



When Seconds Count... Reducing Injury Severity in the Workplace

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The utilities and energy industries have strong safety cultures and pride themselves on promoting and supporting safety in their organization. Yet, despite remarkable gains in workplace safety, there are still an alarming number of fatal and non-fatal injuries on the job. The statistics are sobering and suggest a real need for new solutions.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics data for the utility, construction, transportation and manufacturing industries indicates that in 2018 there were 2.8 million non-fatal injuries, with about a third resulting in an average of 8 lost workdays. Musculoskeletal injuries amounted to over 300,000 annually and of these, 150,000 involved back injuries. Falls, slips and trips involved around 230,000 injuries and accounted for nearly 800 deaths.

Fatalities in 2018 amounted to over 5250 annually, the highest rate since 2008. Of these, nearly 828 were from violence, which was the fourth highest cause of work-related death, behind transportation, falls and equipment contact. Other notable causes of work-related fatalities included exposure to harmful environments and fires/explosions. Injuries such as these require immediate response to lessen their severity or prevent a fatal outcome.

Some of the reasons behind continued high levels of injuries despite investment in safety equipment and environmental controls involve the human factor. Workers in a hurry may neglect proper safety practices. They may fail to follow written safety guidelines or have a sense of invulnerability. Sometimes the work culture fails to achieve a pervasive safety-first mentality with the result that safety shortcuts are taken in the interest of efficiency.

Other less apparent causes may be failure to recognize and address underlying medical causes such as sleep apnea or depression, anxiety and stress that can cause workers to fall asleep or be drowsy or distracted when full attention is required. Heat exhaustion, heart attacks and cold exposure are all hazards workers face that are not easily preventable and result in days lost from work or even death.

A common denominator to any injury or acute medical condition, despite its cause, is the need for urgent emergency services response. Seconds count and can be the difference between a mild injury becoming more severe or even life threatening.

Given what's at stake, it's important for employers to understand that there are very effective new safety solutions that can both help reduce the occurrence of injuries and significantly reduce response times to injuries when they do occur.

AlertGPS provides employers with connected enterprise safety technology that offers companies the quickest way to locate, communicate and get help to their mobile workforce. AlertGPS products and services are used nationwide by organizations in a variety of industries, including the utilities, energy, health care, delivery services, social services sectors, as well as by the US military.

The AlertGPS workforce safety solution has three primary components: (i) a purpose-built safety wearable device for employees, (ii) a cloud-based alerting platform that facilitates a consistent flow of information among the team members responsible for the mobile or lone worker's safety, and (iii) a 24/7 emergency monitoring center available to dispatch help nationwide.

The AlertGPS Active Halo® 4G LTE safety wearable is simple for employees to understand, requires minimal training to use, and has only one button on its face to press to initiate a two-way SOS voice call to our 24/7 monitoring center. The simplicity of the device design recognizes that in stress situations, fine and complex motor skills (such as those required to operate a cell phone) are diminished, along with the ability to multi-task. Two-way voice communications can be initiated by the device holder or the team monitoring the device holder's safety, and the hands-free speakerphone requires no action on the part of the device holder to answer. Upon button press, the employee's location information is instantly available to our monitoring center, and also visible on the company's secure dashboard. The device is equipped with advanced fall detection, including configurable sensitivity settings, and will auto initiate a call into our monitoring center when a fall is detected unless the employee cancels the alert. The device is also equipped with an audible personal alarm (loud siren sound) that can be triggered by the employee, as well as a check-in button so the employee can self-report arrival or departure from a location.

On the job, when injuries occur and seconds count, the AlertGPS Safety Solution can substantively improve event outcomes. AlertGPS has a proven track record of success, with thousands of devices deployed and in continuous use. Let us help you keep your utilities and energy workers protected on the job. Contact us today for a demonstration or a free trial.

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