



SAFETY+HEALTH Newsletter



**FEBRUARY
2024**

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Rules on Wildfire Smoke**

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American Heart Awareness Month

As today's leading cause of death for both men and women in the United States as well as worldwide, heart disease is a condition that affects a huge number of people all over the globe. With the increase of sedentary lifestyles and less healthy food sources, the potential for illness or even death from heart problems may be increasing.

American Heart Month was established to draw attention to the need that each individual and community has to keep their hearts happy, healthy, and beating well all throughout their lives!

History of American Heart Month

American Heart Month got its start more than fifty years ago when US President Lyndon B. Johnson made an official proclamation about the event in 1964. The request was brought about through a recommendation by the United States Congress in a joint resolution urging more American citizens to pay attention to their cardiovascular health.



The idea behind the month was to focus on the heart and bring forward heart disease as an issue that can be complicated but also preventable. Heart disease is a term that is used by medical professionals to describe a number of different conditions that are all related to problems with heart health. Some specifics within this larger spectrum may include coronary artery disease, heart valve disease, irregular heartbeats, blood vessel disease and more.

While some forms of heart disease may include congenital heart defects that a person is born with, most often heart disease is acquired throughout the years and can normally be prevented through various healthy lifestyle choices. American Heart Month is here to raise awareness about this most common health problem as well as to educate folks on what they can do to keep their hearts in tip-top shape!

Get a Heart Health Checkup

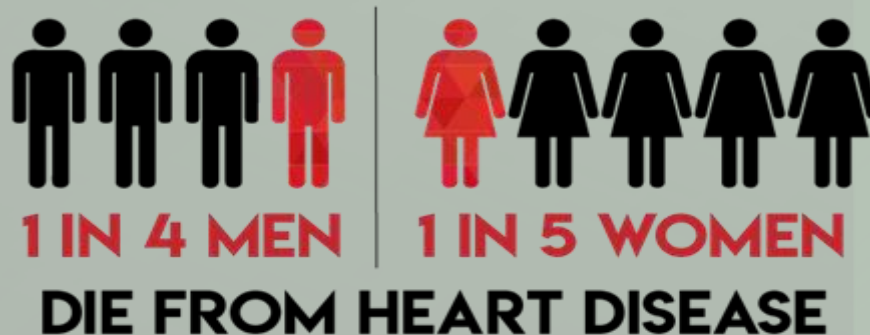
An important factor in living a long and healthy life is getting regular checkups with a doctor, as well as checking blood pressure and cholesterol levels that can be early indicators of heart disease. Many doctors recommend adults over the age of twenty begin getting regular screenings to make sure they maintain their heart health levels all throughout their lives.

American Heart Awareness Month *(Continued)*

Consider Data About Heart Health

Whether as an individual, a concerned family member, or a community leader, in observance of American Heart Month it might be helpful to learn a bit more about the data and statistics surrounding cardiovascular disease, and perhaps to also share them. Here are some important facts to get started with:

- In the United States, one person has a heart attack about every 40 seconds.
- Statistically, Black Americans have the highest risk of death from heart disease, with more than 22% of deaths occurring from cardiovascular problems.
- Each year, the number of people dying from heart disease in the United States is over 690,000, which is about one in every five deaths, and it remains the number one cause of death.
- An estimated 17.9 million people worldwide died of cardiovascular disease in 2019 and, of these, at least 85% were due to stroke or heart attack.



Learn Symptoms of Heart Disease

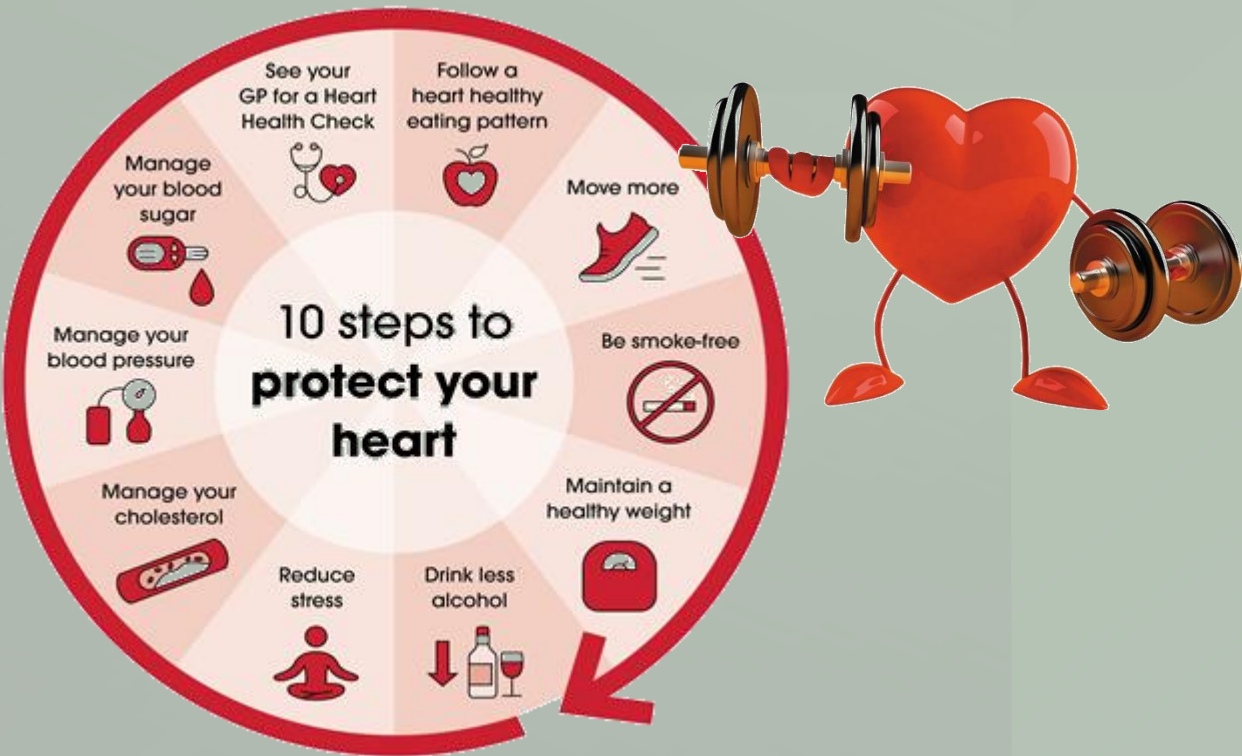
One good way to show support for American Heart Month might be to get educated about warning signs and symptoms that could be indicators of heart disease. Some of the most obvious warning signs for heart issues are fairly well known, such as pain, pressure or tightness in the chest, or chest discomfort (called angina). But it's also important to consider some of these other warning signs that could indicate problems:

- Shortness of breath, including coughing or wheezing
- Pain in a variety of places such as the jaw, neck, throat, back, or upper belly
- Swelling in the feet, ankles, or legs
- Pain, weakness, numbness, or a cold feeling in the extremities (arms and legs)

American Heart Awareness Month *(Continued)*

Help Prevent Heart Disease

Preventing heart disease and heart problems can be a very individual activity, but it can also mean getting involved in community events in celebration of American Heart Month. After all, health can be encouraged as a social endeavor that promotes accountability and resources that can't necessarily be accessed when a person is on their own!



Along the lines of healthy choices that people can make to work toward the prevention of heart disease, doctors often recommend a change in various lifestyle habits. This may include eating a healthy, well-balanced diet with plenty of fruits and vegetables, fish, and less use of sweets or unhealthy fats.

In addition, those who are more physically active can help with heart health as well as reducing weight. Reduction of alcohol consumption and quitting smoking are other ways to act preventatively against heart disease.

For more information visit:

<https://www.heart.org>



American
Heart
Association®

Washington State Issues Permanent Rules on Wildfire Smoke



In an effort to protect workers against unhealthy air caused by wildfire smoke, the Washington State Department of Labor & Industries has issued permanent rules on the hazard.

Set to go into effect Jan. 15, the rules are intended to protect workers from fine particles contained in wildfire smoke that can reach the deepest part of the lungs. This can cause severe health issues such as aggravated asthma, reduced lung function, heart failure, and potentially early death.

Employers will be required to check the Air Quality Index and monitor workers who show signs of injury and illness to determine if medical care is needed. Other employer requirements will include establishing a response plan, training employees, and implementing a two-way communication system.

Washington L&I provides free resources on its Wildfire Smoke webpage.

“With our changing climate, we know the threat of wildfire smoke isn’t a short-term problem,” Craig Blackwood, assistant director of the Washington L&I Division of Occupational Safety and Health, said in a press release. “By developing year-round, permanent rules that clearly spell out the requirement employers must follow, we can help them protect workers from the hazards of wildfire smoke.”

Washington, which adopted emergency rules on wildfire smoke in June, becomes the third state to issue permanent rules on the hazard, joining California and Oregon.

BLS Annual Occupational Injuries Report Released



The Bureau of Labor Statistics released its annual Census of Fatal & Nonfatal Occupational Injuries for 2022. The number of reported workplace fatal and nonfatal injuries and illnesses in the U.S. private sector increased. There were 5,486 workers who died in the United States from fatal injuries suffered on the job.

The rate of fatal work-related injuries rose to 3.7 per 100,000 full-time equivalent workers. That translates into 1 death every 96 minutes: 15 every day, and over 100 every week.

There were an estimated 2.8 million nonfatal injuries and illnesses. The rate of nonfatal injuries remained steady at 2.3 per 100 full-time equivalent workers.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics will release the numbers for 2023 in the late fall of this year. As we know, injuries and fatalities continue to increase.

TWU Tech Ops has seen an increase in injuries with the total for 2022 at 855. Last year (2023) proved to be even worse with 1,009 injuries reported. That's an average of 15 to 23 employees injured every week.

Unfortunately, the outlook is not so encouraging. While injuries continue to increase, any injuries could lead to more serious injuries and even fatalities.

Too many workers continue to die in this country, mostly from preventable causes. OSHA's budget and legal constraints don't help matters, nor do its low penalties. Many of the leading causes of death such as most transportation incidents don't come under OSHA's authority, and other leading causes of death, such as workplace violence, have no OSHA standards, leaving the agency at a disadvantage when attempting to enforce safe working conditions.

BLS Annual Occupational Injuries Report Released *(Continued)*

Unfortunately, OSHA has been making little progress on its workplace violence standard, which will only cover healthcare and social service workers. No date has been set for issuance of an official proposal, so we are unlikely to see a proposal in this Presidential term and it will be several years before we see a final standard, assuming there is a second Biden term. A heat and comprehensive infectious disease standard are also many years in the future.

If we are ever going to significantly reduce the number of workers killed on the job every year, we'll need far more workers to join unions that can use bargaining, the grievance procedure, and even strikes to enforce safe working conditions. We need a more powerful, better funded OSHA that can issue more standards more quickly, with enough inspectors to reach more workplaces more frequently and civil and criminal penalties strong enough to effectively deter employers from cutting corners on worker safety. And we need changes in the Occupational Safety and Health Act that will enable OSHA to enforce safe working conditions more easily. Congress needs to pour more money into OSHA, not less.

AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler stated:

At a time when we should be bolstering workplace safety and holding corporations accountable, the labor appropriations bill put forward by House Republicans proposes cuts to funding for both the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA). These agencies are essential to keeping workers safe on the job, and any effort to defund them is a frontal assault on the safety and lives of working people.

Maintaining a safe workplace should not be partisan; a bipartisan Congress established this right under the law more than 50 years ago. Significant hazards like workplace violence and occupational heat exposure are getting worse and need immediate attention. Now is the time for more resources, standards, and agency oversight to ensure our loved ones have the protections they need to come home at the end of the day.

It's an election year, and labor rights, especially the right to come home alive and healthy at the end of the day, should be on top of the agenda.



PROTECTION from WORKPLACE HAZARDS

When engineering, work practice, and administrative controls are not feasible or do not provide sufficient protection, employers must provide personal protective equipment to their workers and ensure its proper use. Employers are also required to train each worker required to use personal protective equipment to know:

- When it is necessary
- What kind is necessary
- How to properly put it on, adjust, wear, and take it off
- The limitations of the equipment
- Proper care, maintenance, useful life, and disposal of the equipment

Personal protective equipment (PPE) can save lives by protecting workers from injury, illness, burns, lacerations, and other occupational mishaps from equipment and materials that can cause severe damage.

They also prevent the spread of infectious diseases like influenza and tuberculosis by covering skin, mouth, and nose and reducing physical proximity between people.

A PPE Roadshow team was created and is coming to your station. The goal is to:

- Create awareness of PPE equipment available to employees
- Learn how to access PPE catalogs through company website
- Discuss the importance of wearing PPE
- Discuss the importance of employee safety



SAFETY MESSAGE

Little Things—Big Consequences

Little things may lead to Big Consequences. Where did that dropped hardware go? Can't find that nut, bolt, or washer...no sweat...it's only a few cents or it was to be discarded anyway; besides, management is on my back to finish this job. You get to the job site only to find the torque wrench you got is overdue calibration. You decide to use it anyway because the aircraft needs to leave the gate before the flight gets delayed or cancelled.

This is human error. No big deal? Well, ponder this. In 1962, a rocket had to be destroyed after launch when it went off course because of human error. Someone had left a minus sign out of the computer program. No injury or loss of life occurred but it cost over 18 million dollars. In 1997, a nuclear power plant had to be shut down for days because of human error. Someone had dropped their shoe into the reactor. After all was said and done, it ended up costing 2.8 million dollars.



The point here is we are human, and we make mistakes. If you are unsure, assume you made a mistake – do a “double take” to look for them. Do not base your decisions on a wager that nothing should go wrong. On the other hand, if you know you made a mistake, take immediate action to admit it and correct it. If you know the action you are about to take is wrong, then don't do it, no matter how minor you think it might be.

This is what Professional Maintenance Technicians do.

UPCOMING EVENTS

National Burn Awareness Week February 4 -10



National Burn Awareness Week is observed during the first full week of February which launches a campaign to protect against lasting and painful harm.

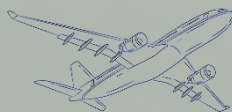
Each year in the United States approximately 400,000 people seek medical care for burn injuries. In fact, every 60 seconds someone in the U.S. sustains a burn injury serious enough to require treatment. Most burn injuries occur at home, approximately 10% take place in the workplace, and fire or open flame isn't always the cause of the burn injury either.



There are three major types of burns, which are thermal or contact burns, electrical burns, and chemical burns. Thermal burns are burns caused by contact with hot objects or liquids, including fires and explosions. Electrical burns can occur through direct or non-direct contact with electrical currents. Chemical burns are brought on by exposure to corrosive materials or acids, such as industrial cleaners.

What is the difference between first, second, and third-degree burns? First-degree burns affect only the outer layer of the skin, leaving the skin red and painful. Second-degree burns leave the skin blistered and/or swollen in addition to redness and pain. Third-degree burns destroy the epidermis and the dermis, sometimes affecting the bones, muscles, and tendons.

What is the proper first aid for treating burns? For first-degree burns, the burn site should be immersed in cool water, not cold water or ice. Second and third-degree burns require immediate medical treatment at a hospital or burn center. For more information visit: www.ameriburn.org/advocacy-and-prevention/burn-awareness-week/



PPE Roadshow – LAX February 13 - 15





Safety+Health Matters!

Got Feedback?

Suggestions on Safety topics in upcoming Newsletters?

Email: Safety@local591.com