

**BEFORE THE  
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE  
HEARING ON THE IMPACT OF RAILROAD INJURY, ACCIDENT, AND  
DISCIPLINE POLICIES ON THE  
SAFETY OF AMERICA'S RAILROADS**

---

**OCTOBER 25, 2007**

---

**WRITTEN STATEMENT OF  
CHARLES J. WEHRMEISTER  
ON BEHALF OF  
NORFOLK SOUTHERN CORPORATION**

---

Chairman Oberstar, Ranking Member Mica, and Members of the Committee,  
thank you for the opportunity to testify about the railroad industry.

I am Charles J. Wehrmeister, Vice President Safety and Environmental of Norfolk Southern Corporation. Norfolk Southern is one of the nation's premier transportation companies. Its Norfolk Southern Railway subsidiary operates approximately 21,000 route miles in 22 states, the District of Columbia and Ontario, Canada, serving every major container port in the eastern United States and providing superior connections to western rail carriers. NS operates the most extensive intermodal and automotive network in the East.

I have held my current position on Norfolk Southern since 1998. My responsibilities include the areas of personal injury safety, employee safety and security training, grade crossing trespasser initiatives, and environmental/hazardous materials

training and response initiatives. Previously I worked in various capacities on the railroad including crossing watchman, switchman, yard conductor, road brakeman and various field Transportation positions.

In this testimony, I will briefly outline Norfolk Southern's safety program, and then specifically address the handling of employee injuries, accident reporting, employee discipline policies and Norfolk Southern's collaborative efforts with our labor organizations.

## **I. NORFOLK SOUTHERN'S SAFETY PROCESS**

Safety at Norfolk Southern begins with our corporate vision: ***"To be the Safest, most Customer-Focused and Successful Transportation Company in the World."***

You'll notice that in our vision statement, ***"To be the Safest"*** is first and foremost among our business objectives, as well it should be. So how do we become world class in safety? How do we eliminate all workplace injuries?

First, note that I've identified safety at Norfolk Southern as a "process." It's not a "program" or a list of responsibilities neatly catalogued in a dusty, three-ring binder. It's a living process; it's our culture, a way of life for a committed group of men and women over 30,000 strong; it's the way Norfolk Southern people do business. It's also about prevention. Our goal is to prevent the incident or injury by being proactive, rather than reactive.

Safety is an evolutionary process at NS, one that has grown out of hard work and study. This is how we got here.

Looking back at the evolution of our Safety Process we've identified what we refer to as "Levels" of safety attitude. "Level I" encompassed a period of years leading up to approximately 1988 when safety was a top-down, management-legislated and supervisory-lead process. Management was committed but people were made to be safe. Rules were created, and Personal Protective Equipment required. There was improvement, but not on the scale that could be accomplished when everyone is allowed to be a player.

By 1988, safety at Norfolk Southern needed to move forward. We retained DuPont Consulting Services, recognized worldwide for their safety efforts and accomplishments, to provide NS with a plan of action to improve our safety of operations. DuPont made specific recommendations, which we adopted. We've had DuPont back with us five or more times to give us an additional pair of eyes and an objective view on how we can continue to improve our process.

With the inclusion of many of DuPont's ideas, principles and recommendations, we began shaping our unique NS safety process. After gathering input, we communicated what we'd learned and experienced, advertised our safety process, demonstrated management commitment, and began focusing on the setting of safety goals. Our employees learned that "No job is so important, no service is so urgent that

we cannot take the time to perform our work safely.” In other words, we’ve got time to be safe.

This brought us to what I like to call “Level II” – “mutual safety” or “participative safety” - a new attitude in which safety became a top-down and bottom-up, participative process. Job briefings were initiated. Family involvement was sought to encourage safety on and off the job. Supervisors were - and are - given training on how to conduct a safety audit. Once each week they examine behaviors, proper procedures, or lack thereof, and working conditions. Safety committee members and all employees were invited, but not required to participate. This became standard practice. Importantly, the audits were proactive and educational – a method of communicating with employees.

Safety Committees were reinforced at all levels. Again, lines of communication flowed in both directions. A new policy growing from the previous safety work of two merged companies was published and distributed to NS employees, the “Norfolk Southern Six Point Action Plan for Safety of Operations.” Safety Bulletin Boards were installed at all reporting locations, and were limited strictly to displaying pertinent and current safety information. The boards advertise safety success, as well as serious incidents which occur on our property, within our industry, or even other modes of transportation, when appropriate.

By the mid-1990’s many locations on Norfolk Southern had risen to a new level of safety awareness, Level III, what I call “voluntary safety,” characterized by

compliance with rules and procedures, and participation in the safety process just because “It’s the right thing to do.” Safety had become a priority both on and off the job. It’s a state of consciousness that transcends rules and procedures when the right climate is set. We ask the “What ifs” such as: “I’ve complied with all the rules and procedures, but what else is there that might still cause an injury?”

As NS advertised and supported the safety process, people became more involved in team safety and mutual safety. NS managers and supervisors learned that “legislated” rules compliance efforts alone were not enough. Safety on the job became a process for all employees, not just management’s plan.

As a result of employees buying into and taking ownership of the safety process, Norfolk Southern has been awarded the E. H. Harriman gold medal award every year for the past 18 years. As you know, this award is presented to railroads for their outstanding performance in safety. Additionally, in seven of the last eleven years a Norfolk Southern employee received the Harold F. Hammond Award, an award given to an individual railroad employee for outstanding safety achievements. The 2006 winner is Kenneth Cheek, a mechanical department employee from Bellevue, Ohio.

## **II. POLICY AND COMMITMENT**

### **A. Six Point Action Plan for Safety of Operations**

Our “Six Point Action Plan for Safety of Operations” is the keystone of Norfolk Southern’s policy on safety and injury prevention. It details specific steps to achieve

results and establishes accountability among managers and employees. Its “Six Tenets of Safety” are the heart of the plan and worthy of repeating. They are:

1. All injuries can be prevented.
2. All exposures can be safeguarded.
3. Prevention of injuries and accidents is the responsibility of each employee.
4. Training is essential for good safety performance.
5. Safety is a condition of employment.
6. Safety is good business.

The “Six Tenets” have aged well. Originally, supervisors were responsible for prevention of injuries and no mention was made of environmental safety. At the suggestion of the people in the field, the “Six Tenets” have now evolved to include each and every employee as well as prudent environmental stewardship.

## **B. Safety Committees**

A good example of the participatory style of NS’ safety program is our commitment to safety committees. Each of the NS operating departments has a formal safety committee structure designed to encourage that safety issues be handled and percolate up from local committees (many of which are chaired by agreement employees or their labor representatives) to division planning committees, regional committees, and ultimately to the Operations Division Safety Steering Committee, or “ODSSC,” a systemwide body that sets safety policy for the entire Operating Department. Chaired by

Norfolk Southern's chief operating officer, the ODSSC meets monthly in different locations throughout the NS system to conduct safety audits, meet with employees, local safety committees, and chairmen of all local crafts, and then conduct a formal, safety business meeting with senior operating department committee members. Although policy is made by this executive committee, it is influenced strongly by recommendations received from local and regional committees.

### **C. Internal Control Plan ("ICP")**

More than 10 years ago Norfolk Southern established a formal plan, adopted pursuant to Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) regulations, which: (1) prohibits all employees from taking any actions to delay the receipt of proper medical care for injured persons; (2) expressly prohibits any form of intimidation or harassment that would have the effect of discouraging the reporting of accidents or injuries; and, (3) imposes disciplinary action against any employee, supervisor, manager, or officer who committed such harassment or intimidation. NS has posted more than 700 permanent, framed copies of this policy at prominent locations throughout the NS system. Each includes details of complaint procedures available to those who wish to report a violation. Each of our operating divisions, NS Human Resources and the Internal Audit Departments also have hotlines that employees may use to report problems confidentially. NS investigates all such claims. Employees are also informed of their right to file complaints through their labor organizations or the FRA. We have included formal training for our employees on this policy and, incidentally, have a Safety Day of Training class going on right now, facilitated by two trainers (one union and one supervisor) explaining to all employees the

respectful treatment they will be afforded if they are injured, as well as NS' policy prohibiting intimidation. In a similar vein, NS' Chairman recently mailed to the homes of all 30,000 NS employees a pamphlet, "Injured at Work - What You Should Know," outlining our employees' rights to respectful treatment.

### **III. HOW NS SAFETY POLICY AND COMMITMENT ARE SHARED**

Norfolk Southern has never been content to simply announce innovations in safety and expect the results will be automatic. As I said at the outset, safety at Norfolk Southern is a living process. It's never "done." Here are just a few of the ways that we keep our policies and our commitment to safety fresh in the minds of all who work on our railroad.

A Norfolk Southern employee's **Personal Safety Action Plan**, or "**PSAP**," establishes individual accountability for improving safety through the preparation and daily incorporation of one's own plan to actively support a statement of personal safety. Most NS supervisors now carry PSAP's on their person. Each includes four Action Steps, namely, *Job Briefing, Communication, Recognition and Education*, that must be reviewed and followed on a daily, weekly or monthly basis, depending on the activity. Many apply this both at home and at work as a reminder that safety begins with each one of us, and includes our families, as well as co-workers.

Similarly, **Division, Terminal, or other Work Unit Safety Action Plans** are being developed for each division, major terminal, production gang, shop or territory.

I'm carrying a copy of my PSAP, my "living document" evidencing my commitment to the process. And it's been initialed. Every employee I encounter and have a chance to explain my commitment to safety is asked to initial my personal safety action plan.

Another effective means of communicating NS safety policy is the **Quarterly Safety Contact**. NS supervisors make and record a personal contact with each employee in their work unit regarding safety at least once each calendar quarter. This affords an excellent opportunity for both parties to share their concerns and establishes positive reinforcement of mutual safety goals.

The last two years have seen a renewed emphasis on the quantity and quality of **Job Briefings** on Norfolk Southern. Strengthening these protocols has been of significant importance to our safety process. Once thought to be the province of the Engineering Department, job briefings designed to ensure that all members of a work environment understand the tasks to be performed, each other's responsibilities, and the potential hazards that might exist are now required by NS safety rules whenever: (1) work begins; (2) work changes; (3) work becomes confusing, or new tasks are started, or, (4) a rule violation is observed. Many locations on our system have evolved to practice "voluntary safety," that is, participation in the process just because it's the right thing to do. Job briefings and participation have been brought to a level where we are each other's brothers and sisters' keepers, even if there is no rule or policy that requires it.

## IV. EMPLOYEE INJURIES

### A. Background

At the risk of being redundant, any discussion of injuries on Norfolk Southern – or even about Norfolk Southern – must start with the reminder that “All injuries can be prevented.”<sup>1</sup> That being said, I understand that one focus of this Committee is to address reports that when a railroad employee is injured he or she may not receive prompt medical care, or is alleged to have been pressured by railroad supervisors to make sure the injury does not qualify for mandatory reporting to the FRA.<sup>2</sup> For the record, no matter what may be said by others in today’s hearing, **this type of conduct is absolutely prohibited and will not be tolerated on Norfolk Southern!** Such conduct is a disciplinary offense.

### B. Medical Attention

Earlier today I mentioned Norfolk Southern’s “Six Point Action Plan,” calling it the keystone of our safety process. That document, issued more than ten years ago, includes very specific instructions regarding a supervisor’s primary responsibility when an employee is injured. In a separate section identified as “Medical Attention” it’s made very clear that:

**“When an employee is injured, the line supervisor’s immediate and primary concern is to ascertain the need for medical attention and obtain that attention immediately.” [Emphasis added.]**

---

<sup>1</sup> See above reference to Norfolk Southern’s “Six Point Action Plan for Safety of Operations.”

<sup>2</sup> See 49 CFR Part 225 for FRA reporting requirements.

Although an NS supervisor will often accompany the injured employee to an appropriate medical facility, the “Six Point” also makes it clear that:

**“He should not, however, go along to the examining room unless asked by the attending physician and with the consent of the employee.”**

While both of these instructions have been in place for a number of years, NS recognizes the need to emphasize and reinforce them, and has a formal process to do so. Following reports of alleged improper conduct in 2003, our Vice Presidents Transportation, Engineering, Mechanical, Safety and Labor Relations met with senior operating staff to review our compliance history, and then chaired meetings with first and mid-level operating department supervisors in two-day, off-site sessions. These are now recurring events. Supervisors are given specific instructions regarding the importance of strict adherence to NS’ Internal Control Plan and FRA regulations, specifically that they must comply with reporting requirements and avoid any act that may inhibit individuals from seeking or receiving proper medical treatment.

In April 2005, Norfolk Southern again addressed the issue of prompt medical care for injured employees by publishing a special “General Safety Information Letter,” signed by the vice presidents of our Transportation, Engineering and Mechanical departments. It left no doubt that any activity which delayed medical attention or interfered with a physician’s determinations regarding the method or extent of treatment, is a serious violation of NS policy.

Following a recent retirement-related change in senior management, this bulletin was re-issued by current officers in May, 2007.

You may hear today – as this very Committee heard on May 8, 2007 in hearings on H.R. 2095<sup>3</sup>, that one labor organization had “just learned” about an incident involving a rail employee in Michigan who sustained cuts to his back and was forced to postpone medical treatment until his supervisor arrived to conduct an interview. This should never, ever happen. But what you didn’t hear on May 8, 2007 was that the incident actually occurred more than five years ago, first aid had been administered, and the injury was promptly reported to the FRA. The reason for the supervisor’s unusual interest was an eye-witness report that the employee had falsified his description of the incident in order to avoid a rule violation. This was no excuse for delaying medical treatment. It violated NS policy and when his actions were brought to management’s attention the case was investigated personally by senior officers of the company and reports made to the FRA.

I mention this incident for two reasons. The first is that in an industry as large as railroading there may, unfortunately, be isolated instances in which a supervisor receiving reports of an employee injury fails to remember his or her primary responsibility. But when these cases are reported to this Committee, I ask that you please consider that what you are told may not be the whole story, and is certainly not

---

<sup>3</sup> Federal Railroad Safety Improvement Act of 2007

representative of today's industry, especially in the area of providing prompt medical treatment.

The second reason I raise this today is to reiterate that railroad management has zero tolerance for any delay in providing medical care. We've learned from past mistakes and I'm personally convinced the message has gotten through to all levels of supervision. Our labor organizations are not shy about letting us know if they believe an employee injury has been mishandled. Whatever complaints labor has asked us to investigate during the past several years, delay in offering and providing immediate medical care has not been among them.

### **C. Railroad Disciplinary Investigations**

The opportunity to respond to charges of an alleged failure to comply with railroad safety, general conduct, and operating rule violations is part of the "due process" guaranteed railroad employees by the Railway Labor Act. Management's responsibility to raise these charges is also an important component of any safety process. Safety rules and their enforcement are our first line of accident prevention. Employees and members of the public are safe so long as the rules are followed. Yet this Committee will be told that railroad management exercises this responsibility in such a way that it has a chilling effect on employees who have suffered work-related injuries. This is a difficult area. Often an employee injury will be the direct result of his or her own rule violation - one that may have also caused an accident with resulting injury or damage in nearby communities, company property or equipment, or co-employees. The charges are not

brought because the employee was injured, but because the resulting injury may very well have exposed unacceptable inattention to rules designed to maintain the safety of operations for all concerned.

In early 2003 Norfolk Southern listened to complaints received from our labor organizations. They told us that employees who reported on-duty injuries were being charged with rule violations as a form of harassment designed to intimidate them, or others, from reporting legitimate injuries. As I've already said, this is a violation of NS policy and will not be tolerated. Nevertheless, in order to remove any chance that this might occur, a special instruction was issued by our senior transportation officer. His instructions changed the ground rules for supervisors considering such action. As of January 20, 2003, no formal investigation related to any of the following incidents or charges may be held without his prior approval. These charges include all those that involve:

1. An employee personal injury; or,
2. Failure to provide necessary information or documentation involving a personal injury; or,
3. Falsification or misrepresentation of the facts involving a personal injury; or,
4. Rule infractions leading to a personal injury.

This mandate remains in full force and effect today, and I know from my own role in the process that it is not ignored.

#### **D. Labor – Management Collaboration**

In 2003 the United Transportation Union (UTU) engaged in a campaign seemingly designed to convince Members of Congress, the FRA, and even the general public that Norfolk Southern had failed to manage employee personal injuries responsibly and in accord with FRA regulation. While we disagreed with most (if not all) of the charges, we recognized that UTU's issues needed to be addressed. In September, 2003 Norfolk Southern's chief labor relations officer wrote to the UTU asking them to appoint a small group to meet with NS to explore ways to address the labor organization's concerns. UTU agreed. A UTU/NS task force was formed. It reviewed NS policies and procedures and made trips to field locations. NS encouraged UTU to bring to our immediate attention any instance in which it believed an employee injury had not been handled appropriately, or in accordance with NS policy. In the intervening years UTU has done so on the average of three or four times a year, communicating directly with NS' chief labor relations officer. His office conducts a thorough investigation of all available records. All supervisory officers involved in the case, and in some instances the complaining employees themselves, are interviewed personally by Norfolk Southern's Executive Vice President-Operations and Vice President-Labor Relations. Thereafter Norfolk Southern discusses the results with the UTU and sends a written summary. In many of the cases referred by the UTU Norfolk Southern determined the handling of the employee injury had been appropriate and complied with Company policy. However, where we found that it had not, appropriate discipline was assessed against our supervisory officers.

Norfolk Southern believes this process has been constructive. The UTU has told us that it does too, and that our investigations have provided thorough and honest responses to the issues we were asked to address.

## **CONCLUSION**

I have addressed issues related to employee medical care and alleged harassment or intimidation in disciplinary proceedings because these are important subjects of interest to this Committee. But Norfolk Southern's answer to charges that a climate of harassment or intimidation exists on our railroad is that if it ever did, it does not now, and has not for many years. Procedures are in place to assure that supervisors at every level understand that an employee's health and safety is everyone's first priority. And this message is getting through. There is perhaps no better testament to this than the unscripted words of Norfolk Southern's 2006 Hammond Award-winning Carman, Kenny Cheek. In a video presentation made at this year's E. H. Harriman Awards ceremony, Kenny let us all know exactly how he felt about our shared obligation to put safety first at Norfolk Southern. These are his own words:

“And I told them I don't care if you are my boss or who you are, if I see you doing it wrong, I am going to come up and tell you about it. \*\*\* If they see me doing something wrong, come right over and tell me. Stop me right there, because I am not above making a slip. That's how people get hurt. For a split second, they let their guard down and something happens and if somebody sees you let your guard down, and they just turn around and walk away, then they are not a very good co-worker.”

Mr. Cheek's complete remarks were reproduced for today's hearing, and are attached. I encourage this Committee to read them in their entirety to fully appreciate

Mr. Cheek's personal commitment to safety as well as the very high regard with which he is held by his co-workers, management and agreement employees alike.

The final message I would like to leave with this Committee today is that the efforts I've outlined regarding the sharing of Norfolk Southern's critical safety message with our employees have, unquestionably, made our rail operations safer. Our safety record undeniably confirms this.

**2006 HAROLD F. HAMMOND MEMORIAL SAFETY AWARD WINNER  
KENNETH L. CHEEK  
Carmen, Norfolk Southern Corporation  
Bellevue, Ohio**

**Transcript of Hammond Ceremony Video  
Washington, DC  
May 17, 2007**

Narrator: Safety is measured in many ways; typically injuries per man-hours, but that standard only measures the result. What is more important is what it takes to achieve that result. It may be leadership or encouraging others to achieve it. Ultimately though, you make the greatest difference in that result by the influence that you have on others. In this respect, Kenny Cheek stands above the very best.

Chris Buttermore (Senior General Foreman): What makes Kenny a leader is that Kenny genuinely cares about his fellow employees and his friends and his family. He cares about safety. He sets goals for people. He helps people obtain those goals and once they obtain those goals, he'll set higher goals to achieve even more yet.

Shunte McClellan (General Foreman): What's important about Kenny and his leadership skills and how he is able to encourage other people to develop their's, is they see his level of professionalism. The respect for the work, respect for the hazards that's out there and once you see that, that person takes pride in what they are doing; it is kind of contagious. And that has influenced people to try to do a better job themselves.

Amy Stottlemire (Carman): If you are doing something wrong, Kenny will correct you. And we have a thing about being brother's keepers. Kenny makes you feel like part of the family. He will look out for you just like while I am like his little sister. And it's great. It's a big family.

Greg Culver (Terminal Superintendent): He will help anybody in any department and he is one of the leaders in the terminal for safety.

Jerry Weaver (Carman): You know it rubs off on people. You know, when you see one guy doing his job, you work with him, you want to get up to the same standards that he is.

Ray Smith (Carman): It doesn't matter if you are friend or foe, if you are doing something unsafe, he's going to let you know. I mean, that kind of rhymes too, friend or foe, yeah, but anyway, that's the way he is. That is the way Kenny is. He is that type of person and I respect him for that. He and I have tangled over stuff like that a few times. He has told me stuff that I didn't like, but he was right and he's helped keep me out of trouble and keep me safe.

Craig Fisher (Carman): I know it influences myself, being around Kenny. Knowing that...you're always in the back of your mind, knowing that...Kenny is on that safety committee and he is always going to bring things up when he sees you

doing something wrong; he is going to stop you in your work and he's going to want you to do it the right way. He is going to explain it to you that way.

Joseph O'Brien (Carman): When I first came here, he was talking to me and he said, "Where did you come from Joey?" I said, "I came from Mingo Junction." He said, "Well, how did you do this type of job down there" and I said, "Well down in Mingo this is how we did it" He said, "Well to start out with, number one, you are at Bellevue now. This is how it is done here and don't let me see you doing it wrong again." Right at first, it sort of blew my mind. You know, I said, well boy, this guy gets right to the point. I have always looked up to him and he's always been that way ever since and it just hit home base. Everybody says is Kenny Cheek a good, safe worker. I said, if you want to learn something, you work with Kenny Cheek and you will know at the end of the day exactly how to do it the correct way, I guarantee ya.

Neil Burras (Conductor): It is the safety mind set that amazes me with him. Because even if there wasn't a safety rule book, I can guarantee you this; he would have evoked his own safety rules. I mean, he is just the kind of guy that, you know, his mind set is safe. I mean, it really is.

Terry Patrick (Track Supervisor): Kenny is the kind of person that walks the walk and he leads by example. And a lot of things, Kenny does a lot of little things that go unrecognized and what I mean by that, if he comes to something minor he can handle himself, he will go ahead and handle it.

Steve Cloud (Clerk): His leadership qualities make a ripple effect that is carried on. It affects other people in a positive way, by example. And the best way to lead is by example.

Narrator: Kenny's leadership spills over into the community; coaching kids to reach for the stars, to achieve what they think is impossible.

Nick Zartman (Carman – Former Student Athlete): When Kenny was a coach, whether he was at school or now that I am out of school and I am at work and I work with him, he still coaches you along and shows you discipline and what to do and what not to do. Whether you get mad at him or not, you just learn to appreciate what he's got to say and respect what he's got to say.

Kelly Skeels (Former Student Athlete): I think it has a lot to do with the fact that he just won't let you quit. I mean, he just is always there, encouraging. Like I said earlier, he is able to, you know, broaden how you look at yourself and how you see yourself. To know, ok maybe I do have the capabilities of doing something I didn't think I could ever do.

Kristen Rathburn (Current Student Athlete): A lot of it and his teachings for us in cross country is your mind set. That is all it is for us. Like, he can put as much practices,

as much hard practices, as much repeat 400's in as he can to get us physically ready, but for our race that is on a Saturday morning, it is all mental.

Mike Martin (Coach – Clyde High School): Well, Kenny is a coach. He has a great rapport with the students and it doesn't matter if the students or the athletes are the number one athlete or if they are the ones that are out there, you know, just trying to do their best. Never probably placing in a meet, never probably going to get their name in the newspaper, but I mean, he treats them all the same. He works with them, he tries to improve what they are doing and, you know, that's one thing where he has that personality that he can, you know, try to get those kids to do the best they can no matter, what level they are.

Narrator:                   The real magic behind Kenny Cheek is the way his influence grows through others.

Diana Cheek (Wife):           Kenny's involvement with safety at the railroad has made a big impact on me that I have carried it to my job at Brookwell Corporation. I am part of the safety team there. Ken is a very dedicated person and when he puts his mind to do something, he follows it through all the way in that his safety aspect with the coaching and with the kids at the high school, he just, it just comes automatic to him. They respect him for that and so the kids are careful and they like that about him.

Narrator:                    If Kenny shares with you the true reason behind his commitment to safety, you become respectfully aware that his commitment is deep and comes from the heart.

Kenny Cheek:                Work safe and don't take safety light because it is not something you should take lightly, it's too serious of a job, you know, and you owe it to yourself to work safe. I think I changed my whole outlook on safety, as far as starting to work safer than what I was back in February 8th, 1975, I had a life altering experience. My wife and I had went out to supper and we were over at a friends house playing cards. This has been 30 years ago. My son, my mother called and said your house is on fire and my son was in it and he didn't make it out. And I didn't have a safety plan and I didn't have an escape and he died. So, after that, I started taking safety a whole lot more serious. You know, you lose someone and it takes a long time to get over it. It has been 30 years, and still to talk about it, it hurts a little bit, but when I get these young kids at the railroad, and you see them doing something wrong, you don't want to have to go to their house and say hey mom or dad, your son just got killed at work. And if I see somebody doing something wrong, that can get them into trouble, they're gonna hear from me. It is gonna be in a positive way. If I have to tell them more than once, it is not going to be in a positive way, because I don't believe that you should have to tell them more than once if they are putting their life in danger. They might not know it the first time, so you let them know and you tell them why you are correcting them. But the second time, we are going to the woodshed. We are going to go to the woodshed and talk about it. I have done it before. I've had to do it with young guys and old guys. And I

told them I don't care if you are my boss or who you are, if I see you doing it wrong, I am going to come up and tell you about it. Don't take it the wrong way because I don't mean it to be taken the wrong way. If they see me doing something wrong, come right over and tell me. Stop me right there, because I am not above making a slip. That's how people get hurt. For a split second, they let their guard down and something happens and if somebody sees you let your guard down, and they just turn around and walk away, then they are not a very good co-worker. That's why you'll see me probably more than anybody in the shop come over and talk to you if I see you doing something wrong. I just don't want.....it's too emotional and it's too traumatic to have to go through a funeral for one of your kids and I don't want any parent of the kids that I work with to have their parents to go through it. So that's why probably I take it a little more serious than most people do.

Narrator:                   Kenny is real. His safety is real. Kenny is uniquely dedicated to ensuring that others maintain not only their own safety, but the safety of others as well.