

# RISKS

## IN THE TRANSPORTATION INDUSTRY

### THE STEPS TO SAFETY

Dedicated drivers sometimes feel an obligation to complete the job and will load or unload without proper assistance.

Driver inattention and/or error are the most frequent causes of motor vehicle accidents.

**MEMIC**  
Partners for Workplace Safety

Call 1•888•887•8867

© 1998 MEMIC

The purpose of this publication is to reveal some facts about your industry which will help you understand and reduce the costs of workplace injuries. We hope that you will use this information to **assess your workplace and create the safest and most productive worksite ever**. But if you need help, call us.

MEMIC data analysis indicates the following are areas of concern in the transportation and utilities industries. The following is a list of problems with recommended solutions that — if put into practice — can help make your place of business safer.

## 1. Material Handling

Many workers are injured during the loading and unloading process. Items are sometimes too heavy or too bulky for safe lifting. Too often customer loading/unloading sites are not safe, or proper machinery is not available. Drivers, for instance, sometimes feel an obligation to complete a job and will load or unload without proper assistance. To avoid potential injuries, employers should require workers to:



- **Use and maintain lift-aid equipment** such as cranes, hand carts, dollies, and stationary rollers rather than lifting by hand whenever possible.
- **When materials must be moved by hand, use appropriate body positioning.** Avoid lifting from the floor level. Avoid extended reaching away from the body or overhead when moving materials.
- **Ask for help** when lifting heavy or bulky objects.

## 2. Medical Management:

If an employee is injured, managing that injury and returning the employee to work as soon as possible can help save money and retain valuable employees.

- **Develop a medical management program** which identifies a specific medical facility or doctor that will work with the employer to return employees to work or to some to alternate duty as soon as they are able. The longer an employee is out of work, the more it costs the employer.

# 3 Slips, Trips, and Falls

Of the injuries that occur in the transportation industry, many are caused by slips, trips or falls. Here are some simple ways to prevent these injuries:

- **Keep floors and work areas clear** of debris, electrical cords, tools and other extraneous equipment. Make sure floors are not slippery.
- **Remove ice and snow** as often as practical and use sand and/or salt on slippery walking surfaces.
- **Fall protection is critical.** An enforceable fall protection policy should be in place. Anyone who is in a position to fall six feet or more should always use fall protection equipment.
- **Make sure feet are properly protected,** particularly in warehouse and material transfer operations. Sturdy foot protection can reduce risk to feet from impact and strains. Slip-resistant soles can reduce slips and falls.

# 4 Motor Vehicle Accidents

Many of the most serious injuries in the transportation division are the direct result of motor vehicle accidents. Driver injuries are among the most severe and contribute significantly to the cost of workers' compensation. Driver inattention and/or error are the most frequent causes of these accidents. You can help protect your employees against motor vehicle accidents by:

- **Requiring defensive driving courses** which are aimed at improving driver attitude and awareness.
- **Control driving time** to help avoid fatigue. Due to some tragic accidents in the past few years, this issue has received added attention in Maine. Not only can requiring your drivers to be fresh keep you on the right side of the law, it will also help to prevent your drivers from sustaining injuries in a motor vehicle accident.



## The Fact File

### Top Transportation/Utilities Injury Sources

1. Vehicle
2. Another person
3. Building material
4. Construction/Logging machinery
5. Fasteners or rope
6. Manual hand tool
7. Non-pressurized container
8. Furniture/Fixture
9. Vehicle and mobile equipment part
10. Floors/ground surface

### Body Part injured

Head	8%
Trunk	43%
Shoulder-arm-hand	15%
Internal systems	4%
Leg/knee/foot	19%
Multiple	11%

### Top Occupations with injuries

1. Truck driver
2. Laborer
3. Power Installer
4. Shipping/Receiving
5. Freight/Stock