Toolbox Talks – Protect the Children

How would you like to be the one who had to tell a parent that his or her child had been seriously hurt on your construction job? I’m sure you’ll agree that it would be the hardest job that any person would have to do. Children around our jobs present a special safety problem. They can’t be expected to be aware of the hazards of equipment, excavations and unfinished structures. However, they are naturally curious, and they may climb over, under or through anything until they get into trouble.

We must try to do everything that we can do to leave the job in as safe a condition as possible. Some steps to consider are:

1. Lock or secure all powered equipment so that it can’t be started.
2. Buckets, blades and scoops should be lowered to the ground.
3. Don’t park equipment on a slope where it may roll if the brake or clutch is released.
4. Don’t leave gasoline or other hazardous materials in areas where children might play with them.
5. Remove portable ladders from areas where children may climb them.
6. Take care to backfill open trenches or, if not practical, cover them with materials substantial enough to hold the combined weight of several persons.
7. Don’t leave “tear out” materials lying around – such as boards with nails, or shards of glass.

Remember, you may not only protect your company from being liable for injury, but you may also save a child from serious and even permanent harm.
Our safety evaluations, reports and recommendations are made solely to assist your organization in reducing hazards and the potential of hazards and accidents. These recommendations were developed from conditions observed and information provided at the time of our visit. They do not attempt to identify every possible loss potential, hazard or risk, nor do they guarantee that workplace accidents will be prevented. These safety evaluations, reports and recommendations are not a substitute for ongoing, well-researched internal safety and risk management programs. This report does not warrant that the property inspected and its operations are compliant with any law, rule or regulation.