

# safety matters

Construction

Kirby-Vass Insulation, Inc.  
"Toolbox Talks"

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## Workplace Accidents Can be Costly

We all know that safety is essential in construction, but do you realize just how costly a job site injury can be? According to the National Safety Council, the average cost per worker of workplace injuries is \$1,300. It may not seem like much money, but the extra expense to pay for injuries has a powerfully negative effect to a company's bottom line.

Why is profitability also an important issue to you? The only way that Kirby-Vass Insulation, Inc. can stay in business is to operate at a profit, and that ability can be threatened by a serious workplace injury.

### The Real Cost of Workplace Injuries

It may be surprising to hear that most companies do not have a high profit margin—3 percent is about average. Expenses take a large chunk of the income, and competition limits how much we can charge for the services we provide.

Each time an accident occurs, the cost of the injury must be subtracted from profits. Consider the following two examples:

- At a 5 percent profit margin, an extra \$20,000 in income is needed to compensate for a \$1,000 injury.
- If the profit margin is nearer to 1 percent, an additional \$100,000 worth of new income is necessary to maintain that profit level for the same injury.

As you can see, that adds up to a lot of extra contracts just to compensate for a single injury. Plus, every time a worker gets hurt on the job, other employees are affected too. You may need to work extra hours to make up for the injured worker, the cost of insurance can go up, or the company may be forced to make difficult budget decisions such as cutting hours or having temporary layoffs.

Also, recovering from an injury can mean time away from work, reduced compensation, painful rehabilitation and frustrating adjustments to daily life.

### Practice Prevention

Though operating at a profit is essential to our success, our top priority is to keep our employees safe and healthy. That's why we are counting on you to help practice good safety principles on the job site, including wearing personal protective gear, following all safety procedures and noticing unsafe situations. Safe work behavior will contribute directly to our bottom line as well as to everyone's job security. By observing safety precautions, we can limit on-the-job accidents.

It is always wiser to spend a bit more time doing the job safely than to risk getting a serious injury. Be sure to always follow our safety guidelines and stay alert for unsafe conditions. Think of practicing good safety as both pain-free and profitable—a win-win situation for everyone!

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