

Bite Size Safety Topics

Following a safety meeting, an employee will sometimes remark, "What can I do about accident prevention? I just work here." It is obvious though, that since safe, or unsafe, conditions and practices occur at the employee level, there must be a lot the employee can do about accident prevention. In fact, the employee has almost total control of safety procedures in an organization, and can take the following actions to promote safety.

Accept accident prevention as part of your daily duties, and as a personal challenge. You can't pass the buck and leave it to the other fellow.

Report unsafe working conditions. If you see an unsafe working condition, report it promptly to your supervisor.

Avoid horseplay. Discourage others from playing practical jokes.

Follow instructions. Stick to safe, approved methods, and do the job the right way. Your supervisor has considered beforehand the best, and safest way to undertake the job. Follow his plan.

Make suggestions. Develop an interest in your work and study your job. Find out how your work ties in with the work of others. Try to improve methods, quality, and production, and you will also improve safety. Discuss your ideas with your supervisor.

Keep your work area neat and orderly. Don't let unnecessary trash, materials, and equipment accumulate. Maintain a safe place to work.

Dress for the job. Dressing safely will help you work safely. Leave off rings, wear appropriate shoes; don't wear oil-soaked or extra-loose clothing; dress cool in summer, and warm in winter.

Want a running list of safe work practices? Here are some elementary ideas:

- Wear clothing suitable for the weather, and your work. Torn or loose clothing, cuffs, and neckwear, are hazardous.
- Wear approved safety footwear suitable for your trade...in good condition.
- Use gloves, aprons or other suitable skin protection, when handling rough materials, chemicals, hot or cold objects. Replace gloves, if worn.
- Jewelry (rings, bracelets, neck chains, etc.) should not be worn.
- Special safety equipment is often provided for your protection. Use it when required. Keep it in good condition, and report any loss or damage immediately.
- In or near old construction, locate gas, power and water sources before starting work. Contact utility companies.
- "No Smoking" signs stand guard near fire dangers. Obey them--always.
- Know location and use of fire extinguishing equipment, and how to give a fire alarm.
- Flammable liquid containers should be clearly labeled and stored in a protected, separate area.
- Flammable liquids should be used only in small amounts in approved safety cans.
- Do not refuel a hot or running engine. Clean up spills before starting.

- Do not block aisles, traffic lanes or fire exits.
- Have safe access to work areas--the safe way is the right way.
- Avoid shortcuts--use ramps, stairs, walkways, ladders, etc.
- Properly brace or shore excavation side wall if it is not sloped.
- Place excavation spoil pile far enough away to avoid load strain on walls. Remove surface rocks that could fall in.
- Do not permit vehicles to be too close to the edge of the cut.
- Bend knees and keep back nearly straight when lifting. Leg muscles, not your back, should do the work.
- Get help with heavy or bulky materials to avoid dropping load or getting thrown off balance.
- Have just one person give commands when team-lifting big loads.
- Work with care and good judgement at all times to avoid accidents, whether or not a specific rule is contained in your company's safety guidelines.
- Give your wholehearted support to safety activities. Preventing an accident depends mostly on you.

These safety tips sound so simple that it almost insults your intelligence to read or listen to them. But, they are very important to your daily safety habits. Learn them and follow them.