

## National Youth Safety Essay Scholarship Contest Winner

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In October of 2018, I took the OSHA 10-Hour General Industry (Healthcare) Course. Since earning my certificate on October 4th, I have been able to recognize many different hazards within my life. On an average day, I go to school then either to work or bowling practice. Between my school, my work, the bowling alley I practice at, and even my own home, I have encountered many different hazards since taking the online safety course. Before taking the course, I would have just looked the other way when seeing a hazard but now that I am more familiar, I know what to do when I see a potential hazard.

Working in retail food service, there is bound to be a few hazards no matter where you work. No business is going to be one-hundred percent hazard free all the time. Sometimes the issue may even go unnoticed for a while before someone catches it. These hazards must to be addressed as soon as possible so they can be attended to before someone gets injured. While working in the food service, I have noticed quite a few hazards. One specifically this winter, was the fact that there was not enough salt spread out on the walkways, therefore, our customers were at risk of slipping on the ice. I mentioned it to my manager who then immediately sent an employee to spread more salt on the walkways. Another issue that happens fairly often is random items blocking the main aisle ways. Before the online safety course, I never would have thought anything of the boxes or other items blocking the walkways, I would either just walk around them or move them a little bit to where I could fit through. After the class, I realized these items could be quite a fire hazard or health risk. If there was an emergency, the employees would have to take extra time to move the items out of the walkway to get through. Now when I go to work, if I see a box in a bad area, I break the box down and take the extra time to walk it out to the dumpster so that there is no risk of a hazard. Retail food establishments can be very safe, but in order for them to be safe, we employees have to take the extra few seconds to realize potential hazards and fix them before an issue arises.

Another place I see many potential hazards is at my local bowling alley. Many of these hazards I doubt the workers even notice but since I took the OSHA safety course, I can recognize them and warn the workers before something happens. While practicing there about a month ago, I slipped and fell on the lane. I assumed it was just because my footing was off or there something on my shoe. Then after I sat down, I realized the oil from the lane had soaked onto the approach area, which made it very slippery for anyone bowling on this lane. I politely told the man at the front counter who quickly got up out of his seat, grabbed some cleaning supplies and cleaned the approach right then and there. A couple weeks later at the same alley, it was a rainy day and I was getting ready for a tournament. When I walked into the player's area, I realized that there was water dripping from the ceiling and the tile floor was very slippery. I grabbed a large trash can from across the room and set it under the leaking ceiling tile. The maintenance man promptly mopped the area and put out a wet floor sign before anyone slipped and got hurt. I am at this alley about three to four times a week; I just want everyone I know there to stay safe so that's why I do my part and let them know when I see a potential hazard.

There are potential hazards everywhere we go, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and it is our job to recognize them and address them. After taking the OSHA 10-Hour General Industry (Healthcare) Course, I feel confident saying when I get a job in the healthcare field, I will be able to quickly recognize potential hazards in my workplace. I want to keep myself, my patients and my co-workers safe from possible hazards and now that I have the proper training, I will have no problem doing so. Knowing this information will help me to keep everyone around me safe and possibly allow me to live a longer life. Thank you CareerSafe for this amazing opportunity to earn a scholarship from this wonderful program. I hope to hear from you soon.