

SAFETY MATTERS

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2024

TAKE THE TIME FOR A GOOD STRETCH BEFORE PHYSICAL WORK

A little more flexibility means less fatigue for your muscles

Just like many people need that first cup of coffee in the morning to get going, your muscles need a little waking up, too.

Prior to the alarm going off, your muscles have been in a relaxed state for six to eight hours. Asking your muscles to get right to work without stretching is risking unnecessary pain and/or injury, said **Deb Gacsal**, RLG's onsite paramedic.

Stretching keeps muscles flexible, strong and allows for your joints to maintain range of motion. Without it, your muscles and surrounding areas could become tight, strained or even permanently damaged during work, she said.

"Stretching is extremely important, if you think about it," Gacsal said. "Stretching is literally designed to wake your muscles up in the morning or before you workout."

The best thing about stretching before work is it only takes 10 minutes to get the muscles to wake up and start their busy day.

Gacsal recommends a series of quick stretches starting at the head and working your way down as a way of putting muscles in alignment. Construction equipment supplier Dozr has excellent tips on how to stretch at bit.ly/3HXkDIw or use the QR code below:



Gacsal recommends trying a stretching program for two weeks. She said when she recommends workers try a stretching program,



Hard, physical work takes its toll. Stretching for 10 minutes before starting work can make a big difference in how you feel at the end of the day.

they are initially skeptical. After two weeks, the skepticism – and muscle fatigue – begin to fade.

"You'll find out that your muscles are not going to be as tired," she said.



GEM HVAC technicians at present have to negotiate two roof systems – a standing seam roof and a rubber roof – as they service rooftop equipment at Ardagh.

ROOFTOP DANGER PROMPTS SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS

GEM works to prevent slips when HVAC techs access Ardagh plant's roof

Accessing HVAC equipment for service on a slippery roof can be a potentially dangerous walk for GEM technicians at the Ardagh can manufacturing facility in Huron, Ohio.

"It's super slippery, especially in the snow," said GEM HVAC Service Manager **Dave Cirino**. "When you step off the staircase onto the roof, it's a little tricky."

Ardagh's project team and its health and safety department worked with the GEM project team at the plant to design a walkway for the 880,000-square-foot roof. The roof is of two designs, standing seam and rubber, making the design more challenging.

GEM ironworkers will install a 1200-linear-foot raised walkway with a railing over the standing seam portion of the roof, while another contractor will handle 2,000 linear feet of a welded raised rubber walkway on the plant's rubber roof, said Site Superintendent **Chris Cuolahan**, who leads the GEM project team, along with Project Manager **Jayson Cleghorn**.

When complete this spring, GEM HVAC technicians will have a designated path to follow on the roof to get to the 19 rooftop HVAC units, 12 forced air intakes, 45 exhaust fans and several split-system condensing units. There will also be improved signage and painting to direct foot traffic.



**RUDOLPH
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GEM ENERGY
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The 8-inch cordless saw reduces sparks and provides greater control of where the sparks will go.

TOOL SPOTLIGHT

RLI trying out three new tools designed to improve safety

It doesn't take much to start a fire. One little spark potentially can lead to a disaster.

It's not uncommon to see a shower of hot sparks coming from metal-cutting tools at RLG worksites. RLI is trying out two new Milwaukee cordless metal-cutting saws (5-inch and 8-inch) that produce fewer sparks and provide better control of where the sparks will go, RLI Superintendent **Montana Oberwegner** said.

"It's a lot safer with fewer sparks and the ability to control where the sparks go," Oberwegner said. "Being

'The saws also eliminate a common trip hazard.'

cordless, the saws also eliminate a common trip hazard."

— Montana Oberwegner RLI Superintendent

The saws also cut faster than comparable 15-amp corded saws. The saws were being

used at the Rolled Alloys jobsite in Monclova Township. Early reviews are positive, he said.

SAVE THE DATE: MAY 29

The RLI Annual Safety Meeting is set for May 29, from 1 to 4 p.m. at Penta Career Center. More details on the safety meeting will be available in the next few weeks.

REPORT FIFIS: KEEP SAFE AND WIN GIFT CARDS

Here are the best FIFIs for November and December:

GEM December
(Four FIFIs/\$75 gift card each.)

An associate stopped a subcontractor working on a lift without a retrieval system, CO monitor or confined space paperwork. The associate notified a supervisor about the deficiencies.

An associate noticed that an unstable load of light poles could have fallen on anyone standing on the passenger side of a trailer. He contacted operators, who used multiple machines to stabilize and safely off-load the poles.

An associate stopped a contractor from working on ductwork with a cut-off wheel but without a face shield, blade guard or handle. The associate provided the appropriate safety gear.

An associate saw another worker driving a JLG lift without being tied off. The associate was also stuck in mud on top of two conduits that had live wires. The associate stopped the work so the lift could be extracted without damaging the temporary service.

RLI December
(Two FIFIs/\$275 gift card each.)

While getting ready for a shutdown to remove a 480v 1,600 amp machine buss, a lock box was established. A GEM associate noticed another associate's box was not properly latched and in lock position. The associate reporting the FIFI notified the other associate to secure his lock.

A contractor was using a crane to lift an electrical scissor lift onto the catwalk of

a cooling tower. An associate notified the supervisor to verify the documentation giving the approval to place the lift on the catwalk. The site superintendent had neither documentation or awareness of the lift. The contractor's foreman was contacted and the lift was immediately removed from the catwalk. The remaining work was performed from the ground using a utility boom lift.

GEM November
(Three FIFIs/\$83 gift card each.)

An associate noticed sparks from a grinder were landing on generator gas cans 8 feet away. He stopped the work so the gas cans could be moved.

A subcontractor was cutting a steel panel without a face shield or a guard on the grinder. An associate stopped the work and provided a different angle grinder and a face shield.

A subcontractor was using the bucket of a front-end loader as a work platform at about 12 feet off the ground. An associate stopped the work, had the subcontractor come down and contacted onsite safety.

RLI November
(Two FIFIs/\$250 gift card each.)

While inspecting roof access scaffolding, an associate noticed ladders were starting to separate from each other. He fixed the issue and notified the superintendent.

A subcontractor was using the bucket of a front-end loader as a work platform at about 12 feet off the ground. A GEM associate stopped the work, had the subcontractor come down and contacted onsite safety.

THANK YOU FOR WORKING SAFELY

RLI laborers demolish the interiors of retail suites that will be converted into a 9,000-square-foot Nationwide Children's Hospital Spring Valley facility in Maumee. The work is expected to be completed in May.

