

Oct.—Dec. 2017 Newsletter

YOU Are the Help Until Help Arrives

Hurricane Harvey swept through Texas and Louisiana in late August reminding us of the havoc that Mother Nature can wreck upon us. With such mass devastation, combined with conditions hampering incoming traffic, emergency responders aren't always able to get to where they are needed most at the speed in which they are needed. You may be able to save a life by taking simple actions immediately.

Life-threatening injuries require immediate action to prevent an injured person from dying. Those nearest to someone with life-threatening injuries are best positioned to provide the first care, which should focus on the most essential actions, including moving someone away from ongoing danger, stopping life-threatening bleeding, positioning the injured so they can breathe, keeping them warm, and providing comfort.

While it fulfills no medical certification requirements associated with formal medical courses, you can take FEMA's "You Are the Help Until Help Arrives" web-based training [here](#) in order to learn more about the important role you can play in providing these potentially life-saving interventions prior to the arrival of emergency services.

Daisy Chains and the Risk Associated with Permanent Temporary Wiring Solutions *(Yes, that IS an oxymoron!)*

One of the more common safety issues seen while conducting site safety audits are "daisy chains" – extension cords strung together, and use of extension cords that do not have a rating that matches with what is plugged into them. Extension cords are universally used in many offices, construction sites, and industrial warehouses.



In the case of the photo above, it was a homeowner who smelled something strange, and upon investigation, discovered the melted extension cord shown. It turns out, a family member had tried to create a more conveniently located plug-in for an appliance by daisy-chaining two underrated extension cords. Fortunately, the melted cords were found before they started a fire!

We often find similar situations in our safety assessments of different work sites. Not only are power strips and extension cords daisy chained together, but they are often used for permanent wiring. OSHA standards outline acceptable uses for temporary extension cords—though, they can seem vague. The referenced standard is [1910.303\(b\)\(2\)](#) in the OSHA general industry standards for electrical safety. The same requirement appears in its twin, [1926.403\(b\)\(2\)](#), which is located in the electrical safety

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Professional Education Units (PEU)

If you have employees in need of PEU Credits, we have registered trainers in Jefferson and St. Louis counties.

Check out our topics on Page 2 and contact us about setting up classes at your location, or in our office, in order to keep your staff credentials up to date

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NATIONAL SAFETY CONSULTING NEWS

Tis the season...for Training!

Not that we don't need training for our employees ALL year, but (at least for the construction industry) Fall and Winter are easier times of the year to fit that training into your work schedules. This time of year also seems to be when we here at NSC start getting phone calls about PEU credits.

We are registered to provide PEU credits in both St. Louis and Jefferson counties here in Missouri, on a variety of topics—and are always working towards adding more to our curriculum. But even if you don't need the PEU credits, we can still schedule training in these, or any other topics you and your staff may need.

If you don't have enough people to meet the minimum head count, we can pool several different companies together in order to meet the training needs of your staff. Give us a call, or shoot us an email to get something scheduled right away!

St. Louis County, MO

Class	Core Credits	Contact Hours
OSHA 30 Hr	15	30
OSHA 10 Hr	5	10
Aerial Lift Safety	1.5	3
Asbestos Awareness Training	1	2
Confined Spaces Training	1.5	3
Control of Hazardous Energy LOTO	1.5	3
Crane Signal Person Training	1	2
Electrical Safety	2	4
Electrical Safety Refresher	1	2
Fall Protection Training	2	4
First Aid Training 4-hr Refresher	2	4
First Aid Training 6-hr Course	3	6
General Safety Review 4-hr Course	2	4
Respiratory Protection Training	1	2
Stairway and Ladder Training	2	4
Welding Safety	1.5	3

Jefferson County, MO

Class	Core Credits	Contact Hours
Aerial Lift Safety	1.5	3
Asbestos Awareness Training	1	2
Confined Spaces Training	1.5	3
Control of Hazardous Energy LOTO	1.5	3
Crane Signal Person Training	1	2
Electrical Safety	2	4
Electrical Safety Refresher	1	2
Fall Protection Training	2	4
General Safety Review	2	4
Hazardous Communications (HAZCOM)	1	2
Personal Protective Equipment	1	2
Respiratory Protection Training	1	2
Stairway and Ladder Training	2	4
Welding Safety	1.5	3

What is a Hazard Assessment, and Why do I Need One?

While an assessment of the hazards in your workplace is not an OSHA requirement, it is recommended best practice, and is certainly an effective tool towards identifying or recognizing hazards that are present, or that can be anticipated. A critical element of a effective safety and health program is a proactive, ongoing process to identify and assess such hazards. Some hazards, such as housekeeping and tripping hazards, can and should be fixed as they are found. Fixing hazards on the spot emphasizes the importance of safety and health and takes advantage of a safety leadership opportunity.

If you need a more in-depth assessment, National Safety Consulting can come in and perform almost a “mock OSHA Inspection” by collecting and reviewing information about the hazards present or likely to be present in your workplace. This process would include considering hazards associated with not only the day-to-day operations, but also for emergency or non-routine situations. This allows us to determine the severity and likelihood of incidents that could result for each hazard identified.

With that information, we can use this information to provide a written report with estimated OSHA fines, would this have been a real vs. a mock “inspection” and recommended corrective actions. At your request, we can then provide site-specific written programs, develop training modules, and present training to your staff.

When did you last determine the hazards within your facility? [Contact us](#) for a quote.

Working Outside During Transitional Weather

From the start of Pumpkin Spice season, the day-to-day weather can't seem to make up it's mind - especially in the Midwest. If you work outside, layering your clothing is a sure fire way to maximize your comfort and safety in changing conditions. Multiple, light layers allow you to make quick adjustments based on your activity level and changes in the weather.

Each layer has a function. The **base layer** manages moisture; the **insulating layer** protects you from the cold; and the **shell layer** shields you from wind and rain. Simply add or subtract layers as your work day, and the temperatures, change.

The Base Layer (against your skin) helps regulate your body temperature by moving perspiration away from your skin. Cotton is a fabric that retains perspiration and can leave you chilled, so for outdoor comfort, your base layer should be made of merino wool or synthetic fabrics. Rather than absorbing moisture, these fabrics transport (or "wick") perspiration away from your skin, dispersing it on the outer surface where it can evaporate. The result: You stay drier even when you sweat, and your shirt dries faster afterwards.

The Insulating Layer helps you retain heat by trapping air close to your body. Natural fibers such as wool and goose down are excellent insulators. Merino wool sweaters and shirts offer soft, reliable warmth and keep on insulating even when wet. For very cold and dry conditions, goose down is best. It offers an unbeatable warmth-to-weight ratio and is highly compressible; however, it must be kept dry to maintain its insulating ability.

Classic fleece such as Polartec® or Thermal Pro polyester and other synthetics such as Thinsulate® provide warmth for a variety of conditions. They're lightweight, breathable and insulate even when wet. They also dry faster and have a higher warmth-to-weight ratio than even wool. Classic fleece's main drawbacks are wind permeability and bulk (it's less compressible than other fabrics).

The Shell or Outer Layer protects you from wind, rain or snow. Shells range from pricey mountaineering jackets to simple windproof jackets. Most allow at least some perspiration to escape; virtually all are treated with a durable water repellent (DWR) finish to make water bead up and roll off the fabric.

An outer shell is an important piece in bad weather, because if wind and water are allowed to penetrate to your inner layers, you begin to feel cold and your risk for cold-related illness increases. Furthermore, without proper ventilation, perspiration can't evaporate but instead condenses on the inside of your shell. Fit is another consideration—our shell layer should be roomy enough to fit easily over other layers and not restrict your movement.

Being able to add or remove comfortable layers of clothing is vital to making it through the transitional seasons, especially when working outside here in the Midwest. Though there is no OSHA requirement for employers to provide workers with "ordinary" clothing, or other items, used solely for protection from weather, such as winter coats, jackets, gloves, parkas, rubber boots, hats, raincoats, ordinary sunglasses, and sunscreen, many employers provide their workers with winter weather gear such as coats/jackets and gloves. If you choose to do so, take layering options into consideration when purchasing cold weather clothing for your team.

When shopping for layering pieces, look for high visibility items.

That way, whether adding or shedding layers, you remain visible on the jobsite

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standards for construction. These standards both state that “listed or labeled equipment shall be installed and used in accordance with any instructions included in the listing or labeling.” But...what is meant by “listing or labeling”?

Manufacturers of electrical equipment used in the United States (and most other countries) have their product evaluated and/or tested by an independent evaluating agent, then listed and labeled for a specific use or purpose. The most commonly used independent company performing this evaluation service in the United States is Underwriters Laboratory (UL). So when you pick up any electrical tool, appliance, or component, it usually will be stamped or labeled with the UL certification mark (or something similar), and it will be listed in their documentation for a specific approved purpose (or purposes). But many times, people never bother to look up the listing which describes the specific purpose. As a result, we can end up using the tool or piece of equipment for purposes for which it was not listed or approved. And that, in turn, nets us an OSHA citation.

So, if we want to look up the UL listing, how do we access that information? Often times that information is provided by the manufacturer in their product information. Another source is the UL White Book or the UL Product Spec online search ([here](#)). There you can look up a specific type of electrical equipment or components and research the approved purpose(s), and in many cases, specific prohibitions.

With that in mind...

Extension cords are sometimes used to energize power strips in locations far from outlets. Because electrical resistance increases with increased power cord length, interconnecting cords increases the total resistance and result in heat generation. This creates an additional risk of equipment failure and fire, particularly when paper and other combustible materials are in contact with the wires.

If daisy chained cords or power strips are at risk for melting in a home with a single appliance attached, imagine what could happen in an office with multiple computer components or a job site with multiple power tools linked into the daisy chain.

Additionally, OSHA’s regulations only allow extension cords to be used as temporary wiring for up to 90 days. Any cords in place over 90 days are considered permanent wiring. Unfortunately, once in place, extension cords tend to become permanent wiring and a fire hazard. Not only could that fire hazard potentially ruin your organization’s financial situation, so could an OSHA citation with a maximum fine of \$7,000.00 per INSTANCE of over-extended temporary wiring.

We recommend you not wait until you smell melting plastic or smoke. Walk around your workplace and your home, checking for electrical hazards that may be similar, and replace with approved and appropriately rated wiring and cords.

Dept. of Labor Offering Grants to Aid in Disaster Response Following Hurricanes

The U.S. Department of Labor announced it has so far committed up to \$70 million in Disaster Dislocated Worker Grant funding to assist in disaster response efforts after Hurricanes Irma and Harvey.

The grants will assess workforce needs in response to Hurricane Irma damage to Florida, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands which followed the widespread destruction caused by Hurricane Harvey in Texas and Louisiana.

DOL activities to assist states and territories include:

- The Employment and Training Administration will provide the Disaster Dislocated Worker Grants and is assisting in administering Disaster Unemployment Assistance for disaster-declared areas.
- The Employee Benefits Security Administration is temporarily waiving certain requirements and deadlines related to retirement plans and group health plans and is coordinating with other federal agencies that regulate employee benefit plans on relief for employers, other plan sponsors, and plan participants and beneficiaries affected by the hurricanes.
- The Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs is temporarily suspending select federal contractor requirements to allow businesses involved in hurricane relief to prioritize recovery efforts.
- MSHA is preparing to send personnel and equipment to assist FEMA in recovery efforts. OSHA is posting [guidance](#) to help employers keep their workers safe during [cleanup & recovery operations](#), and most OSHA programmed enforcement actions will halt in affected areas to avoid disrupting recovery operations. An OSHA Emergency Response Team will provide compliance assistance.

Links found in this issue

You Are the Help Until Help Arrives web-based training (page 1):

<https://community.fema.gov/until-help-arrives>

UL Product Spec online search (page 4)

<http://productspec.ul.com/index.php>

OSHA Guidance (page 4)

<https://www.osha.gov/dts/weather/hurricane/>

Cleanup & Recovery Operations

<https://www.osha.gov/dts/weather/flood/>