

Safety Spotlight

Keeping Your Striping Crews Safe¹

Safety is always a concern when stepping onto a jobsite. Regardless of a project, it is crucial to wear the appropriate apparel and follow the proper techniques when completing striping projects. By taking precautions to keep crews safe, contractors can confidently complete projects preventing accidents from occurring.

Safety 101

Every contractor understands the importance of following basic safety precautions in order to prevent accidents from occurring. To prevent accidents on the jobsite, it is crucial that crews wear safety vests and safety glasses.

Gloves are another item that contractors should wear often because they can protect hands from small cuts and abrasions. They are also successful at protecting hands from paint and solvent. Robert Liles, owner of Robert Liles Parking Lot Service, also carries hardhats in his truck should the jobsite require them.

Another standard safety item is a First Aid kit. While every contractor has a kit, the contents of the kit may be overlooked. "The things you use like Band-Aids and antibiotic ointment are going to disappear over time and have to be replaced," Liles says. "Set up a safety reminder to check the kit every month or so." It is also necessary to carry an eye wash station in the truck.

Barricading the Jobsite

Another area of safety to address is barricading the jobsite. By properly barricading a jobsite contractors will ensure safety for both the workers as well as any drivers. "Occasionally I see people barricading without giving thought of how to do it," Liles says. "The thing you have to remember about barricading is you're communicating with the driver and you have to make it understandable."

On an approach from the roadway, Liles block in as close to the edge of the road as he can so that drivers can see a barricade before making the decision to turn into the approach. "I've seen some barricades on the other end of the approach for a parking lot, and cars pull in, see the barricade and then are stuck," he says. "Then they have to back out into traffic or force their way through the barricades into your work zone."

Liles uses cones when barricading jobsites because they are easy to deploy and visible to drivers. He uses different sized cones for different situations based on the speed of traffic. "If we are in a situation where we think cars might try to get in the jobsite, we use barricade tape," Liles says. "You need to close and open all entrances at the same time. You don't want to close one entrance, do something else and then close the other entrance because cars will get blocked into the parking lot."

¹ AC Business Media, LLC. (2012, June 18). Safety tips for pavement marking crews. For Construction Pros. <https://www.forconstructionpros.com/pavement-maintenance/markings-striping/article/10682842/safety-tips-for-pavement-marking-crews>.

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Striping at Night

Although most contractors complete their work during the day, they may encounter a project that can only be completed at night. If completing night work, there are several safety concerns to be aware of including additional equipment and the area of the project. "We won't work on a parking lot at night unless it is completely barricaded," Liles says. "Everyone wears a headlight and a reflective vest. I've never worn flashing lights, but if there is a possibility of vehicles driving through your work area at night I would wear them as well." The headlights not only keep the worker visible, but the headlights also provide additional light while striping the parking lot.

Another important step Liles takes when working in an unfamiliar area at night is calling the local police department. "If I am working in an unfamiliar part of town I will call the police department and let them know we're going to be striping the parking lot," he says. "I'll let them know we would appreciate it if they would come by and check on us or be aware we are working out there that night. This lets the police know we are supposed to be there. Secondly, it helps if we might be worried about crime or muggers."

Operating Equipment

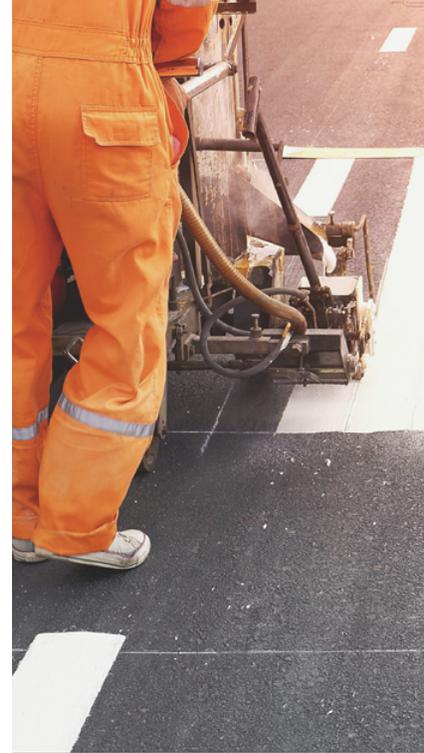
It is necessary for every member of a crew to take proper care when operating equipment. Airless striping units can have a working pressure as high as 3,000 psi, and if not used properly, can be dangerous.

Other Essential Safety Tips

There are several other areas where it is essential for contractors to take additional safety measures. Although contractors may not complete work on public roads often, contractors may find themselves in the position of completing work on a public road. "If you do work on public roads you have to know about work zone safety," Liles says. "The roadway has to be closed off properly by someone who is competent in public roadway work zone safety. If we ever complete work on roads we hire a company to set up the work zone. It is less expensive to hire someone to do it for us than to have someone trained to set up the barricades ourselves."

Another scenario contractors may encounter is working inside a building. "Primary things you have to worry about in buildings is ventilation, the type of paint you are using and gasoline engines," Liles says. "You need to be especially aware of solvents and solvent-based paints, and you need to be sure you have ventilation to keep the solvents away so you aren't breathing them."

Liles also encourages contractors to remind their employees about properly using pressure washers. "We do a lot of pressure washing associated with our striping to prepare surfaces for painting," Liles says. "People forget that the pressure washers we use are capable of cutting through your shoe or cutting your skin if they aren't treated with respect and care."



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