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# THE ALLIANCE ADVISOR

NOVEMBER 2025

## ***FEATURED IN THIS ISSUE:***

- [Safe Workplace & Loyalty Award Distribution](#)
- [Village of Phoenix Receives Haber Leadership Award](#)
- [Automotive Lift Safety](#)
- [School Corner: Situational Awareness](#)
- [Upcoming Conferences](#)
- [Upcoming Training Seminars](#)



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NEWS AND SAFETY INFORMATION

## Safe Workplace & Loyalty Award Distribution

The Comp Alliance recently distributed Loyalty Awards to eligible members on the June and July cycles. Members as of January 1, 2026, should expect to receive a Loyalty award this winter.

Additionally, Safe Workplace Awards were recently distributed to current members on the January policy cycle. January members will have the opportunity to apply for the award again early next year.



Together, the safe workplace and loyalty awards ensure that all Comp Alliance members share in the success of our program, and remain fully invested in keeping their employees free from workplace injuries. Last year, we returned more than \$2 million to our members and over \$11 million since the program began. We are proud to continue giving back to our members through these programs.

Questions about the award programs can be sent to [compalliancemarketing@wrightinsurance.com](mailto:compalliancemarketing@wrightinsurance.com).

## Village of Phoenix Receives Haber Leadership Award

In recognition of its commitment to employee safety and creating a safe work environment, the Village of Phoenix was honored with the 2025 G. Jeffrey Haber Leadership Award by the Comp Alliance at the NYCOM Fall Training School on September 18. The award was presented as a testament to the efforts the village has made to create a safe workplace culture and its commitment to the health and well-being of its employees.



From the left, Michael Kenneally, Executive Director, Comp Alliance; Jim Lynch, Village Administrator, Village of Phoenix; Barbara Van Epps, Executive Director, NYCOM

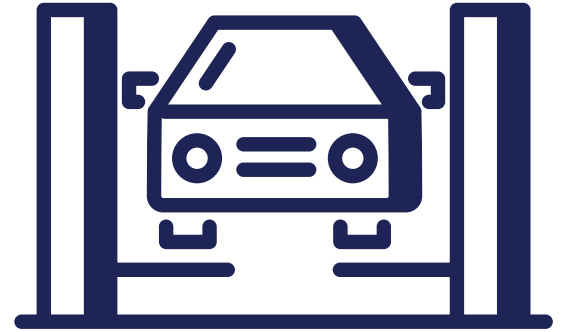
"This award recognizes the leadership and commitment required by elected officials, and the discipline required by employees at all levels, to maintain a safe work environment. The coordinated effort of the (village's) leadership, its safety committee and employees elevates the importance of workplace safety and promotes a safe workplace culture," Comp Alliance Executive Director Michael Kenneally said.

"As Mayor, I would like to personally thank each and every village employee for making this happen. This is definitely not an easy task. It's about keeping all of our employees safe by following proper procedures, security protocols, OSHA regulations and just keeping our eyes and ears open," said Mayor Brian Borchik.

# Automotive Lift Safety

One area of injury auto mechanics may face is working under vehicles. This could include trucks that are resting on jack stands or elevated on an automotive lift. Regardless of the situation, whenever an employee works beneath a vehicle, there are safety concerns to consider.

- Eye protection is necessary as rust, fluids, and other debris are very likely to fall or drip off during work. Falling debris in the eyes can be avoided by wearing appropriate, well-fitting safety glasses or goggles.
- PPE for your hands. Mechanics often scrape knuckles and sustain cuts to the hands during mechanical work. Consider a good pair of mechanic's gloves, which give a solid grip and good protection from sharp or rusty vehicle parts.
- Inspection of jacks and jack stands. Hydraulic jacks can fail during use, so a pre-inspection is necessary. This includes confirming the rated load capacity matches the vehicle, checking for fluid leaks, verifying the hydraulic fluid level is appropriate, inspecting for wear, such as leaking seals, and ensuring smooth, even lifting. Inspect the jack stand in the same fashion, disregarding steps related to fluids, and ensure it's rated in conjunction with the load. Never rely solely on a hydraulic jack to support a vehicle while it is being worked on.
- Automotive lifts carry their own safety requirements; first and foremost is the need for a qualified lift inspection. ANSI 2022 standards call for automotive lifts to be inspected annually by a qualified lift inspector. This is to ensure that the lift operates safely and reliably, minimizing the risk of accidents, equipment failure, and mechanical injury. This standard applies to 2-post, 4-post, hydraulic, scissor, and portable vehicle lifts.
- The American Lift Institute (ALI) offers a certification program for lift operators and a list of qualified inspectors. <https://www.autolift.org/>
- Recently, Safety+Health Magazine released an automotive lift safety document that identifies the various risks associated with auto lifts and corrective measures. [Read it here.](#)
- To ensure that vehicles are lifted safely, the compatibility of the following must be confirmed:
  - the lift
  - the vehicle
  - the work to be performed
  - the expertise of the mechanic





### Can School Districts Benefit from Situational Awareness?

The importance of situational awareness can't be understated when discussing a safe workplace. It is the ability to understand a changing work environment, predict what is likely to happen based on these conditions, and make decisions that keep yourself and coworkers safe to complete the necessary operations, which can be applied to a variety of schoolwork responsibilities. Situational awareness is the foundation of good decision-making for workplace safety. A standard part of any safety program is helping employees develop this skill.

Safe work practices begin at the planning level. Policies are developed to address a variety of risks, their associated hazards, and how those hazards are controlled to minimize personal injury and property damage. These controls take the form of training programs, improved personal protective equipment (PPE), updated safety devices, and safety inspections, among others. School district environments can benefit from improved employee situational awareness in a variety of areas, including:

#### Workplace Violence Prevention

All school district staff complete annual active shooter training and use safety procedures, like single points of entry, working in teams, classroom and office security, camera systems, and alert notification systems. In addition to these controls, staff who maintain awareness of their workstations can better protect themselves and students during hostile incidents. Understanding what might be happening and the proper response (run, hide, fight) can save one's life. In this way, situational awareness can be helpful during workplace violence incidents.

#### Grounds Maintenance

Hazards for staff include eye and hearing concerns with the use of loud equipment, heat and cold conditions, and chemical exposures. Situational awareness entails staff wearing appropriate PPE (protecting vision and hearing), managing heat and cold stress symptoms (wearing suitable clothing and limiting exposure), correcting slick walking surfaces to prevent slips and falls, and using safe work practices around hazardous chemicals (flammables, corrosives, and combustibles).

#### Classroom Organization

Teacher falls are a loss leader and sometimes related to climbing on unsafe devices or tripping over extension cords. Teachers should all be aware that the correct procedure for reaching heights in the classroom requires the use of a step stool or a small ladder. Extension cords can only be used as temporary wiring and should be removed once their use is complete.



### Situational Awareness (cont.)

When in use, the cords should not span across walking areas and, if they do, should be secured to the floor to prevent trips and falls. Routinely observe your classroom to identify hazards and remove them to reduce student and employee injuries.

#### Secondary Classroom Hazards

For the more specialized classrooms, such as wood shops, science labs, and art rooms, the hazards are more specific. However, teacher situational awareness is of even more importance in these areas. Woodworking equipment should be equipped with machine guarding, chemicals should be properly labeled and stored, and kilns should be properly vented, alarmed, and protected from access during use. Staff must be aware of the hazards of these and other secondary classrooms and correct unsafe conditions before they cause an injury or damage.

#### Transportation Activities

School bus drivers handle poor driving conditions, children's altercations, and parental conflicts, while mechanics encounter high-hazard environments including physical labor, dust and dirt, falling objects, and chemical exposures. Situational awareness helps address walking surfaces when they become covered with leaves and ice or snow, defensive driving skills to combat other vehicle aggressions, and conflict resolution skills. Mechanics who employ PPE, have safe welding operations, use hazardous chemicals safely, and improve daily housekeeping can go a long way in protecting everyone's safety at the bus garage.

Situational awareness is also helpful during other routine operations, such as snowplowing, playground monitoring, athletics, winter outdoor work, kitchen operations, and summer custodial work.

Situational awareness can be improved through experience and training. One of the keys to safety is making good, sound decisions based on the current circumstances. Not everyone makes good decisions all the time. With experience and training, it is more likely that the correct decision will be made, keeping employees safe. Teachers hanging room decorations need to use proper step equipment, gym teachers need to provide adequate spacing for activities, bus garage housekeeping is vital, and grounds members must understand the importance of PPE.

In summary, the variety of work completed for school operations presents employees with ever-changing environments. Employees who are trained and gain experience in tackling these conditions exercise better situational awareness, resulting in injury prevention and performance improvement.

## Upcoming Conferences



We enjoyed seeing some of you at the NYCOM Fall Training School!  
We hope you'll visit our booth at the Winter Legislative Meeting.



**FEBRUARY 14 - 17, 2026**

The AOT 2025 Annual Meeting is just a few months away, and we're looking forward to meeting with you. Early bird rates have passed but there's still time to register! Don't miss out on this great opportunity to network, learn, and grow.



**We'll also be seeing you at these conferences. Be sure to check out our booth! Take a look at the [Events page](#) on our website to stay up-to-date on where we're headed next.**

1/14 - 1/16 Training School For Newly Elected Town Officials - Albany, NY

1/21 - 1/23 Training School For Newly Elected Town Officials - Corning, NY

2/1 - 2/3 NYCOM Winter Legislative Conference - Albany, NY

## Upcoming Training Seminars

The Comp Alliance has several live video conference trainings scheduled for members throughout December. We'll cover PESH-mandated topics, including Workplace Violence, Right-to-Know, and Bloodborne Pathogens. Visit <https://compalliance.org/events> for our full calendar.

### HAZWOPER

Monday, 12/22, 8:00 - 8:30 am

### Upcoming Virtual Trainings

- Monday, 12/1: 10 AM - 12 PM
- Monday, 12/8: 10 AM - 12 PM
- Monday, 12/9: 5 PM - 7 PM
- Monday, 12/15: 10 AM - 12 PM
- Monday, 12/22: 10 AM - 12 PM