

Weekly Safety Meeting

Instructions

HOW-TO CONDUCT A WEEKLY SAFETY MEETING

1. Hold the meeting on the job, preferably where everyone can sit and relax.
2. Hold the meeting at the beginning of the shift, right after lunch, or after a break.
3. Supervisors do not always have to lead the meeting. Encourage other employees in your group to lead a meeting. Task an experienced employee or someone that just attended training with presenting a topic that week.
4. Encourage as much employee participation as possible, yet keep your meeting short. Ask questions about the topic to generate discussion and get employees involved.

Weekly safety meetings have proved their worth by alerting employees to workplace hazards, and by preventing accidents, illnesses and on-the-job injuries.

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AVOIDING BACK INJURIES

Back pain is one of the most common ailments for a construction worker. A study in New England which interviewed over 175 workers indicated that over 75% of the respondents reported having back pain within the last three months. Why does this matter? Because back pain will lead to less effective work and can affect the mental health of those injured.

Stretch Before Lifting

Conducting a stretch and flex before lifting or beginning the work day can increase circulation and decrease the risk of an injury. A brief 2-minute stretch is also a great idea for after breaks.

How Can We Avoid Back Pain?

Improper lifting of heavy objects is the number one reason for back pain. Workers should be discouraged from attempting to lift objects too heavy for them. While lifting always keep the load close to your body.

Holding a load farther away will create more of a load on the back which will increase risk of injury. Always lift with your legs. An easy way to remember this is to not bend at the waist to pick something up. Focus on bending and raising at the knees. At no point should the spine look rounded, the natural curvature of the back should be consistently held throughout the lift.

Twisting while lifting can quickly lead to a back injury. Focus on keeping your back straight and getting your feet pointed toward the place you will set the object down.

Maintain Good Posture

A healthy back can be maintained with proper lifting techniques and great posture throughout your day. While standing, stand with the spine erect maintaining the natural curvature of the spine keeping your head in a neutral position. When sitting, use a sturdy seat where you can keep your back upright without slouching to the side or down in the chair.

Use Proper Lifting Techniques

As well as maintaining good posture throughout the day. If something is too heavy for a worker to lift alone, ensure another worker helps them with the lift. If another worker isn't available, try to decrease the size of the load before lifting.

Back health is essential for workers to be at their best. When back health declines, work productivity declines.

Can anyone recall a time that they injured their back? How did it happen? Could it have been prevented?



Work Site Review: Hazards/Safety Suggestions

Company Name: _____ Work Site Location: _____
 Date: _____ Start Time: _____ Finish Time: _____ Foreman/Supervisor: _____

Employee Signatures: (continue on back of sheet if necessary)

(My signature attests and verifies my understanding of and agreement to comply with, all company safety policies and regulations, and that I have not suffered, experienced, or sustained any recent job-related injury or illness)

Manager/Supervisor's Signature: _____

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GOOD HOUSEKEEPING

Good housekeeping is the key to a safe work environment. Cluttered work areas can cause accidents and injuries due to trips, slips, falls, falling objects, fires, unclear emergency exits, and improperly disposed flammable materials (rags, paper, etc.). The work place must establish and maintain sufficient housekeeping practices to prevent hazardous conditions and must extend this practice according to OSHA standard requirements.

To Maintain Good Housekeeping:

In case of snow or ice, working or walking surfaces must be treated. If it is not possible to treat the walkway or work area, slip-resistant footwear is required in accordance with the OSHA standard.



- Materials must be organized and safely stored to avoid fall and trip hazards.
- Clear exit routes and routes to fire alarm boxes and fire-call locations must be maintained.
- Passages must be kept free of debris, tools, materials, electrical cords, and solid and liquid waste.
- All exits, including ladders, staircases, scaffolds, and gateways, must be free of any clutter.
- Adequate housekeeping practices for flammables and combustible substances (rags, scrap, solvents and waste) must be in place.
- Make sure your work area is clear, and always put away tools when they are not needed for job processing.
- In construction sites or alteration and repair sites. The work area, stairs, and passageways must be free of debris, nails, scraps, and combustibles.
- Containers must be provided for waste, trash, oily rags, and other disposables. All garbage must be disposed of frequently and on a regular basis.

What types of processes and procedures do you have in place to maintain great housekeeping at your facility or project? What areas can you improve the level of housekeeping?

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HAND INJURIES

Hand injuries are a part of everyday life. When you use your hands to complete tasks it is easy to rip, cut, or tear your skin. At work the risk becomes greater due to the increased use of force needed to complete tasks.

So, how are hand injuries caused?

Hand injuries can be caused by holding, grabbing, twisting, or lifting equipment or tools improperly. Also, hand injuries can be caused by encountering chemicals, tools, machines, structures, vehicles, slips, trips, and falling objects.

What is the cost of hand injuries?

Hand injuries can result in financial, emotional, and social effects that can last a lifetime. Did you know that over one third of all workplace injuries involve the hands? Also, over 70% of industrial injuries that result in partial disability are hand injuries.

How do you prevent hand injuries?

Before starting your work conduct, a thorough job safety analysis to identify the hazards that you will encounter. Once you know the hazards, put together a plan that includes the supplies, tools, and materials needed to get the project finished without incident.

What do you need to protect your hands?

- Avoid wearing rings, bracelets, or watches on the job.
- Use proper gloves that support your wrist and are appropriate for each task or temperature.
- Use cotton and fabric gloves to keep hands cleaned and protect against abrasions.
- Use rubber or plastic gloves for cleaning.
- When working with chemicals, always use proper gloves.
- Inspect hand tools or equipment before use.
- Never wear loose clothing or jewelry.

Hand injuries can be prevented with the right attitude and attention to detail. Every day you will decide if you want to work safe or take risks. What will you choose today?

Has anyone ever experienced a hand injury? If so, what was it like? How did it feel? Were you able to heal completely?



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MACHINE GUARDING

Machine guarding is on The Occupational Health and Safety Administration's radar!

Machine guarding was the ninth most cited infraction from OSHA in the year 2015. Machine guards are put in place to defend an employee against machine operation hazards. To modify or to remove a guard creates a hazardous work condition and is unacceptable. According to OSHA this is also the reason for over 18,000 amputations, lacerations, and abrasions, as well as over 800 deaths. Often people do not report or record these accidents as OSHA requires, so these numbers may be lower than how many people were injured by incorrect machine guarding.



How should I work with machine guards?

Inspect every machine guard to ensure it is firmly in place. Never under any circumstance remove a guard when using a machine. Always report missing or damaged guards. If a guard is damaged make sure to shut down the machine and have a qualified person inspect it. That guard may need to be replaced before you are able to resume operations.

Is it acceptable to remove the guard from a grinder?

Definitely not, we see this a lot when we conduct inspections. Removing the guard on a grinder is risky business. When the guard is removed there is nothing to protect you from the wheel breaking or flying particles created using the grinder. Use common sense, the guard is there for a reason. Leave the guard on the tool.

Hazards associated with guard removal or modification include:

- Open blades.
- Projectiles towards the operator.
- Possible amputation or death.
- It is an OSHA violation.
- Puts everyone in the work area at risk.

Can anyone contribute a time that machine guarding was involved in your work? Can anyone recall a near miss or accident that could've been prevented?

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