

TOOLBOX TALK for August 17th, 2026

Carpenter's Training -

Portland - 8/29 - MEWP/Aerial Lift.

Ontario - 8/22 - Ergonomics and Silica Awareness

Taper's - Nothing in August

The Trouble with the Last Minute:

Near the end of the day a worker twist an ankle, and it hurts and affects their work for more than a week while they recover. Soon they're back to their regular pace, but this could have been worse and probably could have been avoided if they had taken a few moments to recognize the hazards they were working around.

First, the decision to do the work was made at the end of the day, which is not necessarily bad, but in this case, it was a last-minute idea to hurry and get something done before leaving for the day.

The trouble with the last minute and snap decisions is that often a proper assessment of the hazards in the work area is not being done, which means hazards are not being recognized and mitigated and that our worker is not being protected.

In this case, the work was taking place on a steel stairwell where the treads had not been filled with concrete yet. As you can imagine, working on such an uneven and unfinished set of stairs exposed our worker to trips and strains, where they might catch their foot as they try to walk up or down.

A second problem compounds the first making it even more unsafe. The stairs and stairwell were not adequately lit, so our worker faced uneven terrain in the dark.

Though it may sound like a broken record, hazard assessment could have made a big difference in the outcome. When we take the time to plan, we define the work we're about to do, we look at the hazards associated with the work (uneven surfaces and poor lighting) and probably a few other things too. Then we decide what we'll do to mitigate the hazards we've identified. (Use task lighting, temporarily fill the uneven surfaces with something to minimize the hazard) Just doing these two things may have kept our worker safe.

It's not that we can't do something at the last minute or at the end of the day, it's that we must plan our work, no matter what time of day. Hazard recognition and better planning, means better results.

[Toolbox Talk Submission](#)