

“Well, You're the Safety Manager”

Two years ago I was working at a large construction project on the Big Island in Hawaii as the Project Safety Manager. One day on a Friday, while touring various construction operations, I observed an unsafe act taking place.

A crew was framing a 9 foot high wall that would be poured with concrete and using a ladder that was not properly secured. I stopped the worker who was starting to descend this ladder (company policy requires the ladder be secured at both the top and bottom) and asked him why the ladder was not secured? The worker made the excuse, “I am only going to be on the ladder a minute.”

Another worker standing there watching was asked by me, “Why didn't you correct this unsafe act?” His response was, “Well, you're the Safety Manager.” A response such as this was not expected nor appreciated. This was immediately followed by a mini-safety-stand-down that I lead to discuss company policy for ladder use and individual responsibility for correcting an unsafe act or condition. In other words, watch out for your buddy.

Over the weekend I thought about that incident and made a decision to meet with all the construction workers first thing Monday morning. There were about 60 workers present. The superintendent leading the meeting discussed work operations and then turned to me and asked if I had anything to say?

Without naming names I brought up the unsafe act that happened on Friday and pointed out that a worker had said to me, “Well, you're the Safety Manager.” And then here is what I said to everyone present, “Over the weekend I thought about the statement made to me and here's my response that I want all of you to hear. I may have the title of Project Safety Manager but the fact is each and every one of you is the Safety Manager over your own safety. I'll repeat that. Each of you is the Safety Manager over your own safety.”

As I looked around at all the workers, I was pleased with the fact that the workers got what I was saying. And it is true; each of us is the Safety Manager over our own safety. Take this to heart and share.

For more answers and insight, I invite you to look at our book, *Safety Under Construction—A Quest for Safety Perfection Utilizing Inventive Thinking where we discuss in depth the psychological aspects of safety that include how we are affected mentally, emotionally and physically*. It is a must-read for individuals and anyone who wants to dramatically improve the Culture of Safety within your organization and make unlimited strides for safety success.

Go to: <http://www.SafetyUnderConstruction.com> in order to obtain a great sense of this newly published book on safety and risk. There you will see a representative preview

and reviews of a book that needs to be read, taken to heart and shared. Lives depend on it.

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