



GCOR 7.4 SAFETY TIP

GCOR 7.4 - Precautions for Coupling or Moving Cars or Engines

Before coupling to or moving cars or engines, verify that the cars or engines are properly secured and can be coupled and moved safely.

Make couplings at a speed of not more than 4 MPH. Stretch the slack to ensure that all couplings are made.

Discussion

- The first paragraph of GCOR 7.4 speaks to verifying not only the securement of cars or engines, but also their condition and surroundings prior to attempting a coupling.
- The second paragraph directs limiting coupling speeds to 4 mph or less to minimize the likelihood of lading and equipment damage.
- The final sentence of the second paragraph requires the stretching of couplings to ensure they are made. This portion of the rule is many times ignored, especially by less tenured employees who lack the experience to understand the importance of doing so.

If GCOR rule 7.4 is adhered to in its entirety, several of the risks involved with the coupling and moving of cars and engines are mitigated. This helps protect employees, coworkers, the public and equipment.

GCOR 7.4 in its entirety is a particularly good topic of discussion for job safety briefings and other safety-related discussions. Questions for discussion could be as follows:

- What might occur if cars or engines being coupled to are not secured?
- How can you determine if cars or engines may be coupled to and moved safely?
- Making couplings at speeds in excess of 4 mph can cause damage. Has anyone witnessed the results of making couplings at more than 4 mph? If so, what were the results?
- Does anyone have something they would like to share from their experience of not stretching couplings?