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Dear valued partner,

Mental health is an essential part of workplace safety. The Total Worker Health (TWH) approach from the U.S. National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) emphasizes that protecting workers goes beyond preventing injuries – it also means creating conditions that support overall well-being. When organizations address both physical safety and mental health together, employees experience healthier, safer, and more productive work environments.

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**Which of the following best captures the essence of Total Worker Health (TWH)?**

- A. A traditional safety program that focuses only on protecting workers from physical hazards.
- B. A wellness program that offers gym memberships and encourages healthy eating, but doesn't address work conditions.
- C. An integrated approach combining protection from work-related hazards and promotion of overall worker health and well-being (including mental health).
- D. A program that only focuses on mental health support for employees outside of work hours.

Answer at the end of the email.



(Missed a previous email? [Click here](#) to see an archive of previous months' safety emails on Rockwood's Loss Control website).



## WHAT IS TOTAL WORKER HEALTH?

NIOSH defines TWH as “policies, programs, and practices that integrate protection from work-related safety and health hazards with promotion of injury and illness-prevention efforts to advance worker well-being.”

Unlike traditional occupational safety programs, which

mainly focus on dangerous physical hazards, TWH emphasizes a holistic, integrated model. It recognizes that work conditions – including organizational, psychosocial, and environmental factors – significantly influence overall health, not just on-the-job safety.

By applying TWH, employers can not only reduce workplace injuries but also improve overall worker health and quality of life, leading to higher engagement, satisfaction, and productivity.

## WHY MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS AT WORK

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Mental health is a core component of worker well-being under the TWH framework. Workplace stress – for example, heavy workloads, long hours, insufficient breaks, conflicting or unclear demands, or lack of control over how work gets done – can harm mental health. Over time, chronic exposure to these stressors can lead to emotional strain, burnout, depression, or other mental health challenges. Because mental health affects not just work performance but also personal life and long-term health, a comprehensive approach that addresses workplace structure, culture and support is essential.

## HOW TOTAL WORKER HEALTH HELPS SUPPORT MENTAL HEALTH & WELL-BEING

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Under TWH, workplaces can adopt strategies that reduce risk factors and actively promote well-being. Key elements often include:

- **Leadership commitment:** Safety and well-being must be embraced from top management through all levels.
- **Safe and healthy work design:** Adjust work organization, schedules, demands, and resources to reduce stress and hazard exposure.
- **Worker participation and engagement:** Involve employees in designing policies and practices – their input helps ensure relevance and effectiveness.
- **Integration of supports:** Beyond physical safety, workplace programs should support mental health, offer

flexibility, promote work-life balance, and address social or organizational stressors.

- **Confidentiality and respect:** Mental health support must respect privacy and encourage trust, so workers feel safe using resources without stigma.



Implementing TWH means combining traditional hazard controls with policies that support holistic health – not treating wellness as a standalone “add-on,” but as embedded in how work is structured and managed.

One practical resource under TWH is the NIOSH Worker Well Being Questionnaire (WellBQ) – a tool designed to assess worker well-being (including mental health) comprehensively.



## SAFETY TIPS FOR WINTER SAFETY

Follow these tips to help avoid incident or injury:

 <b>Assess Workplace Conditions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Assess</b> workloads, scheduling, break policies, job demands, clarity about roles, employee control and input, etc.</li><li>• <b>Collect</b> feedback from workers about stressors, workload, work-life balance, mental health needs, and suggestions for improvement.</li></ul>
 <b>Implement or Improve Support Systems and Healthy Work Design</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Examples may include:</b> Flexibility in schedules; mental health resources; peer-support or mentoring; confidential employee assistance.</li><li>• <b>Promote reasonable</b> workloads, adequate rest breaks, manageable shift scheduling, worker control where possible.</li></ul>



### Train Leadership and Supervisors

- **Train management** to recognize signs of stress or burnout and to promote open, supportive communication.



### Rockwood resources:

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- [May 2025 Safety Newsletter - Mental Health](#) – Toolbox talk

You can find additional Rockwood Toolbox Talks [here](#).

### OSHA, MSHA and other resources:

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- [Workplace Mental Health](#) | Center for Workplace Health & The American Psychiatric Association Foundation
- [Mental Health Resources](#) | SAMHSA – Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration – Click on the Mental Health link for resources
- [Mental health at work](#) | World Health Organization
- [Mental Health & Substance Use Disorder](#) | US Department of Health & Human Services
- [Workplace Mental Health](#) | OSHA Resources
- [Prioritizing Employee Mental Health](#) | National Safety Council
- [About the Total Worker Health® Approach | Total Worker Health](#) | CDC



### Learn more about total and mental health on Streamery

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Every Rockwood policy includes access to Streamery, a vast safety library with videos, quizzes and more resources to help you promote safety in your workplace. If you don't

have access, contact us to get a username. Enter the SKU number below to find the recommended video.

### Watch these videos on [Streamery](#):

- **Accidents – The People Factor:** 9 min / SKU 5145 + 5145-S / English and Spanish
- **Health and Wellness 101 for Employees:** 9 min / SKU: 8020 + 8020-S / English & Spanish
- **Fighting Fatigue in the Workplace:** 14 min / SKU: 3586 / English
- **Physical Wellness: Feeling Your Best at Work & at Home:** 8 min / SKU: 8033 + 8033-S / English & Spanish
- **Managing Sleep: Feel Awake and Rested:** 17 min / SKU: 3632 / English
- **Workplace Stress:** 14 min / SKU: 3217 + 3217-S / English & Spanish
- **Take Safety Home: Preventing Off-the-Job Injuries:** 20 min / SKU: 2546 + 2546-S / English & Spanish



### Bonus materials:

#### 1: OSHA Recordkeeping

Each February through April, many employers with more than 10 employees must post a summary of the injuries and illnesses recorded the previous year (OSHA Form 300A). Records must be maintained at the worksite for at least 5 years. If you need more information on if you fall under this requirement or what kind of information is required of you, please visit this link: [Recordkeeping - Overview | Occupational Safety and Health Administration](#) or reach out to the Rockwood Loss Control team at the email listed below.

#### 2: OSHA Top 10 Most Frequently Cited Standards 2025

Fall Protection, Hazard Communication, and Ladders are the top three. Find more information at this link – [OSHA's Top 10 | Safety+Health](#).

#### 3: Seat Belt Covers

Don't forget that Rockwood Casualty is providing **FREE** high visibility seatbelt covers to our insureds to assist in enforcement of seatbelt use by employees. Please contact [safetyolutions@rockwoodcasualty.com](mailto:safetyolutions@rockwoodcasualty.com) to make a request for your company and specify orange or yellow.



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## Questions? Feel free to reach out

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As always, your Rockwood partners are available to answer your questions and help you promote safety in the workplace. [Contact Rockwood Loss Control](#) for any support you need.

Thank you for your continued partnership,

**Rockwood Loss Control Team**  
[Safetyolutions@rockwoodcasualty.com](mailto:Safetyolutions@rockwoodcasualty.com)



*#RockwoodSafetySolutions #LossControl #SafetyTips*

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