

# Soft Tissue Injury Prevention Program (STIPP)

What if construction executives, managers and field employees knew how to prevent debilitating and expensive soft tissue injuries?

Zurich Services Corporation, in collaboration with the Associated General Contractors of America (AGC), offers the construction industry two important educational programs on preventing soft tissue injuries in the workplace.

## The challenge

Joint research conducted by the insurance industry and the AGC discovered that soft tissue injuries (affecting the muscles, tendons, ligaments or nerves) account for approximately 30 percent of the construction industry's workers' compensation claims and nearly 70 percent of total workers' compensation losses.

The U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) reports that soft tissue injuries represent nearly one-third of all work-related injuries, affecting hundreds of thousands of American workers each year.

Soft tissue injuries can be acute, happening suddenly, or they can be chronic, developing over a long period of time. In either case, they can occur both on the job and at home.

Among construction workers, these injuries most commonly affect the neck, shoulders, back and leg muscles. They can be devastating, resulting in months of lost work time or even permanent disability.

Workplace soft tissue injuries can be avoided if the employer takes definitive steps to educate employees about their prevention.

## The solution

Zurich Services Corporation and the AGC have collaborated to develop the soft tissue injury prevention program (STIPP).

STIPP explains soft tissue injury, shows the types of injuries that typically occur in the construction industry and presents recognized safety practices for the workplace prevention.

## Program outline

There are two STIPP options. Both promote awareness of soft tissue injuries, while training participants on how to mitigate or prevent the impact of such injuries.

The in-depth program runs approximately four hours and is targeted at company executives, decision makers and safety managers. It introduces technical information on soft tissue injuries and their prevention. The program includes an easy-to-understand trainer's manual, a DVD to train employees, a PowerPoint presentation for use in training sessions and participant guides.

The shorter program runs approximately one hour and is targeted at field employees and other personnel. It features a 22-minute training DVD (available in both English and Spanish) that offers examples of what to do and what to avoid to prevent soft tissue injuries. Each student receives an easy-to-understand guide that serves as a valuable resource long after the training is complete.

## Benefits

By implementing STIPP, customers can experience:

- Reduced occurrence of soft tissue injuries
- Improved work quality and productivity
- Greater worker satisfaction and comfort
- Minimized worker fatigue and stress
- Reduced direct and indirect costs for improperly planned operations

## Program details

Zurich provides this program free of charge to their customers. STIPP can be adapted to meet customer-specific requirements. This flexibility allows for a live presentation by Zurich personnel, "training the trainer" and variations on these approaches. Customers can develop the program independently or with assistance by Zurich.

Implementation can range from a few days to several months, depending upon customer circumstances.

## For more information

For more information on the soft tissue injury prevention program, please contact your risk engineering account coordinator.

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