

Propel HR

NEWSLETTER

SAFETY

August 2001

Hazard Identification and Control

One important way to provide a safe working environment is through hazard identification. Only by knowing your hazards can you manage them.

INSPECTIONS

Inspections are preventative in nature. They help identify accident causes, including unsafe conditions and unsafe acts, before an accident actually occurs. For this reason, inspections are an important, integral part of every effective safety program.

To maintain a safe and healthful workplace, you need to:

1. Identify workplace hazards that exist now or that could develop in the future. Utilize the information obtained through an investigation of your company. *Propel HR* will be glad to walk through your facilities and educate employees on recognizing dangerous hazards.
2. Establish procedures to control these hazards and take action to eliminate them. Consistent and immediate corrections demonstrate management's serious concern and commitment to accident prevention.

Types of inspections:

Continuous/Ongoing

- Conducted informally by a supervisor, employees and maintenance
- Performed daily as a part of their daily routine and job responsibilities
- Commonly checked items include: housekeeping, moving parts, material handling, environmental, personal protective equipment, chemical handling and storage, fire and electrical, and worker methods and behaviors

Periodic

- Planned and formal
- Systematic, deliberate, and thorough
- Covers specific areas/aspects of an operation
- Written record of findings and corrective actions
- Evaluates your facility, operations, and actions throughout the workplace

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

- A. Work areas should be kept free of objects on the ground or floor to reduce the hazard of slips and falls
- B. Oil and grease should not be allowed to remain on walking surfaces, but should be immediately cleaned up
- C. Oily rags should be placed in closed metal containers until disposed.
- D. Passageways, ramps, and stairways should not be used for storage areas and kept clear at all times.
- E. Work areas, exits, and aisle spaces should also not be used for storage areas and should be kept clear at all times.
- F. Electrical cords should not run across walkways.
- G. Specific storage areas should be established and all materials should be stored using proper and safe storage methods. Call *Propel HR* for OSHA guidelines on proper storage.
- H. Worn or frayed carpet, open seams, and curled edges should not be permitted.
 - I. There should be no loose floor tiles or mats.
- J. Walking surfaces should be kept clear of debris, lint, dust, oil, paint or spray residue, granular materials, sand, mud, ice, and other slippery traction-robbing materials.
- K. Standing water should not be permitted on any walking surface.
- L. Adequate lighting should be provided so that employees can perform their assigned task in safety.
- M. Adequate ventilation should be provided to prevent any accumulation of noxious fumes or flammable vapors.
- N. Refuse should be removed from the building on a regular basis and stored away from the building until picked up and disposed.
- O. Accumulations of ice and snow should be removed from parking lot areas and sidewalks on a timely basis to prevent slips and falls.
- P. Exterior sidewalks and parking areas should be provided with adequate illumination.
- Q. All building exits should be properly marked and a means of emergency lighting should be provided within the building.
- R. Boiler rooms, utility rooms, and other similar type rooms should not be used for the storage of combustible materials. Combustible materials could fall or be tipped over and come into contact with a water heater or boiler flame.
- S. Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) should be stored in an easily accessible area for all employees. MSDSs must be on file for every material that is used in your company's operations.

3 Easy Steps To Manage Hazards

1. Identify hazards.

A. Structured brainstorming.

Form a safety committee.

Committees can consist of employees, supervisors, and safety managers or a combination of the above.

The committee should identify hazards associated with activities, identify their causes and consequences; identify safeguards; develop actions to eliminate, control and manage the hazards.

B. Past Experience and Accident Histories.

C. Fail All. Study all equipment and determine their likelihood and consequences of failure.

2. Understand each hazard's significance and take action.

3. Continuous management of hazards.

Once you have identified your hazards and understood their potential likelihood and severity, it is possible to put in place measures and safeguards to ensure that you are managing and controlling your hazards in an appropriate manner.

If you have any questions concerning safety programs, inspections, or hazard control, please contact *Propel HR* at (864) 271-7611 or (800) 446-6567.