

Workplace Safety Group

July 2009

Monthly News e-Letter

Workplace Violence Prevention

Workplace Violence is any attempted or actual physical force in the workplace that causes or could cause physical injury.

This course meets OSHA requirements including information on the proposed "Bill 168". Upon completion you will be able to understand and better respond to workplace violence and harassment.

4 hour

**On-Site at your location
In-Class at our training
centre**



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ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION-IT'S ABOUT PREVENTION, NOT BLAME

While the intent of bringing this monthly newsletter is prevention of workplace accidents, the reality is that they do occur. When this happens you have an obligation to report what happened, **not to lay blame but to find the root cause of the accident to prevent its' recurrence.**

The sooner, after an accident or near miss, an investigation is begun the more accurate the information that is reported. Individuals or team members responsible for gathering information should be prepared with pencils, paper, cameras and measuring tapes, all tools to assist in the information documentation.

When looking into the cause of an accident there are seven categories which provide questions that help assess a cause.

1. Work procedure-task at the time of the accident
 - a. Was a safe work procedure used?
 - b. Did conditions change that altered the normal procedure?
 - c. Were appropriate tools & materials available? Used?
 - d. Were safety devices e.g. lockouts functioning properly?

2. Equipment-causes resulting from equipment & materials used
 - a. Was there equipment failure? Why? How?
 - b. Was equipment poorly designed? Substandard?
 - c. Were other substances e.g. chemicals involved?
 - d. Were these substances clearly marked?
 - e. Were alternatives available?
 - f. Should appropriate PPE (personal protective equipment) have been used?
 - g. Were users of PPE trained to use it correctly?

Questions, Concerns, Comments?
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SUMMER WHMIS SALE

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or
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3. Physical Surroundings-Environment
 - a. Were weather conditions a factor?
 - b. Was poor housekeeping a factor?
 - c. Was temperature a factor?
 - d. Was noise or inadequate lighting a factor?
 - e. Was the atmosphere, e.g. gases, fumes, hazardous?
4. Personnel-Workers
 - a. Were workers experienced?
 - b. Did they have appropriate training?
 - c. Were they physically able to do the work required? Tired? Stressed?
5. Management-role or presence of supervisors or higher management in the accident
 - a. Were safety regulations, procedures & orientation communicated and understood by workers?
 - b. Were these enforced?
 - c. Were workers trained for that work?
 - d. Had hazards been identified? Addressed? Corrected?
 - e. Was equipment inspected, maintained & serviced regularly?
6. Accident Site-physical evidence changes or disappears quickly and should be recorded as soon as possible. Investigators should note the following:
 - a. Positions of injured workers
 - b. Equipment, materials or chemicals in use at the time of accident
 - c. Safety devices in use-position of guarding & controls
 - d. Equipment damage
 - e. General state of housekeeping in the area
 - f. Weather conditions
 - g. Lighting and noise levels
 - h. Time of day

Photos, measurement and sketches all help to clarify and validate written reports.
7. Witnesses-first-hand accounts of what happened through open ended questions that require more than YES or NO answers
 - a. Where were you at the time of the accident?
 - b. What were you doing at the time of the accident?
 - c. What did you see and hear?
 - d. What were the environmental conditions like-weather, lighting, noise level?
 - e. What was the injured worker doing?
 - f. Describe what do you think happened?

Each of these categories asks crucial questions to get to the root cause of an accident or near miss. Investigators should refrain from forming opinions, offering comments and most importantly laying blame. Remember, it is the facts that are important in preventing future, similar events from occurring.