

# SAFETY MATTERS

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2021

## BP CO BOILER SHUTDOWN

GEM and RLI plan out and complete the job with zero incidents

**BP Carbon Monoxide (CO) boiler shutdown** - The month-long shutdown shows how planning to eliminate every hazard is the best way to end a project with zero incidents.

GEM boilermakers, electricians, pipefitters, insulators and laborers, with RLI carpenters, worked round-the-clock to finish the job in October.

### Challenge: Debris from the stack

Recalling that debris from the stack was an issue in the 2018 outage, the team planned for the same challenge this time.

Debris netting was installed on all exposed sides and the top of the boiler.

RLI carpenters installed hard-top scaffold walkways to and from the boiler and around the base.

## PLAN FOR 'WHAT COULD GO WRONG?'

Identifying hazards protects us from the unexpected

**North Star BlueScope/Aris-totle Melt Shop** - The project team planned for what could go wrong, and that saved Derek Snider, a GEM ironworker, from a serious fall during roof panel installation.

"At the beginning of the job, we talked with the safety team about how to properly tie off because of the screw-down roof and its height," says Chris Haeft, GEM general foreman. "We decided to anchor the tie off protection to heavy-duty bar joist while keeping the potential fall distance to a minimum."



Derek Snider

Snider was working 130 feet up, installing metal roof panels on the low sloped roof.

As he stepped backwards, sliding a metal panel along the joist, Snider lost his footing and fell - but his personal fall arrest system performed as designed and stopped him after he fell about 3 feet. He pulled himself back up onto the joist and kept working.

"In the future, I'm definitely going to slow down a little bit, double check where I am at all times and pay a little more attention," Snider says.

### Challenge: Confined space

The firebox is about 400 square feet and 75 feet tall. To help crews stay cool and protected from fumes, vent plans included air conditioning units to provide an air change about every 30 seconds.

Exceeding the permit, all crafts in the firebox - including inspectors and supervisors - wore full-face respirators or half-face with spoggles during hot work.

### Challenge: Preparing for loss of power

To make sure workers could exit safely if power was lost, everyone wore a battery-powered headlamp. Battery-powered lights were placed throughout the scaffolding.

**The result of that careful planning:** a very safe project, with zero first-aids, zero recordables and zero lost-time.

## STRONG SAFETY IN 2020

In 2020, a year of non-stop change, there was one constant: RLG associates' commitment to safety.

RLI's and GEM's Total Recordable Incident Rates (TRIR) were well below the national average. In fact, 2020 is the second best year in the history of each company for TRIR.

- RLI's rate was 1.01, compared to the 3.0 average for a general contractor.
- GEM's rate was 0.79, compared to the 3.1 average for a multi-trade mechanical contractor.

"The key to our success is the way our field leadership owns the entire project planning process, which includes ensuring a safe and healthy work environment," says Bill Cornett, GEM field operations/safety manager. "The high level of engagement, industry expertise and presence to their teams keep their projects running safely while achieving a high quality product that our customers demand, appreciate and deserve."

Mike Keane, RLI field operations manager, adds, "Understanding what everyone has gone through this past year with all the distractions of the pandemic, uncertainty of jobsites shutting down, and all the unknowns - and we still maintained our commitment to safety. This speaks volumes about the people on our projects. These rates reflect our RLG safety culture, from the pursuit of a project to its completion."



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## OUR NW OHIO SUBSTANCE ABUSE PROGRAM

### Our policy stays the same with a few minor changes

As of January 1, there are a few minor changes to our substance abuse policy in northwest Ohio.

The policy itself is the same, but it has a new name: the AGCNWO Substance Abuse Policy. There is also a new third party administrator: Reliable Drug Testing.

All RLG trades are affected - except boilermakers, electricians, HVAC, insulators and plumbers/pipefitters, who will continue under the Northwest Ohio Great Lakes Construction Alliance (GLCA) Substance Abuse Policy and MOST.

#### Why the change?

Reliable Drug Testing has collection facilities in Sylvania and Bowling Green, which can speed up the process. AGC of Northwest Ohio also was able to negotiate drug screenings at lower cost.

#### Can I use the same clinic?

Some clinics used in the past will still be

## FIND IT-FIX IT

### Keep the safety conversations going

Team up to help each other work more safely. Then document your solutions with Find It-Fix It so we can keep learning together.

Here are some recent finds and solutions:

**Unsafe behavior:** I saw a young carpenter using a circular saw in an awkward, unstable way.

**Solution:** I stopped him and explained the proper way.

**Unsafe condition:** We used a 12-foot ladder pinned to the bank to access a foundation excavation that was sloped 1 to 1, and it did not appear to be safe for access and egress in snowy conditions.

**Solution:** I talked to the foreman and superintendent to see if there was a better way to access the foundation excavation. The foreman decided to dig in and pour a temporary set of stairs for access.

**Unsafe condition:** I found a half-full gas can in an area where hot work was being

available and new ones may be added. Before you go to a clinic, confirm the location with RLG Safety or the person who signs you up for a drug screen.

#### What will be different for associates?

If you're in the affected group, you will no longer have a paper "Chain of Custody" form.

Once your test is ordered, the form will be emailed or texted to your cell phone. At the clinic, all you need to do is open the e-mail or text and the clinic will scan the QR code.

If you don't have a cell phone, the form will be emailed to the clinic.

You still need to bring a photo ID to your drug screen.

Questions? Contact your HR or Safety team.

performed overhead with sparks falling.

**Solution:** I had them stop work and removed the gas can.

**Unsafe behavior:** Our reinforcing subcontractor was cutting rebar with a Metabo and did not have a face shield right next to another employee without a face shield.

**Solution:** I stopped the work and talked to both employees about the hazard they created when cutting without a face shield, not only for the guy cutting but also the guy standing right next to him without proper eye protection. They both went and grabbed a face shield.

**Unsafe behavior:** An associate went to unthread a flange while the steam was on.

**Solution:** I stopped him and turned the steam off.

**Unsafe condition:** A person was driving a lift over plywood with a hole under it.

**Solution:** I informed him that the hole was there and put tape up.

## HEART DISEASE

### Prevent it at every age

February is Heart Disease Awareness month. Heart disease causes one in every four deaths in the U.S.

In your 20s:

- Get wellness checkups at least once a year.
- Maintain a healthy weight - stay active and eat healthy.
- Cut the salt.
- Don't smoke and avoid second-hand smoke.
- Drink alcohol in moderation.
- Practice good dental hygiene.

In your 30s:

- Plan healthy meals and physical activities for the whole family.
- Is there heart disease in your family? Talk to your doctor.
- Learn stress management techniques.
- Get enough sleep.

In your 40s:

- Maintain a healthy body weight.
- Get your blood glucose checked.
- If you're snoring, see your doctor to determine if you have sleep apnea, which can lead to high blood pressure, heart disease and stroke.

In your 50s:

- Eat fresh fruit and vegetables, fiber-rich whole grains, fish, nuts, legumes and seeds. Try meatless meals.
- Know the signs of a heart attack and stroke.

In your 60s:

- Ask your doctor if you should have an ankle-brachial index test, which measures the pulse in your feet to detect peripheral artery disease (PAD).
- As you age, your body needs fewer calories. Stay physically fit and eat a healthy diet.

<https://www.bioiq.com/preventing-heart-disease-at-any-age/>