

# Safety Matters

## Retail

Provided by: SCS Agency Inc

### Avoid On-the-Job Accidents

Your job is an unpredictable one and hazardous conditions could arise in a variety of situations, especially considering the customers you encounter throughout the day. However, on-the-job accidents can be avoided by focusing on safe practices and taking necessary precautions.

#### Be Aware of Safety Hazards

Most accidents are caused by an unsafe act, an unsafe working condition or a combination of the two. For example, a worker could fall off a ladder that was not secured properly – an accident caused by the unsafe act of not securing the ladder. Or, a cord on the ground could cause a customer to trip, and that would be the result of an unsafe condition. In either instance, the accident could have been prevented by following proper safety precautions (either by securing the ladder or ensuring the cord was not in the path of customers).

It's important to understand what causes accidents so that you can avoid them. While it is impossible to list all of the hazards you may encounter while working, common ones include the following:

- Injuries caused by debris or spills that are not cleaned up
- Damaged tools or equipment
- Misuse of equipment or machinery
- Horseplay
- Any number of possible accidents due to

customer behavior

#### Don't Cut Safety Corners

The first step to keeping yourself and co-workers safe is to stay alert on the job and don't let routine or familiarity lure you into carelessness. Always observe safety precautions before and during a task, even if those precautions make the task more inconvenient or take longer to complete. Cutting corners may not seem like a big deal, but doing so is a primary cause of accidents.

#### Practice Safety

Next, know your job. The more you know about your job, the safer you'll be. Know the proper procedures and safety precautions for any task you do, and if any questions arise during your workday, be sure to talk to your supervisor.

Also, know which tasks, areas and situations are more prone to hazardous conditions, and always be on the lookout for anything unsafe. If you see a customer behaving unsafely or committing an unsafe act, inform the customer and explain how to safely correct his/her behavior. You cannot control how customers act, but you can watch for unsafe situations and attempt to make them safer.



### Get Involved

And finally, make a personal contribution. A good way to start this is to follow all safety rules, even if you think they are unnecessary or slow you down. Certain rules are made for your protection, so follow them. Plus, if customers witness you behaving unsafely, they are more likely to model that behavior.

Also, just because an unsafe act is not specifically prohibited, it doesn't mean you should do it. Use your common sense when evaluating if an act is safe or not – there may be a very easy way to make it safer if you stop to think it through.

Develop a safe attitude! This is probably one of the most difficult things to recognize because most of us have the mistaken notion that it's always someone else who gets hurt, never us. If we all do our share in observing safety rules and staying alert for unsafe conditions, everyone will benefit.