Traumatic Injuries in the Workplace

Introduction:

Work-related injuries happen every day. According to the National Safety Council, in the United States, a worker is injured on the job every seven seconds. This equates to 540 work injuries per hour, 12,900 work injuries per day, 90,400 work injuries per week, and 7 million work injuries per year. These are staggering numbers and these are just the reported injuries; many go unreported. Some workers are able to return to work either immediately or after a short period. However, many workers will be out for an extended period, averaging up to three weeks of missed work. Some workers who experience job-related injuries that result in long-term disability are not able to return to work at all.

Discussion Points:

- Work related injury statistics according to the NSC
- Types of Traumatic Injuries
- OSHA provisions on businesses
- Business responsibilities in providing safe workplace
- Traumatic injuries are a life-changing event

Discussion:

At some time in their lives, most people will experience a traumatic incident, and many of these will occur at the workplace or during a work-related event. Heavy equipment and machinery present the highest risk hazard. OSHA stipulates that all mechanical motion, including powered conveyors, drill presses, bending machines, milling machines, grinders, and crushers can be dangerous. The most common accidents resulting in traumatic injury or death, according to OSHA, include falls, blunt force trauma, electrocutions, and crushing injuries. Traumatic injuries have an enormous impact on the worker’s livelihood and family. Many injuries, including amputations and severe head or brain injuries, are devastating and life-changing, and happen in a matter of seconds, often without any warning.

OSHA requires all business owners to provide a safe workplace for workers. Employers must implement measures to minimize the occurrence of injury, including workplace policy, procedures, and practices. A Traumatic Injury Prevention Program should be designed to reduce and prevent work-related injury and death. It is recommended that the program include a hazard assessment and accident exposure investigation, hazard correction tracking, record keeping, the burden of responsibility, a compliance plan, safety orientation, training, understanding job hazards, and communication skills.

At the end of the day remember that most injuries are preventable.

As always, stay safe out there!