The final keynote of the 2014 NSC Congress & Expo coupled laughter with an important message: Your family depends on you to be safe at work.

Before a standing-room-only crowd for the Leadership Keynote, Dale Lesinski, vice president of DiVal Safety Equipment, spoke about the evolution of safety.

Forty years ago, children played with BB guns without wearing safety goggles, people rode around in cars without buckling up and playground surfaces were made of asphalt with no safety protection. Now, Lesinski noted, BB guns come with safety goggles and warnings, safety belt use is required by law, and protective padding is found on all playground equipment.

“We had concrete and steel,” Lesinski said. “Our kids can’t even get a sliver.” Conversely, how we view hazards in both our personal and occupational lives has moved in the opposite direction, he said. Workplace hazards are clear on the first day of work, but the perception of those hazards melts away, according to Lesinski. Because of this, people have a habit of skipping procedures in a hazardous environment, believing injuries will not happen to them.

Throughout the workday, employees should keep in mind the important people in their lives – loved ones they would not want to see get hurt, he said. Although most people think of spouses, children and grandchildren, Lesinski recommended that workers include themselves on that list.

“We’re all here working hard to take care of our families. That is it,” he said. “They’re counting on you coming home tonight.”