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ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS:

Preventing Falls

In our January Newsletter we addressed the hazards involved with Service pits. In this issue we want to raise awareness of other potential fall hazards most auto shops are exposed to. Falls and falling objects can result from unstable working surfaces, ladders that are not safely positioned, and misuse of fall protection. Workers are also subject to falls or to the dangers of falling objects if sides and edges, floor holes, and wall openings are not protected. (See full article at right)

Auto Battery Safety Facts

A motor vehicle battery does the following things:
Activates the starter and ignition system so the engine will turn over;
Provides extra power when the charging system (alternator) is not capable of meeting the needs of the vehicle; and controls voltage bursts when the air conditioner or radio are turned on.
(See page 2 for full article)

Fall Protection

Fall protection must be provided for each employee on a walking/working surface with an unprotected side or edge at the height required by the OSHA standard applicable to their work environment.

Management is required to:

- Develop, implement and commit to a fall protection program
- Provide training on the fall protection program
- Evaluate the program on a regular basis to insure the program's effectiveness and determine whether it needs to be changed or updated

Employers are required to:

- Assess the workplace to determine if the walking/working surfaces on which employees are to work have the strength structural integrity to safely support workers. Once employers have determined that the surface is safe for employees to work on, the employer must select one of the options listed for the work operation if a fall hazard is present.
- Where protection is required, select fall protection systems appropriate for given situations.
- Use proper construction and installation of safety systems.
- Supervise employees properly.
- Train workers in the proper selection, use, and maintenance of fall protection systems.

Unprotected Sides, Wall Openings, and Floor Holes

Almost all sites have unprotected sides and edges, wall openings, or floor holes at some point during construction. If these sides and openings are not protected at your site, injuries from falls or falling objects may result, ranging from sprains and concussions to death.

- Use at least one of the following whenever employees are exposed to a fall of 6 feet or more above a lower level:
- Guardrail Systems
- Safety Net Systems
- Fall Arrest Systems
- Cover or guard floor holes as soon as they are created.
- Guard or cover any openings or holes immediately.
- Construct all floor hole covers so they will effectively support two times the weight of employees, equipment, and materials that may be imposed on the cover at any one time.
- In general, it is better to use fall prevention systems, such as guardrails, than fall protection systems, such as safety nets or fall arrest devices.

Information attained from MySafetyPoint.com

Reference: OSHA Fact Sheet



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Battery Safety Precautions

To prevent an accident that could cause serious eye injuries, you should follow several safety precautions when jump-starting, inspecting or testing the battery.

- Protect your eyes with ANSI Z-87.1 splash-proof safety goggles when working on or near a battery.
- Never work on a battery near an open flame such as a match, lighter or cigarette. Batteries contain hydrogen and oxygen: a spark could ignite them, causing the battery to explode.
- Check the battery for damage—cracks, corrosive materials and loose wires, once a month.
- Make sure your jumper cables are rust and corrosion-free with no exposed wires. Cables repaired with electrical tape are unsafe.
- Do not drop metallic objects on a battery, as a spark can ignite the gases produced by the battery.
- When jump-starting, inspecting or testing your battery, never lean over the battery—even if you are wearing safety goggles. The battery could explode and damage your face and body.
- Squeezing the battery casing may cause the sulfuric acid stored inside the battery to spill through the vents. Use a battery carrier when available and always handle with extreme care.
- Dispose of auto batteries properly. Some service stations and stores where batteries are sold will dispose of the old batteries for free or for a nominal charge.
- Call a professional if you are uncertain or if you cannot remember how to jump-start your car correctly.

For more information on this, and other health related issues affecting workers, visit OSHA's Web site at www.osha.gov

Chemical Burns

- Flush the eye for at least 15 minutes. The affected eye should be held open and flushed with the first available “drinkable” liquid: water, milk, juice or a soft drink.
- After flushing the eye, seek immediate medical attention.
- Do not cover or bandage the eye. The emergency room doctor will have to waste valuable time removing bandages.
- Contact lens wearers should not attempt to remove their lens. Begin flushing the injured eye, allowing the liquid to dislodge the lens gently.

Cuts and Punctures to the Eye or Eyelid

- Cover the eye lightly to protect it from dirt particles and see a doctor right away.
- Do not flush the eye with any liquid. Flushing may remove fluids that maintain the eye's structure and function.
- Do not try to remove an object stuck in the eye. You could cause even worse damage to the eye.

Specks in the Eye

- Lift the upper eyelid outward and down over the eyelid.
- Let your tears wash out the speck or particle. If the speck does not wash out, keep the eye closed, bandage lightly and see a doctor as soon as possible.

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