



Good Morning!!!

You know, construction can be a grueling industry, and stress is unavoidable. But if left unaddressed, that stress can lead to depression, anxiety, and hopelessness—and too often, this is a deadly combination.

The month of September is National Suicide Prevention Month.

You know, nobody talked about mental health in construction for a long time. No one asked crew members, “Are you depressed, anxious, or stressed about money? Is your marriage struggling? Are you drinking alone? Do you sometimes wish you were dead?”

That may sound dramatic. However, construction workers and miners are at the highest risk of suicide when you compare them to employees in any other industry. They’re one-and-a-half times more likely to take their own lives.¹ That’s not just sad—it’s devastating for the workers, their families, and us.

Around 40 million American adults deal with anxiety yearly, and 21 million have major depression.^{2,3} (That excludes kids and people with mild or moderate depression, so the numbers are higher.) Additionally, 40% of Americans said their mental health suffered negative effects due to the coronavirus pandemic.⁴

In 2020, nearly 46,000 Americans died by suicide—and 1.2 million more attempted it.⁵ Overall, suicide was the 10th leading cause of death for Americans of all age groups in 2018. (It ranked second for ages 15-34 and fourth for ages 35-54.)⁶

So regardless of who you are or what you do, mental health and wellness concern all of us. That’s especially true in the Dirt World, where people are at even higher risk.

As a good, caring leader, you want to help your employees be well and enjoy life. You want to engage in mental health awareness and suicide prevention. You’d also like to think that if one of your crew members was struggling with these issues, they’d come talk to you about it.

Yet often when someone takes their life, their employer, colleagues, and even loved ones are often shocked.

There are almost always crew members who get the news and say, "Bill? There's no way. He was the funniest guy I knew!"

The truth is, none of us truly know someone is (or isn't) okay unless we've created a caring culture where people feel safe opening up. The first step is learning why we are at higher risk for mental health struggles. Once we understand the risks, we can take steps to mitigate them.

Wolfpack, look out for one another and don't forget about yourself as well.

If you are thinking about suicide or are in need of help, there are several free resources that provide confidential support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. If you are concerned that a friend, family member or co-worker is at risk for suicide.

Call the [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#), a national network of local crisis centers that provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

For immediate help, call [1-800-273-TALK \(8255\)](#)

Text [HELLO to 741741](#). Every person is connected with a crisis counselor, who is trained to listen and offer sound advice.

Wolfpack... Out.

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