"Line of Fire" ToolBox Talk

Upon review of the most recent Hazard ID, Near Miss and Injury reports across the Shaw Group, **Hit/Impact** is the most common incident sub type identified in our EHSInsight reporting. To work on reducing the number of NM and Injuries we are having involving hit/impact incidents, we need to focus on **NOT** putting ourselves or others in the "Line of Fire".

What is Line of Fire?

'Line of fire' is a term that describes the path of a discharged or moving object. In our workplaces, there are many objects that have the potential to create a "line of fire exposure".

Awareness is the first line of defense! That is the purpose of this toolbox; to get every Shaw employee thinking about **NOT** putting themselves in the line of fire or at least limiting the potential for line of fire exposures.

Let's look at a common simple example:

Hammering a nail into piece of wood (everyone has done this) – To get the nail started, can you eliminate having one hand in the line of fire while striking the nail head to get it started?

- Maybe there is a tool that holds the nail upright, a quick google search revealed the picture shown here to the right.
- Is this practical if you were required to nail thousands of nails per day? Maybe not, but what else could you do?
- Recognizing you are about to swing a 20oz framing hammer towards your fingers is a start - carefully get nail started with a lighter tap, then remove your hand. Stay focussed on the process!

"Line of Fire" awareness not only involves the employee performing the task but it also can affect those working around them. Are there controls we can use to protect others while we work?

- Remind other workers to stay clear of hazards through communication.
- Use flagging, barricades, or a spotter to keep people out of "Line of Fire" zone.
- Use safety tools like toolbox talks and risk assessments to communicate and understand risks and controls.

Here are some other common operations that create potential Line of Fire exposure in our workplaces and controls that can be used to mitigate the risk:

Lifting/Hoisting

- Never walk under a suspended load.
- Communicate to other workers when entering a lifting/hoisting zone or utilize barriers and visual indicators.
- Balance the load prior to lifting.
- Rigging equipment shall never be loaded more than its maximum safe loading limit.

Objects with Fall/Roll Potential

• Not all objects may be overhead; be mindful of top-heavy items and items being transported by forklift or flatbed.

• Secure objects that can roll, such as tools, cylinders, poles, and stock using appropriate stops.

• Ensure toe boards are in place when working at heights

Vehicle/Heavy Equipment

• Use parking brakes and wheel chocks for any vehicle or equipment parked on an incline.

• When working near moving, heavy equipment, remain in the operator's full view.

• Look for pedestrian and vehicle traffic when positioning vehicles and equipment at a job site.

Overhead Work

• Establish a drop zone, an area below any work being performed aloft.

• If work at the structure base is unavoidable, inform the workers above you are there; if possible, stop work above and at a minimum, ensure proper PPE is worn until work stops.

We typically have safe job procedures or safe work practices for the above-mentioned activities, to recognize the "line of fire" risks, but what other Line of fire risks are you exposed to daily? Here are some to get you thinking:

- Closing your car door – are your hands and body out of the way.
- Cutting something with a knife towards you or while holding the object with your other hand in the line of fire.
- Using a wrench in an awkward position where there is risk of it slipping off and striking another part of our body.
- Never use your body to prevent damage from occurring- Have you ever instinctively stuck your foot out to cushion a falling knife?
- How many have ever stuck their hand in closing elevator doors?

Whether it is a struck by, caught in/between or stored energy situation, please take a few seconds before beginning your tasks and ask yourself, am I putting myself or others in the line of fire and if so, how can I eliminate or lessen the risk. **Don't** be like these workers below!