



093: Tripping Hazards

General concepts

You can keep from producing tripping hazards by adopting specific work methods toward that end. For example, you can make a habit of looking for tripping hazards every time you set up for a wire pull and every time you complete a pull.

You can identify tripping hazards left by others and eliminate those hazards before an accident occurs.

You cannot prevent tripping hazards unless you think about them as you work with the things that can create them.

You cannot anticipate tripping hazards if you are carrying so much that you can't see them. One way to avoid tripping hazards is to get help carrying anything bulky, no matter how light it is.

Portable cords

Route cords away from traffic ways. Overhead is preferable. If laying cords on the floor, lay them out straight, not curled. Tape them down with duct tape so they do not form loops people can trip on.

If routing a cord at surface level across a walkway, use a cord guard. If you don't have a cord guard, tape the cord securely in place along the whole length that is exposed to the walkway.

If you must run a cord down a stairway, run it to one side and tape it securely in place. If possible, tape it to the side of the stair casing rather than letting it lie on the steps.

If someone else has left a cord in a walkway or stairway, secure it with tape or push it to one side. If it cannot be made reasonably safe, contact your foreman. Don't unplug a cord that someone unsafely routed, as that may create a further safety hazard. For example, that cord may be powering lights or equipment that requires a ground through the power source.

Lanyards, belts, and harnesses

Do not just leave these in a pile before or after an ascent. Not only does such a practice create a tripping hazard, it leaves this safety gear open to damage.

Stow lanyards, belts, and harnesses properly. That may mean hanging them on a fixture for that purpose, putting them in a pouch, returning them to the tool shack, or putting them in your gangbox. If you don't know where to stow them, return them to the tool shack or ask your foreman.

If you find such gear unattended and it is a tripping hazard, pick it up and take it to the owner, or to your foreman if you can't find the owner.

Covers

Before removing a cover from any conduit box, enclosure, panel, or other such equipment, determine a safe place to store it. That place can be close to the work area, but should not be where feet are likely to come into contact with it.

Do not simply lean a switchboard cover up against the next cubicle. Doing so creates a tripping hazard, and the focus of the fall is likely to be inside the panel you are working on.

Discussion leader duties for this session:

Look around the job site for some tripping hazards. Fix them as you find them, but take note of where and what these were. Tell your crew about the hazards during the discussion and ask them what could have been done to prevent these occurrences.

What this Safety Talk covers:

How to prevent tripping hazards and how to spot potential tripping hazards left by others.

Discussion notes :

What general concept will help you avoid creating tripping hazards?

What will keep you from not creating tripping hazards?

What will keep you from anticipating tripping hazards created by others?

How should you route portable cords in regard to traffic ways?
Stairways?

If you find a portable cord, or a bundle of such cords, running helter-skelter down a stairway, what should you do?

How can you ensure people don't trip over your safety gear?

What should you do if you find unattended safety gear and it's a tripping hazard?

What should you do before removing a cover? After?

How can you reduce tripping hazards on wire pulls?

Use wire that comes packaged with no spools, if possible. This eliminates all spool-related tripping hazards.

If you are using wire that is packaged on spools, use a spool rack. A spool that is resting on the floor with a piece of EMT stuck through it has a tripping hazard on either side and the middle.

If laying wires out on the floor as part of a pull, take care to remove loops and curls. Manage the traffic in the are, so people are not walking across the wires being pulled.

Dispose of scraps after each pull. Short scraps are slipping hazards. Long scraps are tripping hazards.

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