

Incident/Audit Focus for 2006

The areas below have the highest incident occurrence during the year 2005. They should be reviewed as needed to elevate employee awareness in order to reduce these type of incidents. If addressed properly, and corrected in our auditing process, the number of incidents in Division One can be reduced. Trends are listed in frequency order and suggestions to reduce them.

Equipment Incident Trends

Hit Stationary Object – This is when we hit stationary objects within the workzone, or parking areas, yards, etc. Operators are to insure a safe distance around the vehicle or equipment prior to moving them. If unsure of safe clearance, you should get out and inspect the area for objects that you may come in contact with. *Never assume the path is clear.* Daily planning should include sufficient areas to turn around, adequate parking, designated spotters and discussed in the Daily Tailgate Safety Meetings. If conditions change during the day, everyone should be informed.

Backing – This continues to be one of our top incidents and it is totally avoidable. NCDOT employees are backing into equipment, materials, objects, etc. Ways to reduce these are: avoid backing if all possible, go around the block if needed to prevent backing up; always have a spotter when backing; park so you can pull forward when possible, operator to get out of vehicle/equipment and check to the rear prior to backing, always use your mirrors while backing, and use proper hand signals; maintain audible backup alarm at all times. If you must park behind someone's vehicle or equipment or in a blind spot, notify operator of your vehicle position.

Defective Equipment – This is an incident that was directly related to using defective equipment. Operators and drivers are to maintain their assigned vehicle and/or equipment in good working order. Daily Vehicle Inspections, if done correctly, find most defects. If a defect is found that would compromise safety, the equipment must be taken out of service until repaired. All defects are to be documented and reported to the equipment shop.

Unsecured Load - When hauling any type of material, it must be secured to prevent it from falling off trailer, hitch, etc. and coming in contact with others. Four (4) tie down points must be used when hauling equipment. Buckets and other attachments that swivel must be tied down with a separate chain (s). All chain used must be grade 80 type chain. (see Division One Safety Website for additional information.) When hauling loads in Dump Trucks, loads must be covered, load should not be above freeboards, and loaded in a manner that materials will not spill onto roadway.

Hit by Private Vehicle – We are often hit by others. This can be reduced by NCDOT personnel parking away from contractor personnel in workzones or other areas, and using defensive driving techniques when on the road. Defensive driving is driving so as to prevent collisions in spite of the actions of others or the driving

conditions present. Drivers must drive attentively, communicate intentions to other drivers, watch their distance with other vehicles, adapt to road conditions, keep vehicle well maintained, avoid distractions, and **STAY ALERT!** Always expect other drivers to do the unexpected.

Injury Incident Trends

Lifting – Strains from lifting injuries can be painful and take a long time to heal. If severe, strain injuries can lead to operations and permanent disability. To reduce the chance of back and shoulder strains, employees should use mechanical lifting devices when possible. If you must lift manually: 1) lift with your feet flat on the floor 2) use your legs, not your back to do the lifting 3) keep your back straight and avoid twisting while lifting objects 4) keep your arms and elbows close to the body 5) get assistance when possible.

Slip, Trip, and Falls – Keeping a neat work area is essential to personal safety and will reduce these type of hazards in the workplace. You should keep walkways, stairs and aisles free from clutter; clean up leaks and spills immediately; use ladders that are in good working order; walk through work area and remove trip hazards; scout unfamiliar areas for debris or sink holes that may be hidden in tall grass prior to starting work; use fall protection devices when working 6' or more above the ground; missing steps, ladder rungs, or flooring are to be replaced.

Struck by – There are numerous ways we can reduce the chance of being struck by an object. Some of these include: insure your equipment is in good working order and that machine guards are in place; use proper PPE, such as safety glasses; stay a safe distance away from tree felling operations or other operations where there may be falling objects; stay alert at all times and be aware of your surroundings, especially moving equipment.

Poisonous Plants/Insects/Spiders – We have “On Guard” brand skin protectant in inventory that employees should use when working with poisonous plants. Technu wash is also available and is used to cleanse the skin thoroughly after working in poisonous plants. Tick bites must be recorded on a tick log in case problems arise at a later date. Various insect repellents are available through inventory and are to be made available to employees as needed. Spiders like to hide in dark, damp places, so take extra precaution when working in these type of areas.

Cut/Puncture - We use a number of tools and equipment that if not handled properly can cut or even kill you. Employees must be properly trained in the use of equipment they are required to operate. Proper PPE for the hazard must be utilized. Appropriate tools should be used, do not make substitutes unless safe to do so. Machine guards must be in place and never removed unless being serviced or repaired. When tools and equipment are being serviced, lockout/tagout procedures are to be followed. If guards are missing or damaged, Supervisors must be notified and the guard must be replaced or repaired before beginning work. Pinch points should be identified and precautions taken to avoid them. Place warning stickers where needed as reminders to hazards.