

INTRODUCTION

While your employer has a legal obligation to minimize or eliminate exposure to hazards in the workplace, you and your coworkers also have a responsibility for personal and team safety while at work. This lesson will cover employee responsibilities, safety procedures and policies, reporting, personal protective equipment, housekeeping, stop work authority, and emergencies.

**SAFETY
IS EVERYBODY'S
RESPONSIBILITY!**

EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES

While supervisors and management have their roles to play in the safety of the workplace, you and coworkers also have a responsibility to look after your safety and the safety of others. These personal responsibilities include:

Safety procedures and policies

Become familiar with the specific safety procedures and policies for your company. This includes policies and procedures that include:

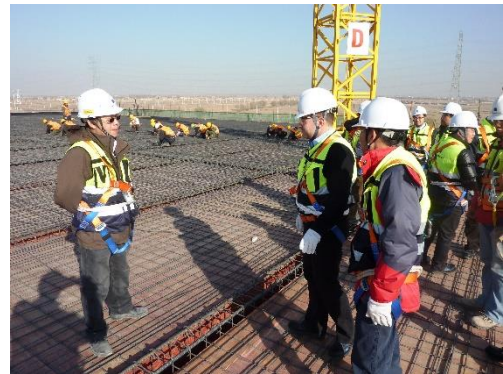
- Mechanical equipment
- Hand and power tools
- Chemical use
- Material handling
- Lifting
- Electrical equipment

You should follow all company safety policies and procedures as they are provided to you. If you have questions regarding a specific policy or procedure, you should speak with your supervisor for clarification.

Safety Training

As part of the safety policies and procedures, companies will often hold safety training. Whether safety training sessions are held once a week, every ten days, once a month, or once a year will depend on your company and the industry that you work in.

You should attend all scheduled safety training. Safety training can provide you with information on hazards associated with job tasks, tools, or equipment. It can offer safety practices that you can use to reduce or eliminate your chances of getting injured. If you have questions regarding topics brought up in training, please speak with your supervisor.



If you were absent from training, you should speak with your supervisor to see if you can get copies of training material or see about make-up training.

Hazards

Become familiar with hazards that are common in your workplace. Hazards are most often covered in safety training meetings or materials. Additionally, you should be aware of your surroundings and immediately notify your supervisor or manager if you notice an unsafe situation. The following are unsafe situations you may encounter:

- Slipping, tripping, or falling hazards
- Missing or modified guards or other safety devices
- Improper storage of chemicals, tools, or materials
- Seeing coworkers not wearing or improperly wearing personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Damaged tools or equipment



Additionally, when working with chemicals, you should read and become familiar with the manufacturer-provided safety data sheet (SDS). The SDS will inform you about hazards that are associated with the chemical or chemicals you are using. If you have questions regarding the SDS or where they are located, please speak with your supervisor.

Personal Protective Equipment

Your employer may provide you and your coworkers with personal protective equipment (PPE). PPE will not protect you if you do not wear it or wear it improperly. When provided with PPE, you should:

- Inspect the PPE before putting it on.
- Turn in damaged or worn items so they can be replaced.
- Make sure that the PPE fits appropriately.
- Care for and store PPE by following the manufacturer's instructions and your company policies.

Guards

In addition to PPE, tools, machines, and pieces of equipment may come with manufacturer-provided guards or have after-market guards installed. These guards should NOT be removed or modified.

Stop Work Authority

If your company has a stop-work authority policy implemented as part of their safety policies and procedures, you should follow that policy. A stop-work authority policy gives all employees the right to stop work if they notice an unsafe condition or situation. If you have questions about your company's stop-work authority policy, please speak with your supervisor.

Reporting

You and your coworkers have a responsibility to report certain things in the workplace. To help maintain a safe work environment, you should report the following to either a supervisor or a member of management:

- Identified hazards
- Damaged or worn PPE
- Damaged tools and equipment
- Missing or modified guards
- Injuries or accidents that occur in the workplace
- Any other unsafe working condition



EMPLOYEE SAFETY RESPONSIBILITIES

Failure to report one or more of the mentioned conditions could expose you or your coworkers to injury. It could be a violation of your company's safety policies and procedures. If you are unsure how to report hazards, injuries, or other conditions, please speak with your supervisor.

Safety Ideas

You can also contribute to the safety of your workplace by speaking with managers and supervisors about safety ideas that you have. Even if safety policies and procedures are in place and followed, there may be other ways to perform a job or task that reduces or eliminates a hazard.

Ideas can be shared during safety meetings, training, anonymously, in writing, and more. If you have questions about bringing safety ideas to your company, please speak with your supervisor.

Emergencies

Even with the best practices, accidents and emergencies can still occur. To help you be prepared for such situations, you should become familiar with your company's Emergency Action Plan (EAP). The EAP covers things like evacuations, natural disasters, chemical spills, and so on.

You should also become familiar with the location of all emergency exits located within your workplace. You should follow your company's EAP when an emergency occurs. If you have questions about your company's EAP, please speak with your supervisor.

CONCLUSION

To review, in addition to the safety required of employers, you and your coworkers have a personal responsibility for a safe workplace. Personal responsibilities are becoming familiar with specific policies and procedures, attending training, and being aware of hazards and how to avoid them. It also includes reporting unsafe working conditions and offering ideas on improving safety in the work environment. If you have any questions or concerns about your workplace, please speak with your supervisor.