food service industry, is collaborating in this NIOSH-led research by providing access to its workforce. The study involves the participation of approximately 4,000 employees and will continue for 3 years. For more information, contact [Jennifer Bell](#).

OSHA Issues Hazard Alert on Formaldehyde Dangers to Hair Salon Workers

OSHA has issued a revised hazard alert to hair salon owners and workers about potential formaldehyde exposure from working with certain hair smoothing and straightening products. The revised alert was prompted by the results of agency investigations, a warning letter issued by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and factually incorrect information recently sent to salons by a company that manufactures hair products. [Click here](#) for OSHA's updated alert.

ASSE Scholarships & Grants

The ASSE Foundation (ASSEF) is pleased to announce the 2013 Scholarship & Professional Education Grant Program available to students pursuing degrees in occupational safety and health and to ASSE members and safety professionals working to advance their professional credentials. Thanks to its generous donors, ASSEF is offering more than \$180,000 in 2013.

ASSEF has updated its scholarship and grant application and has gone paperless, making the application process efficient and convenient. Click [here](#) to apply. Click [here](#) to review the Frequently Asked Questions before completing your application.

Applications are due December 1, 2012, and award recipients will be announced on or around April 1, 2013. Please share this information with anyone who may benefit from this program. If you have any questions, please e-mail Adele Gabanski at agabanski@asse.org.

ASSE 2013 Poster Contest

Children ages 5-14 will have the opportunity to illustrate the importance of safety by entering the 11th annual ASSE kids' Safety on the Job poster contest. The contest aims to teach children about the importance of being safe at work and what occupational SH&E professionals do to protect people, property and the environment.

The contest is open to all children sponsored by an ASSE member. ASSE members can sponsor family members, schools and the children of their coworkers. Those seeking an ASSE member to request sponsorship can check with their local ASSE chapter by clicking [here](#) or by sending an e-mail to customerservice@asse.org.

The winning poster from each of the five age groups is featured on the annual North American Occupational Safety and Health (NAOSH) Week poster distributed worldwide, at NAOSH Week events and at Safety 2013. The posters that best illustrate safety on the job will win the contest. Click [here](#) for contest rules and information. Entries are due by February 14, 2013.

Take Advantage of Your Membership

- [Network](#) with industry professionals via LinkedIn
- Conference calls and annual [meetings](#)
- Triannual electronic [technical publications](#) and access to publication archives
- 150+ [interviews](#) with top industry professionals
- [Publication](#) opportunities (earn COCs)
- Advisory committee [guidance and advice](#)
- [Volunteer](#) and leadership opportunities
- Discounts on group-sponsored [webinars](#)
- Group [sponsorship](#) on conference speaking proposals
- Mentoring services

These are the top-ranked member benefits for the Service Branch. As a branch member, please be sure to take full advantage of your membership and [e-mail us](#) with any questions. Similar benefits are also available for the other 28 industry and interest groups.

Academics
Construction
Consultants
Engineering
Environmental
Ergonomics
Fire Protection
Healthcare
Industrial Hygiene
International
Management
Manufacturing
Mining
Oil & Gas
Public Sector
Risk Management/Insurance
Transportation

Agricultural
Health & Wellness
Human Resources
Legal Services
Military
Training & Communications
Utilities

Blacks in Safety Engineering
Safety Professionals & the Latino
Workforce
Women in Safety Engineering
Young Professionals in SH&E

Recommended Reading

- [Click here](#) to read about Six Sigma in a services environment.
- [Click here](#) to read about how the International Warehouse Logistics Association wants exemptions from Food Safety Act Provisions.
- [Click here](#) to download Effective Crowd Management Guidelines from the National Retail Federation.
- [Click here](#) to read the press release on the Service Branch and crowd safety.

Publication Archive

Note that Practice Specialty, Branch and Common Interest Group publications are archived in the [Members Only](#) section under Resources. Find current and past publications for all of the groups you belong to in one place!

Body of Knowledge Tutorial

ASSE's Body of Knowledge (BOK) wiki-like searchable database is available to all members. To help you get the most from this resource, we are providing a recording of an introductory and instructional tutorial to get you started.

[Click here](#) for the standard version.

[Click here](#) for the iPhone/iPad version.

www.safetybok.org/

Best of the Best

The 2011-12 *Best of the Best* is now available. [Click here](#) to view this compilation of top technical material from our practice specialties. Visit www.asse.org/ps for more information on the groups represented in this publication or www.asse.org/JoinGroups to get the most out of your ASSE membership by adding a practice specialty.

Welcome New Members

We want to thank everyone who has remained a loyal member of the Service Branch and welcome the following members who recently joined. We currently have nearly 300 members. If you have any colleagues who might be interested in joining the branch, please contact [Krista Sonneson](#) to request an information packet. If you know anyone who might be interested in joining ASSE, please contact [customer service](#).

Hassan Al Mosawi, SABIC
Raymond Baggett
Tracy Bartels, Vail Resorts Keystone
Valerie Bentdahl, Emerson Network Power Connectivity Solutions
Robert Bewighouse, Clarion Safety Systems
Allison Brigitzer
Chris Calleri
Terry Carmon, Dayton VA Medical Center
Peter Carvajal, Weekes & Callaway
Tressa Chambers-Milton, Grainger
Robert Cook
Joseph Davis
Howard Harrington
William Howsden
Laura Hughes
Odalys Ibarra, Fifth & Pacific Cos., Inc.
Sherry Kay
Trevor Larsen, Walt Disney World
Kurt Lazarus
Ching-Chu Liu, Corning
Daniel Martino
Philip Muna
Donna Parker
Richard Saizan, Alliance Safety Council
Michael Sebenick, Alyeska Resort
Aaron Smith
David Spasojevich
Tammy Thomas, SMM South Corp.
Elisionia Valle, Wenner Bread Products Inc.
Jerome Yoon

For information on how to join, visit www.asse.org/JoinGroups.

Resource Snapshot

Service Industry Information: www.asse.org/ps/service
Body of Knowledge: www.safetybok.org
Journal of SH&E Research: www.asse.org/AcademicsJournal
International Resource Guide: www.asse.org/IRG
Networking Opportunities: www.asse.org/connect
Publication Opportunities: www.asse.org/ps/write
Volunteer Opportunities: www.asse.org/ps/volunteers

Environmental Practice Specialty

The [Environmental Practice Specialty \(EPS\)](#) focuses on issues, such as environmental management, water and air quality, solid and hazardous waste, emergency planning and response practices, chemicals and toxicology, legislative and regulatory monitoring, and expert testimony and resources.

From its start in 1990, EPS has always made an effort to provide its members with opportunities for professional development and recognition through conference events, webinars, guidance documents, its triannual publication [EnviroMentor](#) and awards programs. In addition, EPS routinely surveys its members for their input on OSHA and EPA legislation and on hot topics, such as hydrogen as an alternative fuel source and green practices in the workplace. EPS also sponsors the [Agricultural Branch](#).

To join this popular practice specialty, contact customer service at (847) 699-2929 or visit www.asse.org/JoinGroups. If you are an existing member of EPS and would like to join the Agricultural Branch for free, send an e-mail to customerservice@asse.org indicating your interest.

Follow EPS at www.asse.org/ps/environmental and on [LinkedIn](#).



At Your Service is a publication of ASSE's Service Branch, 1800 E. Oakton St., Des Plaines, IL 60018, and is distributed free of charge to members of the Service Branch. The opinions expressed in articles herein are those of the author(s) and are not necessarily those of ASSE. Technical accuracy is the responsibility of the author(s).

Contact the branch advisory committee at www.asse.org/ps/service.

Protecting people, property and the environment



ASSE

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