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Toolbox Talk January 30, 2023 Battery Handling Toolbox Talk

With the winter maintenance starting on the Gray & Son equipment, this Toolbox Talk will touch on some of the hazards dealing with vehicle and equipment batteries. We use batteries to power our cars, trucks, tractors, forklifts, construction equipment, and power tools. These are the four main hazards associated with batteries:

1. **Acid.** The electrolyte in a battery is corrosive and can burn skin or eyes, eat holes in clothing, or even damage a concrete floor.
2. **Flammable gas.** Batteries emit hydrogen gas, which is flammable. It ignites easily and can cause a fire or explosion if allowed to build up in a small area.
3. **Electrical shock.** Many of us are aware of this danger because we may have seen sparks fly when jumper cables are attached to a car battery. Some battery systems can discharge at extremely high rates of current. Accidental shorting of terminals or cables can result in severe **electrical** arcing, causing you to get burned and shocked.
4. **Weight.** Batteries, like those used in forklifts, are heavy and require proper material handling equipment to lift them safely.

Safe Battery Handling Examples include:

Safety glasses or goggles and a face shield to protect your eyes and face from chemical splashes. Rubber gloves provide both acid protection and electrical resistance to prevent shocks. Chemical apron—your clothes and body need protection as well. Safety shoes or boots to protect your feet from a spill. Be sure to know where the eyewash is located.

Follow these best practices for charging batteries safely:

- Charge batteries in designated areas to avoid open flames and sparks.
- Use appropriate equipment to load/unload batteries from equipment.
- Keep tools and other metallic objects away from uncovered batteries.
- Be sure the proper charger is being used for the kind of battery.
- Check that vent caps are in place to prevent overflow and spilling of electrolyte.
- Shut off the charger when connecting or disconnecting the battery.
- Use baking soda or an approved cleaning agent to neutralize spilled acid.
- Always check the voltage of a battery. It could be 12 volts or 24 volts.

2023 HR / Safety Meetings
Embassy Suites 213 International Circle, Hunt Valley, MD 21030
Thursday, Feb 16, 2023 / Thursday Mar 2, 2023 / Thursday Mar 9, 2023
7:00 am to 3:00 pm. All are required to attend.

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