

Safety & Health Training: Workplace Hazards

Workplace hazards pose a risk to your workforce and have the potential to result in injury or illness. Providing training on workplace hazards equips your employees with the knowledge to identify hazards and hazardous conditions at your workplace and in the jobs they perform, and how to protect themselves against these hazards.

Before training your employees on workplace hazards, you first need to know the possible hazards at your workplace. You can accomplish this awareness through your hazard identification process. You can then use this information to determine training needs related to workplace hazards and develop training information and educational content for your workforce.

This one pager summarizes ways to accomplish hazard identification at your organization and provides ideas for educating and training your workforce on workplace hazards.



Image retrieved from Microsoft Creative Commons

⚠️ HAZARD ⚠️

Anything, by condition or behavior, with the potential to cause injury, adverse health effects, or damage to property or environment

HAZARD IDENTIFICATION

Hazard identification is a process which involves the recognition, evaluation, documentation, and prioritization of hazards for correction. Use this process to identify where and what types of hazards may occur. Use a team approach, including people both familiar and unfamiliar with the work area (to gain different perspectives) and document your findings.

Organizations commonly accomplish hazard identification through:

- Utilization of a hazard reporting program and review of employee concerns
- Scheduled and unscheduled inspections (e.g., annual safety & health (S&H) office inspections, quarterly routine self-inspections, leadership walkthroughs, on-the-spot inspections)
- The design, planning, and implementation phases of new construction or renovation projects
- Analysis of process, equipment, and machinery changes
- Routine and non-routine task analysis (e.g., job hazard analysis, activity work analysis)
- Industrial hygiene sampling
- Pre-work checks (e.g., looking at equipment set up and the surrounding work environment)
- Documentation review (e.g., safety data sheets, manufacturer operating instructions and manuals)
- Stressing awareness and reporting of sudden workplace changes or abnormal conditions
- Investigations, including near-misses and a review of lessons learned.

EDUCATION & TRAINING TOPICS

Your organization must ensure managers, supervisors, non-supervisory employees, and contractors understand the possible hazards and hazardous conditions in your workplace and in the tasks they perform. Use your list of possible workplace hazards and the information collected from your hazard identification process to help create your training. Tailor the training to your organization. Include general work-related hazards applying to the whole organization, as well as those applicable to specific areas, processes, and tasks within your organization.

Consider educating your workforce on the following topics:

Definition of a Hazard and Unsafe Conditions and Behaviors	Processes in Place to Identify Hazards ¹	General Work-Related Hazards	Hazards Specific to Work Areas, Process, and Tasks
Hazard Reporting Process	Hazard Controls and Personal Protective Equipment ²	Existing Safe Work Procedures	Use of Safe Work Practices

1. Examples include job hazard analysis, routine self-inspections, and S&H office inspections.

2. Inclusion of this topic helps employee evaluate if hazards are appropriately controlled

DELIVERY OF EDUCATION & TRAINING

The method(s) used to train your workforce on workplace hazards can vary – it all depends on what works best for your organization. Organizations generally use a combination of methods to communicate workplace hazards.

Ideas to educate and train your workforce on workplace hazards include:

- Formal presentation and discussion on general work-related hazards
- Site-specific meeting and discussion on area-, process-, and task-specific hazards
- Safety meetings and morning pre-job briefings
- Safety and health (S&H) newsletters
- Contractor briefings
- Integration into other S&H trainings
- Workplace hazard-related activities during organizational events.



Image retrieved from Microsoft Creative Commons

In any case, document the completion of any education and training provided to your workforce. Periodically revisit training information to make sure it is up-to-date with results from your hazard identification process. Continue to think of new ways to educate your workforce on workplace hazards, especially if previous methods weren't very effective.

For additional information on the SMCX's services, please visit the SMCX-hosted website at: <https://www.smscx.org/>.