



Safety Tips

A five-minute training Series for Pest Management Professionals.

The Cause of Accidents



You may be surprised to learn that most accidents result from unsafe acts versus unsafe conditions. In fact, it's not even close, an estimated 85-90% of all accidents result from unsafe acts versus conditions. Generally speaking, unsafe conditions are typically easier to identify and correct than unsafe acts. As a result, the prevention and control of unsafe conditions is a critical component of an effective safety program.

An unsafe act can be defined as something an employee does or fails to do that contributes to an injury or near miss. Examples would include standing on the top rung of a ladder, failing to use proper PPE (personal protective equipment) and driving too fast. Unsafe acts are associated with behavior and actions.

On the other hand, unsafe conditions are related to actual unsafe physical conditions and equipment malfunctions that lead to accidents. Examples of unsafe conditions include auto accidents that result from a tire blowout or sudden brake failure. Of course, this assumes the tire or brakes showed no warning signs to suggest a failure was imminent. Otherwise, it is reasonable to expect that routine maintenance and inspection practices could have prevented the accident and it could be considered an unsafe act.

So what can be done to reduce accidents resulting from unsafe acts?

- Stay focused and comply with current safety rules and regulations
- Take personal responsibility for working safely; the company or safety equipment cannot make you accident proof
- If you conduct safety inspections, review employee behaviors
- Do not take shortcuts that expose you to hazards
- Plan ahead so that you have adequate equipment to do the job safely
- Report all unsafe conditions
- Always ask if you are unclear or have a concern about a safety procedure
- Use common sense and do what is right