



18. If You Notice a Dangerous Situation, Fix it NOW!

Several years ago I was involved in a situation for which I have to take full responsibility. I was getting ready for a night shift at the firehall. As I was walking out to the van, I slipped on some ice on the sidewalk. I thought, “This is dangerous. I’ve got to fix it.” One thing led to another and I didn’t do anything. At 2:00 am I received a call from my neighbor. My wife had fallen down and broken her arm. Here’s what happened – my daughters were 3 years old and 4 months old at the time. In the middle of the night, the 3 year old’s temperature shot up and she was complaining of a stiff and sore neck. These are possible signs of meningitis, a very serious condition. My wife had already put the infant in the car seat. As she was carrying the 3 year old to the car, she stepped on the same patch of ice I had slipped on and landed on her shoulder, breaking it in three different places. I had to use two weeks’ holidays to take care of everyone.

My family including myself, was lucky. What would have happened if my daughter’s head had hit the concrete instead of my wife’s shoulder? I’ve treated people who have died or received serious, permanent brain damage when their head hit the concrete that hard. I would have been responsible. I saw a dangerous situation and walked right by it and didn’t do anything about it. I would have had a hard time living with the guilt.

If you ever come across a dangerous situation, fix it immediately if you can. If you can’t, mark it in some way so others will see it, and report it to someone who can fix it.

Don’t just walk away from a dangerous situation – you never know whom it may harm.



... AT ALL TIMES!