

# NCVDLS Quarterly Safety News

PAGE 1

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## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Stop Winter Falls

1

Bleach Things You Should Know

2

Lessons We Can Learn From

3

HCS Test Your Smarts

4

## STOP WINTER FALLS

The recent period of warm winter weather, although welcome, is unlikely to last. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric



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Administration reports that during this winter season certain areas of North Carolina may face wetter-than-usual weather due to the strongest El Nino pattern on record.

This means that when the cold air arrives, periods of snow, ice or freezing rain will likely come with it. It's not a surprise that when snow and ice accumulates on walking surfaces, the potential for slips and falls greatly increases.

When the snow and ice hits, be smart and walk like a penguin:

- Wear appropriate footwear. Textured soles are best.
- Move slowly.
- Take Small Steps.
- Keep your hands out to help



Falls account for over 8 million hospital emergency room visits, representing the leading cause of visits (21.3%). Don't become a part of this statistic.

In the US, products that claim the ability to control microorganisms in must be registered with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). To be registered, the product must meet regulations regarding raw



materials, processing, label strength, shelf life, usage safety and product efficacy. All Clorox® disinfecting products containing bleach are EPA registered. The EPA has a website that lists it's registered disinfectants.

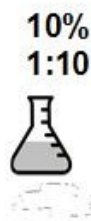
## Things You Should Know— About Using Bleach as a Disinfectant

Household bleach consists of a mixture of sodium hypochlorite (NaOCl) and water. Regular household Chlorox® bleach contains 5.25% sodium hypochlorite, but many bargain brands have lower concentrations. More concentrated forms of bleach are also available. Clorox® Germicidal Bleach contains 8.25% active ingredient, for example.

Solutions of sodium hypochlorite are not stable and over time lose their anti-microbial properties. According to Clorox®, unopened containers of regular household bleach can be safely stored for about six months. Beyond six months, bleach will begin to degrade at the rate of about 20% a year until it is totally degraded to salt and water. Exposure to air, light or heat will accelerate the degradation process.

When open to air, chlorine evaporates rapidly from the solution, which in turn reduces its disinfectant (anti-microbial) properties. Because it is unstable, experts recommend that fresh disinfectant solutions containing bleach be made daily.

For most applications, a fresh 10% bleach solution (1 to 10) is recommended. This provides a 0.5% (or 5000 mg/L) free chlorine



concentration. To make this dilution, mix one part household bleach with nine parts of clean water. A good rule of thumb is 10 minutes of contact time with 10% bleach achieves effective disinfection for most routine applications.

Because bleach is corrosive to eyes and skin, always wear suitable eye protection and gloves when mixing. Bleach is also damaging to metals so it's a good idea to rinse metal surfaces with water or alcohol after allowing the bleach solution sufficient contact time.

# A Lesson We Can Learn From

An employee at the Rollins Laboratory cut their thumb while using a box cutter to open a package. Fortunately the injury was minor and did not require outside medical treatment. While box cutters are useful tools, injuries involving their use are too common.

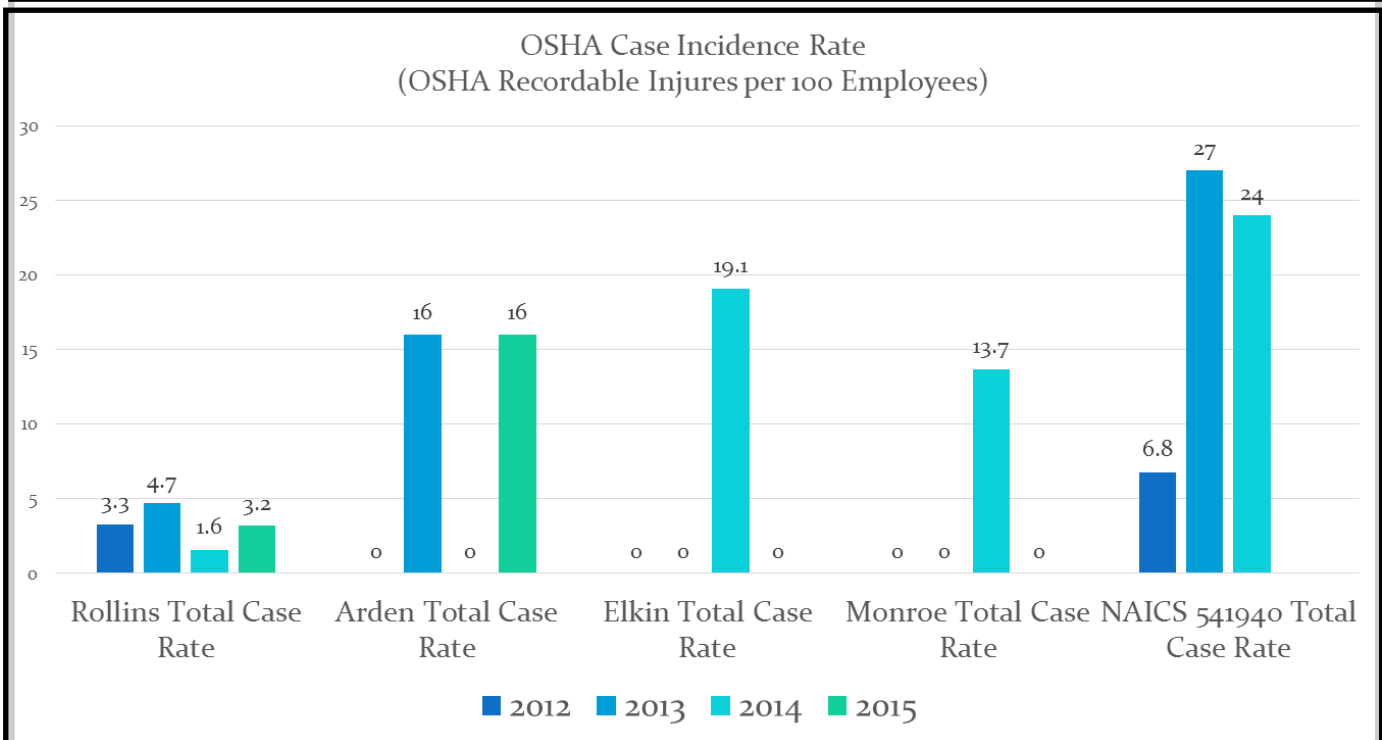
When working with a box cutter, pay full attention to what you are doing. Don't use a box cutter while you are moving or talking to someone else. Don't become distracted.



It goes without saying that you should always cut away, not toward yourself. As experienced as you might be, you can never know when the blade will slip out of the box you are cutting, and injure you or the person next to you. Assume that the blade could slip at any time and keep your fingers and hands out of the way.

The chart below shows the OSHA Case Incident Rate for each lab location for the years 2012-2015. The rates represent the number of OSHA recordable injury/illness cases per 100 employees per year. The figures for NAICS 54190 are the national industry-specific results for Veterinary Services, which include veterinary diagnostic labs and veterinary clinics.

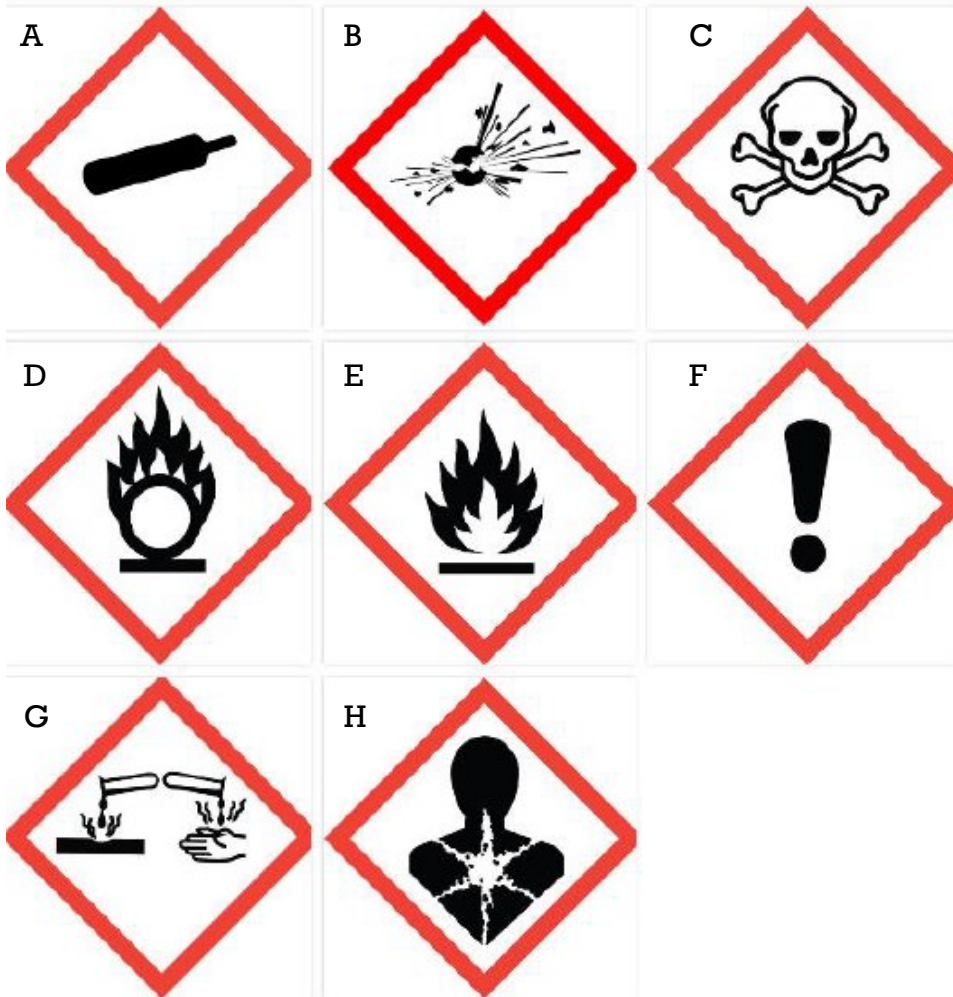
An OSHA Case is defined as an on-the-job injury or related illness that requires medical care beyond first aid. By looking at the rate of cases per 100 employees, it is possible for us to compare the safety performance of companies of different size.



## Hazard Communication Standard - Test Your Smarts!

As of June 1, 2015, the Hazard Communication Standard (HCS) requires pictograms on chemical container labels to alert users of the hazards to which they may be exposed.

### HCS PICTOGRAMS



#### Match the Pictogram (on left) to the Hazard:

1. \_\_\_ The symbol that means explosives, self-reactives or organic peroxides?
2. \_\_\_ The symbol that means carcinogen, mutagenicity, reproductive toxicity, respiratory sensitizer, target organ toxicity or aspiration toxicity?
3. \_\_\_ The symbol that means flammables, pyrophorics, self-heating, emits flammable gas, self-reactives or organic peroxides?
4. \_\_\_ The symbol that means gases under pressure?
5. \_\_\_ The symbol that means skin corrosion/burns, eye damage or corrosive to metals.
6. \_\_\_ The symbol that means oxidizers?
7. \_\_\_ The symbol that means acute toxicity (fatal or toxic).
8. \_\_\_ The symbol that means irritant (skin and eye), skin sensitizer, acute toxicity, narcotic effects or Respiratory tract irritant?

Answers:  
1. B, 2. H, 3. E, 4. A, 5. G, 6. D, 7. C, 8. F