

2024-06-24 TBT Workplace Inspections

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Workplace inspections are a basic necessity of any safety program. These inspections should be done prior to the start of work as well as periodically throughout the shift and at the end of the work task. Workplace inspections serve the purpose of identifying any hazards in a work area. After hazards are identified, they need to be corrected before work proceeds or continues. There can always be additional hazards present in any work area that were not planned for.

Hazards in the Work Area

Objects, equipment, people, or even animals find their way into work areas disrupting the work and creating additional hazards. Elimination of hazards is the most effective way to avoid injuries and property damage incidents. It is important to remove any unnecessary people, items, or equipment prior to the start of a work task.

By removing unnecessary personnel from a work area, there are fewer people that have the chance to interfere with the work or be in the line of fire if something were to go wrong. Objects that are not needed in the area create trip hazards or can be struck by moving equipment and should be moved as well.

Biological hazards such as insects or wildlife in work areas can pose many hazards to workers. Insects such as ticks or spiders can carry disease or poison that can affect an individual for years. Insects and wildlife can also distract employees from their work which could cause an injury.

Inspection Focuses

There are many other hazards that can affect a work area. Some of the common items you should look for during a workplace inspection include fire hazards, faulty equipment, broken tools, housekeeping issues, missing equipment guards, missing railings, electrical cord and outlet problems, sharp objects, and missing labels. These are just a few examples- think of hazards unique to your work tasks and work areas.

Summary

There can be a variety of issues in any single work area. It is important to take the time to thoroughly check your work area for hazards and take the steps to mitigate them. Eliminate as many hazards as you can before relying on a less efficient control to protect yourself, such as PPE.

Ask yourself these important questions:

-What are items you look for during your workplace inspections?

-What do you do if you find a problem in your work area during an inspection?

-What is a hazard you discovered while conducting a workplace inspection?

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