

Anger: Just One Letter Short of DANGER

If you have angry workers in your department or you yourself are angry, you may end up reporting more injuries on the job. A recent study by the Annals of Family Medicine found that high levels of anger increase the risk of injury. Angry people are more likely to sustain injuries serious enough to require emergency medical care, and the risk is higher for men than women, says lead author Daniel Vinson of the University of Missouri.

The study, in the Annals of Family Medicine, found that nearly **32%** of all the patients reported being **irritable just before they were injured**, 18% reported being angry and 13% reported being hostile.

Anger more than quadrupled a person's odds of being injured, while being hostile increased those odds **sixfold**. For men, Vinson says, the link was particularly clear. Another study that followed 100 drivers for two weeks linked episodes of anger with "near accidents". Two additional studies found that angry people were more likely to have car crashes or sustain football injuries.

There is little doubt that anger can be a contributing factor in workplace injuries, but what do you do about it? Here are some tips:

- **Consciously determine to be calm.** Don't react, think! Remember your goals and respond appropriately. Choose to remain calm!
- **Communicate.** When someone upsets you, tell them. Calmly talk to them about how you feel about their words or actions. Learn to express yourself better -- clear and composed. Choose to!
- **Remove yourself.** Get away from the scene until you can respond without anger. Your success will not happen overnight. Take it one step at a time, one day at a time. Remember to relax. Relaxation exercises or music can be helpful. Keep in mind you can reach out to someone you trust for help. Choose to!
- **Frequently take time for yourself.** Do something you enjoy like walking in the park, swimming, reading the Bible, or seeing a feel-good movie. Do something nice for someone you admire. It's okay to feel good about yourself. Choose to!
- **Look for the positives.** Don't dwell on the negatives. "Don't sweat the small stuff." Don't worry about things that are out of your personal control. This is difficult, but an attitude and behavior that can be learned!

I Just Wanted To

... The phrase "I just wanted to....!"

BUTTE — Why did a sober, middle-aged man lead Butte police on a dangerous, high-speed chase through Butte and on the interstate early Thursday?

"I just always wanted to do that," he said, according to the Butte police report.

John C. Hughes, 55, is accused of trying to evade a police patrol by driving at high speeds through Butte and on the interstate just to see what it would be like, police reported.

Hughes likely found out it involved severe tire damage, because police used "stop sticks" to deflate his tires during the chase in order to get him to stop, according to the police report. Hughes was arrested without further incident and faces a misdemeanor charge of reckless driving while eluding police.

Investigators say Hughes wasn't intoxicated and they didn't find drugs or other contraband in his vehicle. Sheriff John Walsh said the man allegedly told officers afterward that he always wanted to see what it would be like to be in a chase with police.

"That's the first time I've ever heard of anything like that," the sheriff said.

Each of us get rushed or hurried or just complacent and take short cuts that aren't safe and may cause us to have an injury. Things like not locking equipment out, not wearing the proper PPE for the task, skipping the safety checklist. You know what they are, as you've probably stopped at some point and made a conscious decision to forgo following the safe way to do it.

That's what this Montana driver did. He decided he just wanted to "do it", so he did. Now many of you may think it's no big deal as he didn't get hurt during the incident. The key to this is no one got hurt **THIS TIME**.

The scenerios are endless as he was doing what he wanted on the high speed chase. The police could have crashed, someone could have walked out in the road, he could have lost control due to the stop sticks, etc. The fact is, he not only put HIS life in jeopardy, but the lives and well being of all those in the community.

The same applies to you when you make those conscious decisions not to follow the safety procedures. You may think it will only affect you, however the risks you take can impact your coworkers and the community in ways that may not be obvious or haven't occurred before.

Think about that before you make that decision next time and do it the safe way.

All in Fun

There's nothing wrong with a little fun at work but it's important to know the difference between having fun and at-risk behavior to place yourself or a coworker in harms way. The following story from December 15th's edition of The Daily Reporter in Milwaukee illustrates the point:

A man who was crushed by a refrigerator Tuesday was goofing around with co-workers who pushed the appliance from a fourth-floor porch, according to the Milwaukee medical examiner's report.

Horseplay

Throwing a refrigerator off the 4th floor balcony may be a fast and exciting way to dispose of it, but it certainly isn't the safest way. Even if the victim wasn't directly underneath it, as it crashed to the pavement, parts and pieces would go flying and could possibly strike someone nearby. Depending on the type of unit, hazardous chemicals could leak from it due to the inevitable damage.

Distraction

It appears the victim was distracted by a phone call. This happens all too much these days with our reliance on cellular service that is clipped to our hip. The important rule to remember is to never utilize your phone while working on moving equipment or in other hazardous situations. Go to a safe area like an office, hallway or break room to use your phone. Have it on vibrate or mute so you won't be distracted if it rings while on the job.

Each year there are several deaths caused by such "fun" in the workplace. Ensure you or your coworker isn't the next headline in the newspaper.