

With the increase in variety and quality of mechanical equipment in and around the home the foregoing hazards are increasing daily. The speed with which much of to-day's mechanical equipment moves imposes a stronger and more pressing need for safety precautions to be heeded at all times.

Machinery, and installations of all kinds, should be set up by skilled tradesmen, not hobbyists; it should be maintained at a high level of proficiency and checked continually. It is a wise householder who takes a lesson from industry, where equipment is checked regularly and constantly and kept in top working order; and where the work methods and habits of the operators are watched.

Less Obvious Causes

Factors in this category are more dangerous because their effect on accident-free living is not readily understood nor easily recognised.

Two of these unseen factors which play a very large part in contributing to accidents are fatigue and poor lighting.

Fatigue slows up all mental and physical action—efficient thinking, planning and moving is not possible when tired. We become more careless and less on the watch for those things which constitute accident hazards.

It has been said that fatigue in doing work depends more on the way the work is done than the amount of work that is done. Looking for new and better ways of doing jobs, as well as perfecting the old ways, means not only progress but also less risk—a job done the best way is also one done the safest way.

Some ways of overcoming fatigue are:

Plan activities for the day and the week, alternating the heavy and demanding (mentally and physically) with the lighter and less exacting so that the same peak of concentration and effort has not to be maintained for long periods.

When a heavy and demanding job is a long one take 10 to 15 minute breaks—leave the scene of activity and, preferably, lie flat on the floor with the feet raised.



Doreen Johnson, of Murrin Bridge, sketched this scene



A prize to Betty Lee, of the Cootamundra Girls' Home, for this sketch

Ensure good ventilation so that there will be an adequate supply of oxygen for the body.

Lighting

Sufficient light is one of the best weapons in any safety campaign, for poor lighting increases the accident risk.

In addition to poor lighting, from the point of view of quantity, it is important to remember that too much lighting can also be a danger, as can glare and strongly contrasting shadows.

The direction from which light comes is also important. In the main, good, even, overall illumination, with no dark corners should be the aim. The light source should be shaded, and should not cast the worker's shadow on the work.

To improve lighting:

Check the windows to ensure they are able to do the job for which they are meant—they may be too heavily curtained, outside shrubs and trees may need thinning, pruning or removing; they may need cleaning!

Check the amount of window space.

Check the number of light sources and bulb wattage.

Repaint, using light paint to ensure maximum reflection of light.