TEXAS MUTUAL SAFETY ALERT



SEPTEMBER 2026

As a service to our policyholders, Texas Mutual shares serious workplace injury trends based on catastrophic injuries and fatalities reported to our claims department. Not all of these reported injuries are covered by workers' compensation, but our goal is to help you ensure these types of incidents do not happen in your workplace. Find safety tips below to help keep your employees safe on the job.

If you have questions, we encourage you to contact us at **844-WORKSAFE (967-5723)** or safety@texasmutual.com.

IN THIS ALERT

- Stored energy injuries
- Airborne illnesses

STORED ENERGY INJURIES



An employee on a construction crew was changing the bit on a power tool. They set the tool on the ground with the bit facing upward and started the swap without first bleeding the air pressure out of the tool. Before the new bit was secured, the tool fired and drove the bit into the employee's eye. The employee was wearing safety eyewear at the time but still sustained a serious eye injury.

A tool that is switched off is not the same as a tool that is de-energized. Compressed air stays in the hose and in the tool body after you stop working, and that trapped pressure is enough to launch a bit like a projectile from inches away. Stored energy takes other forms too, including hydraulic pressure, springs under tension and suspended loads. None of it is visible, which is exactly why the step sometimes gets skipped.

Safety tips:

- Treat every pneumatic tool as pressurized until you have vented it yourself.
- Point tools away from your body, and keep your hands out of the line of fire.
- Use personal protective equipment (PPE) as your last layer of protection, and pair it with de-energizing the tool every time.
- Ask your supervisor if you are not sure how to de-energize a tool.

AIRBORNE ILLNESSES



Two employees in emergency response agencies responded to routine medical calls and gave care to patients. Days later, both employees learned the patients they had been in close contact with tested positive for measles, which was unrelated to the initial calls.

By the time either exposure was identified, both employees had finished their shifts, spent time around co-workers and gone home to their families.

Measles, flu, COVID-19 and tuberculosis all spread through the air, and all of them are contagious before symptoms are obvious enough for anyone to act on. Shared break rooms, truck cabs and shift meetings give an airborne illness several paths through a crew in a single day, then to the households connected to them. Controlling spread early keeps a short-term illness from becoming a workplace-wide disruption.

Safety tips:

- Stay home from work when you have a fever, new cough or rash.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your elbow, then wash your hands.
- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds before you eat and after handling shared tools, radios or equipment.
- Open windows or run ventilation in break rooms, trailers and vehicle cabs when you are sharing close quarters.
- Wear a mask around anyone who is coughing or feverish and keep your own immunizations current.

GET FREE SAFETY RESOURCES

Texas Mutual policyholders have access to thousands of free training materials in our multimedia safety resource center, including our safety catalog with up-to-date resources.

To access the free materials, log in to your texasmutual.com account and select **Safety**. If you need help accessing the safety resource center or you have a workplace safety question, call us toll-free at **844-WORKSAFE (967-5723).**