Taking Ownership of Safety Picture This

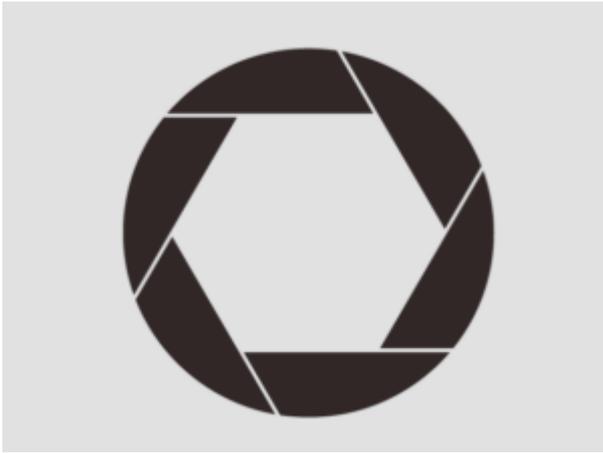# Common workplace safety hazards

1 WORKING AT HEIGHT

Employers need to identify all locations where fall protection is necessary – as well as where the engineered anchor points are – and train employees and regularly audit the fall protection program, Dankert said.

2 POOR HOUSEKEEPING

If the clutter or spill requires specialized training to clean up, then employees need to alert their supervisor, who can send in the appropriate staff. Additionally, Dankert recommends setting aside a few minutes at the end of each shift, or on a Friday afternoon, to clean up before leaving for the day.

3 ELECTRICAL – EXTENSION CORDS

Although extension cords can be useful for temporarily supplying power for certain operations, the key word is "temporarily." When a cord is used for several weeks or months, Dankert said, OSHA doesn't consider the use temporary. This opens the door for a violation.

4 FORKLIFTS

What's a leading cause of forklift-related hazards in the workplace? In George's experience, it's when workers feel compelled to work quickly. Shortcuts include driving with too large of a load or driving distracted. The end result may be hitting a rack, damaging a wall or product, or even injuring a co-worker.

5 LOCKOUT/TAGOUT

Proper lockout/tagout procedures can help prevent serious injuries, but only if those procedures are followed. "A lot of organizations, they've got the best procedures in place, but it's the implementation of the procedures that fails," George said.

6 CHEMICALS

When an organization purchases and uses chemicals, it needs to have a control system, Harrington said. It needs to know what the chemicals are for and why they were ordered.

7 CONFINED SPACES

Confined spaces can present a number of hazards. George said many tragedies involving confined spaces have occurred because an employer didn't issue a permit or failed to carry out a risk assessment.

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