

### Safety When You're Working Alone

Working alone means working where you cannot be seen or heard by another person and where you cannot expect a visit from another person.

Working alone is not the best situation, but sometimes it is necessary.

Doing a job alone can be more hazardous than doing the same job in company of others. If a worker is injured, ill or trapped, there is no one nearby to help or call for assistance. Lone workers are also more vulnerable to crime such as robbery or assault.

Consider these tips for greater safety when working alone:

- Talk to your boss and colleagues about your job, the hazards and how to minimize them.
- See if work can be rescheduled so you do not have to work alone.
- Set up a check-in system by which you call or page someone at regular intervals so they will know you are okay. Agree on a tracking method to be used if you are overdue.
- Carry a personal alarm, cell phone or two-way radio. Manage the batteries so you will always be able to get through.
- Use a buddy system, taking another worker with you into higher risk situations.
- File a travel plan when you drive somewhere alone. Keep vehicles well-maintained to avoid breakdowns. Stock an emergency survival kit in the vehicle.
- When visiting a possibly intimidating client, take a taxi and have the driver wait outside.
- Handling cash or other valuables puts you at risk for violent robbery. Have your employer take steps to reduce the amount of cash on hand to lower the incentive for robbers.
- Have your work area arranged for maximum visibility from windows. Get training in how to avoid and handle a robbery, and learn to use the security system.

Some people enjoy working alone and choose solitary jobs on purpose. An injury or a violent encounter can take the fun out of your work, so be prepared to work as safely as possible when you work alone.

### Injured on Your Day Off



*Man sustains serious head injury in industrial accident*

*Worker was picking up his paycheck on his day off.*

There is nothing worse than getting injured while at work . . . except maybe getting injured at work when you're not on the clock and there just to pickup your paycheck.

Industrial workplaces can be a dangerous place whether you're working inside the facility or just coming in to pickup your paycheck for the week.

It seems obvious from the photograph that this would not be a safe entrance to the facility as you are going through a narrow opening that is lower than the typical door, roller conveyors on the walking surface and large objects coming through the opening occassionally. However the article also says that people routinely utilized it to go in and out of the facility. **Bad habits and risky behavior** are definitely at play.

Also the injured person had only worked at the facility for two weeks. Did he not know the danger? Had he never seen loads of blocks come through the opening? Did he learn from coworkers this practice?

This brings to light that when dealing with new employees your actions are in the spotlight. They are like sponges and want to absorb everything they see veterans say and do so they too can perform a good job.

What type of example are you setting? Think about that as you work today and look at each task you do.

Are you doing it safely?

Are there dangers?

Would I want to teach someone that I care about that this is the way to do the task?

All important questions to ask ourselves.