Workplace Safety Part 3

Moving it along now to equipment. Just reminder that there is a workbook for this and there will be a test once all of the modules are up. To prevent cuts and injuries, make sure your clipper blades are in good repair, and watch how you grab them. dropping your scissors onto your feet because of open toe-ed shoes will hurt and probably require a tetanus shot. We'll talk about how to handle injuries shortly.

Use the right equipment for you. Meaning if you are a lefty use lefty shears, there is a different push pull to righty than to lefty shears Learning how to use swivel shears and there is a learning curve, will go a long way to preventing carpal tunnel and other conditions. I will get more into that topic when we get into repetitive injuries. Well maintained equipment and blades will reduce stress on your body. So keep your tools maintained, cleaned and oiled right. And this includes your clippers. Make sure all the cords are in good repair. Exposed wires can cause electrical shock.

Let’s look at a couple of videos on holding shears.

1st video:

This is Chris again with how to hold your shear swivel edition. This is what you're more used to be seeing me with. Now you'll notice I have different inserts in my swivel foam shear than I did in my non swivel chair. That's because you hold swivel shears, completely opposite how you hold non swivel shears, you use the same fingers, use your ring finger and your thumb. But you'll notice how far in my hands are. My fingers are in the inserts. My thumb is nice and firmly in there to the nail bed. That's about how far my ring finger is going. You just get all in there like you're bowling. The reason for this is because swivels move on their own. You don't need that extra room to have your fingers do the swiveling and you can do all of those same things and more without bending your wrist. So if you're holding your swivel shears properly, with the inserts fitted to you and your fingers in them enough, you actually can control one of the biggest complaints about swivels is not being able to control them, but that's because you're trying to hold them or most people are like regular shears, this won't work with swivels this and you can control them. It's nice and ergonomic. So two different ways to hold your shares for two different types of shares.

2nd video:

Hi, this is Chris bear, Anthony. Let's talk about how to hold our shears properly. We'll start with our non swivel pair. You notice I have nice thick finger inserts in there because fingerings are the key to holding our shares properly. Notice in the thumb, not only do I have a nice thick insert in there, but in order to make it fit my finger where I want it, I have two inserts in there. So just putting my finger in the air a little bit I could probably even use a thicker insert in my ring finger. This is how we hold our shears. The reason we're putting just the tips of our fingers in there is it lets us move the shears around a little bit better and if we're doing pivot point scissoring. We can even make that nice and thick and use the ball of our thumb just a little tip of our thumb. That way we can get the angulation anywhere we want with a shear that lets us have a nice firm grip on there. and control the shear and move it in any way we want to move it. The reason we use our ring finger is because it lets us use our other fingers to stabilize the shear and keep it from bouncing.

Let’s move on to your work area. In this air section, I'm going to get a little bit more specific with house callers and mobilers.

It’s best to change up your positions throughout the day. Standing, sitting while using stools, basically shifting. just shifting the weight on your legs, can help tremendously. Working at the incorrect height or working in awkward positions can cause a lot of problems. You want to be able to use grooming tables that go up and down. That's a little harder for house callers.

So what happens when you work hunched over? The obvious is lower back pain, hip, neck and shoulder pain, but your body systems are all interconnected. Which means that if you don't take care of your posture, you can experience negative consequences with your breathing and your digestive systems. So here are just a few things to watch out for.

1. The first one is increase in fatigue. Believe it or not, hunched over uses more energy than sitting up straight. Your muscles and your ligaments have to work harder to keep your body misaligned, leaving you feeling tired and lacking energy.
2. By improving your posture you can get a better night's sleep and feel rested in the morning.
3. Your lungs and diaphragm need room to exchange oxygen properly. When your spine isn't aligned correctly, you aren't able to take in deep breaths and send out the necessary oxygen to all parts of your body. And this can lead to your vital organs like the heart and the brain working in less than optimal conditions.
4. Leaning over all day can tighten the muscles in your neck and over time the bones in your back starts to adjust to this as a new normal position and the natural curvature of the spine can change. The tightness in your neck muscles can lead to tension headaches that radiate from your neck up to your head.
5. If you struggle with heartburn, the way you sit can be to blame when you slouch if base is extra pressure on your abdomen. And this pressure can cause the acids in your stomach to flow into your esophagus and damage to sensitive tissue that lines this tube. Sitting upright after meals can help your fluid digest and minimize the flow of acid into your esophagus. And this also means stop hunching over your tables when you eat your lunch.

Plus, we have house callers, they'll have to bring their equipment into their workspace, tables, products and tools and sometimes upstairs as well. So a couple setups. These pictures are from my friend Chris Anthony. And this is her setup as a house call groomer due to COVID. She was doing bathing outside rather than inside the house. This is this is her setup. The middle picture has a picture of a fold up tub that she picked up on Amazon and one bin that contains all her bathing equipment that's got a bathing beauty. In there her shampoos and that that fold up tub fits right into that. The other one has her clipper back on it on top of a reliable storage

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This is what how she walks into the house so she has her all her tools and the roll up thing underneath the clipper bag fold up table, the grooming arm. This is how it fits all nicely into her vehicle and you'll notice in her vehicle she has a UV sanitizer.

Falls and the damage they can do.

Cords and hoses that you do not put away, Edges of mats. Any fall can be serious, but falling out of a mobile grooming van adds depth to the fall. So instead of falling to the ground, you're falling from a height. And height alone can cause way more damage. There's the risk of hitting your head on something on the way down. Asphalt being one of them. I slipped on someone's icy driveway that not only ripped up my hand from the ice, but pieces of the driveway asphalt was embedded in my hand as well. That was not fun getting that cleaned out at the ER.

Interior work temperatures, and this can go in either direction, too hot or too cold heatstroke or hypothermia. vans and trailers are metal boxes and heat and cool much quicker than homes or businesses. But that's not to say this isn’t a problem in a physical location. I worked at a shop that had full glass windows and when the sun shone through it, it significantly raised the interior temperature to an unworkable point even with the AC. Tint added to the window solve that problem. You can also add tint to mobile grooming windows by the way.

Let's talk about some of the signs of heatstroke. This is from the Mayo Clinic. High body temperature, altered mental state or behavior such as confusion, agitation, slurred speech, irritability, delirium, seizures, and coma can all result.

Heatstroke is a different type of sweating. It's called an alteration in sweating, and heatstroke if it is brought on by hot whether your skin is gonna feel hot and dry to the touch. However, heatstroke brought on by strenuous exercise, such as grooming, your skin may feel dry or slightly moist. You may feel sick to your stomach or vomit. Your skin may turn red as your body temperature increases. Your breathing may become rapid and shallow. Heart rate may significantly increase because heat stress places a tremendous burden on your heart to help cool the body. Your head may throb.

 Contributing factors outside of the actual ambient temperature includes: your age, the amount of exertion you're doing, sudden exposure to hot weather meaning you are working in a cool environment and then step out into 100 degree temperature, the lack of air conditioning, certain medications and certain health conditions can contribute.

This is serious and can result in organ damage. Want to make sure you keep hydrated while working in hot conditions.

Now the flip is hypothermia and the signs of hypothermia include, shivering, exhaustion or feeling confused, fumbling hands, memory loss, slurred speech and drowsiness.

It, of course, has the same contributing factors except as heat stroke except instead of lack of AC, there's no heat.

The Occupational Health and Safety Administration, OSHA recommends employers maintain workplace temperatures in the range of 68 to 76 degrees Fahrenheit and keep humidity in the range of 20 to 60%.

Now my favorite workplace injury hair in the wheels of movable objects such as dryers. You're pushing against something that is really hard to move such as a stand dryer. Oh, and of course, the opposite. Someone just cleaned out all the hair and didn't tell you. So instead of trying to push an immovable object, you fly across the room with it.

Then there's distractions. Not paying full attention to the pet in front of you. Usually, it's the cell phone, answering texts, participating in online drama. I mean, you get the picture. Distractions lead to missing behavioral cues that thepet is about to bite or that you need to stop the grooming. Cellphones belong in your pocket, especially if you work alone or in somebody's house. Easy to reach in the event you need to call for help for any reason. Friend of mine laid on the floor of her mobile grooming van praying the dog wouldn't move because she threw her back out. Fortunately, the owner peeked in on her dog and saw her on the ground. And then there's distractions cousin overwhelm.

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health which is NIOSH or NIOSH defense defines job stress as the harm physical and emotional responses that occur when the requirements of the job do not match the capabilities, resources or needs of the workers. This is usually due to an inexperienced groomer or one that does not understand canine or feline behavior, accepting pets that should be sedated at a veterinarian office, groomers that are expected to groom way more pets than they are capable of doing, not taking breaks or lunch. I mean, it all adds up.

Sometimes it's as simple as this groomer just needs to stop and take a deep breath and refocus on something else for the moment. Other times, it's indicative of your work culture. Sometimes this scenario can be really hard to fix because everyone is so close to the problem. Getting outside perspective can help.

Take time off from your work, your brain needs to reset otherwise overwhelm continually builds up until something gives.

Signs of overwhelm or being in a state of overwhelm otherwise known as burnout. Include:

1. Your heart is racing and feels hard to breathe. This may be a sign that your sympathetic nervous system the part of your nervous system that activates the fight or flight response is working overtime and anxiety is in the driver's seat. aches, pains, dizziness, and even an impaired immune system can be signs that your body is under chronic stress.
2. Emotional and behavioral changes, such as moodiness, crying easily, irritability, and withdrawal often signal when your stress is increasing.
3. You can't stay focused on tasks and you're missing out on new favorite fun activities.
4. Lowered concentration and increased apathy might be a result of stress related sleep issues or intrusive thoughts.
5. You feel guilt or anger for taking on too many responsibilities.

Let's move on to carbon monoxide detectors. Carbon monoxide is deadly. Carbon monoxide is colorless, odorless, tasteless gas that is produced by burning gasoline wood, propane, charcoal or any other fuel. You will not know it's in the air unlike a propane link leak which has an additive attitude so you can smell it. It comes from faulty boilers from the shop or working in someone's home. In a mobile unit, the generator is leaking into the work area through the through the floor seams or because you've backed up too close to the wall and the bushes or the lawn crew is there at the same time and your intake fans are drawing it into your work area. If you have an inverter, and you're idling exhaust from cracks in the pipe, or driving any vehicle with the damaged exhaust pipes.

Carbon monoxide detectors can save your life. It probably saved mine. I was driving and the latch between the cab and the work area door was broken, so the door would swing open all the time. I'm driving in the rain when all of a sudden my carbon monoxide detector goes off. I opened all the windows and drove straight to my dealership. I totally looked like I was driving with the windows down in a rainstorm By the way, which is why they probably took me so serious when I walked into the dealer repair office. Exhaust leak was seeping into the cab while I was driving.

What are the signs of carbon monoxide poisoning? They may include: dull headache, weakness, dizziness, nausea, vomiting, shortness of breath, confusion, blurred vision, loss of consciousness. People can have irreversible brain damage or even die before anyone even realizes that there's a problem.

You want to install them in every room of the shop in the center of the mobile grooming van. And you can carry a portable one in for house call. Those are usually battery operated. You want to change the batteries on them twice a year and they do have a lifespan of about 10 years.

You also want to add smoke detectors. Let's not forget your nose. Propane leaks can happen but you can smell the additive in the propane. You also need to have fire extinguishers. There should be one fully charge in every room of a shop one in a mobile van and a small one for housecall. If you are mobile or house call making sure it is secured with a pin in place. You have no idea how much of a mess it will make. If it inadvertently discharges, you might as well just throw away any tools. I had one release in a cab while I was in the back with a golden. I mean, all of a sudden there was a continually whoosh and Philly and I just looked at each other. I opened up the cab door and this simply closed it. I was glad I had no tools in there. It literally took hours to clean

Then there is air exchange. An important approach to lowering the concentrations of indoor air pollutants or contaminants, including any viruses that may be in the air is to increase ventilation. The amount of outdoor air coming in doors insure proper ventilation. Outside air can reduce the concentration of airborne contaminants including viruses. Mobile groomer should have two fans: one intake and an outtake fan. The outtake fan should be over your tub so help the pull out moisture. Because each building and existing HVAC systems will be different, a HVAC specialists should be consulted to determine the best way to maximize the system's ventilation and air filtration capabilities for each specific room in a building.

Bathing area

This is a wet area and wet floors are slippery. You want to make sure that you install ground fault interrupter outlets that GFI outlets if you are drying, or clipping anything that has an electrical cord attached to it. if it gets wet, you can be electrocuted. A GFI outlet that detects water will cut off the electricity to the outlet

Electricity has long been recognized as a serious workplace hazard exposing employees to electric shock,electrocution, burns, fires and even explosions. And electric shock can result in anything from a slight tingling sensation to immediate cardiac arrest and severity depends on the following: the amount of current flowing through the body, the currents path through the body, the length of time the body remains in the circuit and the current frequency.

Then there is contaminated allergic product which we had covered in an earlier in the sanitation section.

The severity of tap water scalds depends on the temperature of the water and the length of time skin is exposed. Human exposure to hot water at 140 degrees can lead to serious burns within three seconds. Whereas at 120 degrees, a serious burn can take about 10 minutes.

Use ramps and if possible electric tubs to get larger pets in and out. Working at the correct height is so important so as not to be bending over consistently. Grates and lifts in the tub can help raise the smaller pets up to a more workable height if you don't have an electric tub.

It is why so many household groomers prefer to do the smaller pets because they could fit them in the kitchen sink which is a better working height than using the tub in somebody's home.

Vehicle accidents.

While this is primarily a mobile or a house call groomer issue. If you send an employee on an errand and they get into an accident, it's a workman's comp case. In most cases, an injured employee will qualify for workman's compensation cover if the car crash occurred in the course and scope of employment.

Relevant factors into the determination of coverage can include: whether the employee was driving from one worksite location to another, the trip involved making deliveries or running errands for the boss or your employer trips involving transporting another employee for business purposes.

A car accident may not be covered by workman's compensation insurance policy if it occurs, while the employee is making a deviation from the work related route to run a personal errand. For example, you send the employee to the bank, but the accident occurs when they decided to go to their bank as well.

Now laws will vary from state to state, but it doesn't matter who's at fault. Even if it is the employee’s fault, it is still a workman's comp claim. The only difference between states will be any specific amount of coverage. And an auto accident can range from minor injuries all the way up to fatalities.

And while you can't prevent an accident happening from outside negligence, you can make it as safe as you can for yourself and employees. GPS tracking locators can tell you exactly where the vehicle is, how fast they're going routes are taking, how long they're idling, as well as their accelerating and braking habits. There are hundreds of options to choose from, you're going to have to do your homework here. Triple A offers driver safety programs. Your insurance company may also offer programs discounts for those that pass.

A dash cam will record and save onto either a SD card, or use cell signal and backup to a cloud server. Again, you’ve got to research your options.

Train your staff and what to do in the event of an accident, have a checklist ready to go. Adrenaline is going to be free flowing. It'll be easy to forget what needs to be done. In the workbook, there is a sample motor vehicle accident checklist. Real quickly, you want to move the vehicle over to safety, turn off the vehicle, assess the damage if it is safe to do so. You don't want to get out of the car if it's on a busy highway. Check on others involved if it's safe to do so. Contact the police and take photos. Write down pertinent information and then file with your insurance. Laminate the checklist and keep it in the employee manual as well as in the vehicle itself. All right. So that's it for today. We're next session we will start off with bites.