



# Southern California Trade Contractors Association

## Safety Newsletter

1<sup>st</sup> Quarter, 2015

### Age of HVAC Systems and New Technology

#### Your aging HVAC systems may be costing you

There are many benefits to performing routine maintenance on your HVAC (Heating, Ventilating and Air Conditioning) systems. If reducing the risk of water damage to your building and contents isn't motivation enough, perhaps the cost savings in your utility bills will win you over.

Building and HVAC systems age at different rates. An aging HVAC system may not be able to meet the environmental needs of the building today. Changes to windows, space use, office equipment, occupancy and other modifications can have a significant impact on the demands, efficiency and water management performance of HVAC systems.

Many of the new HVAC equipment technologies available today are vastly more energy efficient than those of just a few years ago. You can find more information about potential cost savings of purchasing a new system at [www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov).

Whether you purchase a new system or keep the one you have, regular checkups of key building systems help keep operating costs low and protect against expensive catastrophic equipment failure.



- Regularly audit your HVAC equipment to identify components that may need to be updated.
  - How old is the water pump?
  - Is the compressor on its last leg?
  - Are all drains in good shape?

One of the best ways to minimize a building's risk of water damage is to develop, maintain, and follow a systematic equipment inspection and maintenance schedule. Make a checklist that includes the known or estimated dates each key HVAC component was installed and when they should be replaced.

- A simple checklist with suggested timing of monthly, seasonal, or annual events should be accompanied by:
  - A written preventive maintenance program, with operating manuals and specifications for each piece of equipment, including model and serial numbers.
  - Required spare parts, equipment specifications, and a parts suppliers list.
  - An equipment history record file, noting dates of installation and repair history.
  - Air balancing reports and airflow specifications.
  - 'As-built' blueprints and systems operation plans for mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems.

*This bulletin is intended only as a reminder and is offered solely as a guide to assist management in its responsibility of providing a safety working environment. This bulletin is not intended to cover all possible hazardous conditions or unsafe acts that may exist. Other unsafe acts or hazardous conditions should also be noted and corrective actions taken.*



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## Top Four Construction Hazards

The top four causes of construction fatalities are: Falls, Struck-By, Caught-In/Between and Electrocutions.

### Prevent Falls

- Wear and use personal fall arrest equipment.
- Install and maintain perimeter protection.
- Cover and secure floor openings and label floor opening covers.
- Use ladders and scaffolds safely,

### Prevent Struck-By

- Never position yourself between moving and fixed objects.
- Wear high-visibility clothes near equipment/vehicles.

### Prevent Caught-In/Between

- Never enter an unprotected trench or excavation 5 feet or deeper without an adequate protective system in place; some trenches under 5 feet deep may also need such a system.
- Make sure the trench or excavation is protected either by sloping, shoring, benching or trench shield systems.

### Prevent Electrocutions

- Locate and identify utilities before starting work.
- Look for overhead power lines when operating any equipment.
- Maintain a safe distance away from power lines; learn the safe distance requirements.
- Do not operate portable electric tools unless they are grounded or double insulated.
- Be alert to electrical hazards when working with ladders, scaffolds or other platforms

**For more complete information:**

**OSHA U.S. Department of Labor**

**[www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov)**

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