

Ask the Expert

Hello again to all UAW members I hope everyone is doing their part in staying Healthy and safe during the surge in Covid-19 cases. It seems like this nightmare will never end.

So here is a question for you. If you were asked whether you would let a loved one perform the jobs we currently do, with the same equipment, following the same processes, what would you do? Do you feel that when you perform your job, you are exposed to job place hazards? If you are, then would you be comfortable with a loved one being exposed to the same hazard? If not, why is it good enough for you?

If you know it is there, why don't you ask your Supervisor to have it corrected? You are required to do so under the provisions of 8.3 of the Health and Safety Language, "*An employee who believes that a condition has developed which presents a significant threat to his health or safety shall promptly notify his/her Supervisor of such conditions. (not a teamlead)*". The union's best instrument for improving your health and safety is you! Don't get suckered into Caterpillar Rewards program! Its main focus is to reward individuals for bad behavior by working out of process and unsafe. If you have to work around or walk over trip hazards, tell your boss, and if he/she doesn't address it to your satisfaction, file a complaint. Any time your feet leave the floor, especially if you're four feet or more above the floor and you can't maintain three points of contact, you are at risk of fall. If your coolant is bad or if you have to breathe air that you can see, your boss needs to know. If you're required to lift something that is over your facility maximum or any lift that causes pain, report it.

Do you know that you are responsible for every word of every Safe Job Procedure, Standard Work, CPS or CLMS class you are required to take or have taken? Do you really take time to read the information? When the time of year comes around and management is pressuring UAW members to do their required learning, are you reading through the material or just filling the answers in that you saved from the year before? I actually witnessed two individuals calling for management to help them correct their cheat sheet and management was more than helpful because they don't care if you know the information. They just want to make sure they are hitting all their metrics to ensure they get a nice big bonus. In the event something happens, you'll be sure to see any and all of these documents, plus some that you've forgotten about. Believe me, they will be used as evidence of your "wrongdoing" in a disciplinary action.

Your UAW Health and Safety Representatives are there to help members address safety concerns when management is not taking member's hazard concerns serious. If your supervisor is not taking action, call for your UAW Safety Representative and file a complaint. C.I. cards are there to slow the process up to 30 days or longer. You are the expert on your job. Give your boss a chance to address your health and safety issues, but don't settle for anything but being satisfied with the resolution. Always remember why you go to work each day and those who depend on you.

Remember, you are the expert on your job!

Loren Meyers, Plantwide Safety Chairman
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