

## This month's theme: **A Focus on Potential Serious Injuries**

As we are about to say goodbye to 2022 and focus on 2023, most all our member companies have either already developed or will be developing safety improvement plans. This is an important exercise for any organization to undertake and should be part of the overall business plan. As a wiseman once said, if you don't know where you are going how will you know when you get there. Fundamental to the planning process is identifying those high risk areas or tasks within the organization that require risk mitigation.

### **What the Data Tells Us:**

The PPI Safety Committee reviews incident data submitted each month. A big thanks to the ten companies who diligently provide the monthly data. Reviewing that data provides insights to risk reduction opportunities. One specific area that the team has discussed is the severity of some of the incidents reported in 2022. There were seventeen incidents identified through the first eleven months, with a severity rating of either 3 or 4. This means a significant potential existed for a disabling injury or possibly a fatality to occur. Most of these injuries involved the head, arms, hands, and torso area. These incidents resulted in serious fractures, lacerations, and contusion injuries.

### **How and Why Focus on Potential Serious Injuries:**

The "how" part of the equation is pretty straightforward....let your data direct you. There is a science to injury prevention and it starts with a rigorous review of your reported data and investigations, both for injuries and near misses. Usually, a review of the most recent three years of data will enable the organization to identify high risk tasks that have resulted in or have the potential to result in a serious injury.

Why focus on potential serious injuries? There are several reasons organizations should direct safety efforts in this critical area.

1. First and most importantly, reducing risk to serious injuries conveys the organization's value for safety. No owner, senior leader, plant manager, or first line supervisor ever wants to see an employee seriously injured. A focus on reducing serious injury potential that includes engaging employees in the identification and solution, shows people you care about them,
2. Allows an organization to apply resources to where they are needed the most. Organizations do not have infinite resources so using what you do have to eliminate the most serious risk makes the most sense. Keep in mind that even if a complete solution is not available, interim measures should be employed to reduce the risk. Also, use the hierarchy of controls when considering the permanent solution.
3. It sends the right message about commitment to improving safety. Employees know what the high-risk issues are in their area. Engaging them to address the risk shows the organization's commitment to making the workplace safer.

Happy Holidays and a safe and healthy New Year.



# **SAFETY BULLETIN – DECEMBER 2022**