

Think Safety and Carry a Big Stick



With winter upon us, many parts of the country will experience inclement weather. The temptation to ignore rules pertaining to securing rail cars rises during periods of foul weather. It is human nature to think “it will not happen to me”. What can we do to encourage employees to secure equipment every time? One measure we can take is to make it easier for them to secure the equipment. Consider supplying a brake stick to apply and release rail car hand brakes. With a brake stick, the employee does not have to mount the equipment, which could be snow or ice covered, to apply or release a hand brake.

The brake stick was designed to reduce fall and strain injuries incurred while accessing handbrakes.

Best Practices

- Provide proper task training regarding application and release of rail car hand brake.
- Never going in between rail cars to use the brake stick
- Only tighten until the brake chain is snug
- Use the brake stick to open or close track knuckles.
- Store brake sticks in a convenient place.
- Never go between two pieces of rail equipment unless they are separated by at least 50 feet.
- Practice good communication skills to ensure everyone understands the task.



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