



*Safety Brief Series*

## **HOW TO CONDUCT A TAILGATE TALK**

*Use Tailgate Talks as a guide to help you conduct 10-15 minute tailgate training sessions for your crew.*

**KEY POINTS:**

- Choose one safety topic per session.
- Be concise. Keep it short.
- Keep the sessions small.
- Meet in a place that's comfortable for workers.
- Allow time for questions and answers.
- Document the training.

### **THE CONCEPT**

Tailgate training is a gathering of a small group of workers around the tailgate of a truck or other spot for a brief training session on a single safety topic.

### **PLAN LOGISTICS**

- Limit sessions to a small number of workers. Six to 10 is a good number.
- Choose a quiet spot that is comfortable for your workers.
- Hold sessions early in the week, but not on Monday mornings.
- Conduct tailgate training sessions an average of once a week. Dedicate specific time for the training.

### **CHOOSE SAFETY TOPICS**

- Review your accident records. Pick topics related to accidents that have occurred.
- Walk around your operation. Look for situations that could result in injuries.
- Ask employees for their ideas.
- Read newsletters and other articles for more information. Use them for additional ideas.

## PREPARE YOUR PRESENTATION

- Use a one-page fact sheet like the Tailgate Talks provided by the T2 Center (find them using this link: [www.t2center.uconn.edu](http://www.t2center.uconn.edu)) or outline your own ideas.
- Look for visual aids. Examples: warning signs, a flipchart, an illustration on poster board.
- Photocopy handouts ahead of time.
- Read through the materials the night before.

## CONDUCT THE SESSION

- Keep your presentation informal.
- Don't use words your employees won't understand.
- Use visual aids.
- Involve your workers in discussion of the topic.
- Allow time for questions at the end.
- Have workers sign a sheet showing they were trained and keep it on file.

### TAILGATE TRAINING DO'S AND DON'TS

#### DO:

- Limit sessions to no more than 15 minutes.
- Choose topics that relate to your operation.
- Hold sessions an average of once a week.

#### DON'T:

- Conduct training sessions on Monday mornings.
- Speak in a manner workers won't understand.
- Discourage employees from asking questions.

### Informal

- Sessions held on employees' turf.
- No "lecturing."
- Trainer speaks employees' language.
- Employees are comfortable and more willing to participate.

### Very Focused

- One safety topic presented at a time.
- Easier for most workers to digest one topic at a time.
- Puts safety information on the "front line" where it's most effective.

### Brief Sessions

- Sessions run no more than 15 minutes.
- Doesn't lose employees' attention.
- Employees more likely to look forward to shorter sessions.

### Repetition

- Consistently held sessions reinforce the importance of safety.
- Employees are more likely to remember what they heard.
- Employees are more likely to put concepts into action.
- Constant reinforcement keeps ideas fresh.

## Employee Involvement

- Workers raise issues management was unaware of.
- Employees see their ideas put into action.
- Enhances two-way communication between workers and supervisors.
- Improves worker morale. Employees become part of the safety team.

## Line Supervisor Involvement

- Gets line supervisors involved in the safety program.
- Supervisors who train are more likely to “buy into” safety.
- Increases line supervisors’ self-confidence.



### **BASIC TRAINING TIPS:**

- Be enthusiastic about the topic.
- Don't speak in a monotone voice.
- Don't “spoon-feed” information to trainees. Get them involved.
- Choose topics employees can relate to.
- Set a good example.
- Reward good ideas and safe practices.
- Show you really care.

For more Tailgate Talks, Safety Briefs or more information about the Connecticut Technology Transfer Center, visit us at: [www. T2center.uconn.edu](http://www.T2center.uconn.edu)

