



**SAFETY**

Nebraska Building Chapter

## **AGC Safety Initiative E-News**

**January 15, 2020**

### **MISSION:**

Help each other enforce safety rules to ensure that every person on construction site goes home safe and healthy at end of the workday.

### **National AGC Safety Awards (NASA) Program**

Recognizing AGC Contractor Members for Safety Excellence since 1926, the National AGC Safety Awards (NASA) program has been an ongoing effort to offer AGC members an opportunity to evaluate their safety record. NASA compares a member's safety record with other AGC members according to the member size and construction type. Additionally, NASA provides a great opportunity for contractor members to compete for nationally recognized awards that have excellent safety records.

AGC contractor members must have participated in the National AGC Safety Awards Program for three consecutive years in order to be eligible for an award. **This means a member must have participated in the program for the years 2017, 2018 and 2019 in order to be eligible to receive an award in 2020.** Vicki has mailed the letters detailing the NASA program with the form to complete and return **by the first week of February.**

### **OSHA Can't Stop the Music, but maybe Employers Should**

On September 6, 2019, OSHA issued a [letter of interpretation](#) in response to an employer's question regarding the use of headphones to listen to music on construction sites. The employer stated that some headphones are advertised as "OSHA approved" and asked whether OSHA had any specific regulation that prohibits the use of headphones to listen to music on a construction site. While OSHA does not have a regulation prohibiting the use of headphones, the letter outlines several hazards and issues that employers should consider.

First, the letter advised that OSHA has a construction standard that sets noise exposure limits and that, if those limits are exceeded, the employee must provide hearing protection to reduce noise levels below the exposure limits. OSHA clarified that portable music players are not a substitute for proper hearing protection.

Next, the letter states that while headphones may be allowed at the employer's discretion, employers must consider whether the use "creates or augments other hazards apart from noise." OSHA was particularly concerned with the possibility that listening to music through headphones may expose employees working on construction sites to struck-by hazards. OSHA stated that employers must "ensure that employees are not exposed to struck-by hazards while performing their work. Listening to music may produce a safety hazard by masking environmental sounds that need to be heard, especially on active construction sites where attention to moving equipment, heavy machinery, vehicle traffic, and safety warning signals may be compromised."

Finally, OSHA addressed the issue of headphones being advertised as "OSHA approved" by clarifying that "OSHA does not register, certify, approve, or otherwise endorse commercial or private sector entities, products, or services."

The key takeaway from the letter is that employers must address employee use of headphones to listen to music on the worksite, even if there is not specific OSHA standard prohibiting it. If the use of headphones would expose employees to potential hazards, such as the struck-by hazards described in OSHA's letter, employers could still be liable for a violation of the general duty clause. Given this, employers should evaluate

their worksites and determine whether a policy prohibiting the listening to music on the job is appropriate.

[Read more](#)

### **AGC Nebraska Building Chapter's Workforce Development [Resources](#)**

Meet and exceed your workforce goals with assistance from these AGC Nebraska Building Chapter's [resources](#)

- [Construction Supervision Fundamentals](#) (CSF,) for the new Supervisor, newly promoted foreman or those seeking career advancement. **Register by March 6**
  - The CSF course is a highly interactive first step on the path to developing construction supervisors. This course presents nine foundation skills of successful supervisors: There are 15 hours in-seat classroom instruction and approximately 4 hours of assignments between sessions.
- **Supervisory Training Program** (STP,) for the seasoned supervisor.
  - **February 2 to February 29** [Communications](#) **Register by January 17**
  - **March 8 to April 4** [Contract Documents](#) **Register by February 14**
  - [Click here](#) for the registration form.
- **Print Reading 101**, a ready to go training package – all you add is a facilitator.
- [A3 Collaborative's](#) prime target is young- to mid-career A-C-E professionals who work together on projects.
- [Learn more](#)

**Supplement your safety program with [AGC Nebraska Building Chapter Safety Resources](#).** The site offers on-demand, online or on-site training opportunities on a variety of topics; services; regulations and news within our industry. Share this link with team members!

**FREE SAFETY TRAINING VIDEOS--ON-DEMAND** located under the **Training tab** at [agcnebuildersSafety.com](#). Members are provided complimentary day-passes, which allows unlimited usage of a selected video for a given day from 12:01am to 11:50pm. [Click here](#) to preview the construction video catalog. Click on the iTrainStation logo to set-up an account. You need to be approved as a user during Nebraska Building Chapter office hours, (Monday-Thursday, 8:00am-5:00pm and Friday, 8:00am-12noon) before adding videos in your library for access at a later date. If you have any questions, please contact: [Vicki](#), 402-438-0400.



### **Saying you value safety in the workplace and demonstrating it are two very different things**

One challenge leaders often have is that although they may articulate that they understand why safety is important, it can be a struggle to show that safety is authentically part of “who they are.” In other words, they have difficulty showing that it’s rooted in their personal safety ethic. This needs to change if their organization is committed to changing its safety culture. Having a personal safety ethic means that safety is actively seen by both their leadership peers and front-line workers as a part of their agenda, and that they have the conviction to carry it out. This value for safety is perceived as transcending the traditional business culture because it has been made a priority.

What is a “personal safety ethic,” anyway? A leader’s personal safety ethic is demonstrated by every action taken and not taken when it comes to safety. It’s embodied several different ways:

- How safety is communicated verbally and in writing.
- The energy, emotion and body language he or she displays when discussing safety.
- The degree to which the leader conveys a personal responsibility for the safety of him or herself and others.
- The continuous effort to understand exposure and exposure reduction.
- The degree to which safety considerations are integrated into the decision-making process.
- The level of engagement with safety improvement initiatives.

All of these can be learned, but leaders with a strong personal safety ethic often have a firsthand story to tell about why safety is particularly important to them. Placing a premium on safety is a value organizations need to express, and it starts with top leadership. [Read more](#)