Facilities Safety
Toolbox Talk

Every day, workers witness actions that they know are unsafe—potentially disastrous actions that could almost certainly be stopped—but they don't voice their concerns. Why are people inhibited in these situations? Why do we so often stay silent?

Managers and those who are in positions of authority need to emphasize not only ourselves, but our employees to speak up when they see a safety issue without the fear of *formal* punishment for perceived insubordination or slowing of productivity. The thing is, there are plenty of *informal* punishments that may still apply; people who want to speak up could fear being ostracized by coworkers, overlooked for good work by their supervisors, and the list goes on.

Despite these fears regarding safety "interventions," most workers do take this responsibility very seriously, and they believe that they would speak up. But in the moment, they usually say nothing. As an employee, there are things you can do to promote a culture of safety and honesty. Speaking with your management about current policies in place and requesting ongoing education and training surrounding workplace violations are two proactive steps to take. It is always easiest to enact change by starting with yourself, so make your best effort to be a welcoming, friendly and trustworthy friend to colleagues. Doing so may just make the difference in whether or not someone feels comfortable coming forward.

It can get easier to identify workplace violations as you progress in your career. However, no matter your position within a company, it is possible to correct errors or misbehaviors you observe in the workplace. Take on the responsibility to learn the policies of your workplace when it comes to violations. To keep yourself and others safe, see something, say something, do something.

Safety is everyone's responsibility and should be comfortable talking with our supervisors on these issues.