



MADE SAFE NL

Complacency: False Sense of Safety

Whether you've done the same job for the past 20 years or just the past few weeks, complacency can lead you to a false sense of safety.

Referred to quite often as health and safety's greatest enemy – *Complacency* can be defined as “being overly satisfied or comfortable with an existing situation or condition; often while unaware of some potential danger or hazard”.

Being in your comfort zone and having thoughts like “I've never been hurt” or “I could do this with my eyes closed” can lead to skipped steps, missed hazards and a significant risk of injury.

There are few things you can do to lower your risk of growing complacent on the work site:

Safety Talks. These aren't designed to waste 5-7 minutes of anyone's day, every day. These are designed to keep you aware of what's happening and remind you of hazards that you may encounter. Make sure you listen and focus. Just because you've your job a certain way, a hundred times before, doesn't mean it's safe to do so this time. Things can change, and quite rapidly so you need to be able to adapt constantly.

Change the routine. The exact same routine is a key ingredient in complacency. Switch it up, if it's safe to do so. If you can, even small changes to how you organize your tasks can help you refocus and stay alert.

Observation. Just take a few seconds before beginning a task to look around and observe. It may be just the refocus needed to see a hazard you may not have otherwise.

Focus. This one is easier said than done. Take time to plan your work. Be situationally aware. Pay attention to any safety signs as you work. Review necessary safe work practice and procedures. Do what you need to do to stay focused on completing the job safely.

And finally – Don't count on things to stay the same, especially with your safety. Make sure you're alert and focused at all times, because hazards don't take breaks.

Source: Adapted from <https://albertabcsafety.com/blog/complacency/>