



Stay focused during holidays

Compiled by Jason Rosdahl, Industrial Hygienist-Safety Specialist

During the holidays, many of us will attend celebrations with family and friends or schedule travel or last minute shopping. These festivities, however, can also bring distractions and stress.

According to the American Psychological Association, stress increases as people prepare for the holiday rush. During this time, people are also more prone to injury because they are not focused on the task at hand, whether at home or on the job.

As the year draws to a close, it's important to take proactive steps to stay focused on personal safety and the safety of others, and keep our "head in the game." Stress can distort perceptions, but by taking the following steps allows us to understand and manage it.



- Awareness: It's easy to let your mind drift while your hands and legs are in "auto pilot" doing the work. No matter the activity, remain aware of your surroundings, stay focused on the task at hand and be precise in your work.
- Be realistic: You can only accomplish so much. Set achievable goals then take small, decisive steps toward those goals.

- Recognize stress trigger events: External stress is often caused by something you feel you can't control, but internal stress is manageable. You can control how you react to stress. If you find yourself becoming distracted, stop and reframe your thoughts.

- Keep things in perspective: Adopt a long-term view to avoid "blowing things out of proportion."

When stress becomes overwhelming, seek help. SDSTA has an employee assistance program (EAP) available to

all employees. Calling this program is both free and anonymous. For more information about Sanford Lab's EAP, contact Eileen Brosnahan, human resources administrator at ebrosnahan@sanfordlab.org or call 888-293-6948.

Safety is for all of us—our co-workers, our families and our friends. You can help keep your holiday happy and safe by choosing to manage your stress and to stay mentally focused.

Have a safe and wonderful holiday season.

Safety performance recipients



Pictured from left: George Vandine, Jerry Hinker, Brian Johnson and Michelle Andresen.



Pictured from left: Brian Johnson, Michele Andresen, John Keefner and Al Stratman.

October: Jerry Hinker, top lander was nominated by George Vandine, Ross Shaft foreman. The driver of a semi tractor-trailer filled with steel took a wrong turn in the Ross yard and Hinker quickly realized the situation was unsafe. He calmly and safely led the driver through an alternate route. He also arranged to have several vehicles moved to make way for the truck. "This situation could have been dangerous," said Vandine. "But Jerry kept his cool, stayed calm and safely resolved this potentially hazardous situation."

November: John Keefner, underground operations engineer, was nominated by David Rynders, radiation safety officer and experiment safety manager. Keefner worked with several Sanford Lab employees to coordinate the removal of the LUX detector. He planned and identified potential risks to people and equipment; briefed his team on the potential hazards and JHA process; conducted rehearsals; and ensured stop work points were understood.

"John is modeling the safety mindset we want at Sanford Lab," said David Rynders. "The safety culture is only as strong as the first line supervisor's commitment. John did a great job and I look forward to working with him in the future."