It pays to pay attention

Today, there are always multiple things vying for your attention. However, a lack of focus on the task at hand can lead to tragedy, especially in riskier situations. One of the leading causes of work-related deaths is due to contact with objects, which include being struck against an object; struck by an object; caught in an object or equipment; or caught in collapsing material. According to Injury Facts®, there were 738 workplace deaths due to these types of incidents and more than 240,000 cases of injuries with days away from work in 2010.

These types of injuries can arise from falling objects or from being inadvertently struck by a moving vehicle—such as a forklift or a car. Paying attention is vitally important for both those operating machinery, but also those working around it.

Here are some tips to help prevent injury from contact with objects:
• Neatly store loose materials
• Secure items that are stored at a height
• Store heavy objects close to the floor
• Open one filing cabinet drawer at a time to prevent a tip-over
• Wear the proper personal protective equipment for your environment, such as steel-toed shoes
• Always walk behind moving equipment, if possible
• Never obstruct your vision by overloading moving equipment
• Only operate equipment that you are properly trained to use
• Make sure all the safety devices on your equipment are in good working order before use
• Use extra caution around corners and near doorways

Bring it home
You can take steps to make your home safer from contact with objects, too. Think about your furniture arrangement so there is always enough room for normal traffic. Don’t fall victim to distracted walking, especially when using your cell phone. Be present in the moment and try to keep your mind from wandering, even if it’s a task you’ve done a million times.