

Safety & Health Training: Workplace Hazards

Workplace hazards pose a risk to your workforce and have the potential to result in injury or illness. Providing hazard recognition training equips your employees with the knowledge needed to identify hazards and hazardous conditions so you can eliminate them before an incident occurs. Actively involving your workforce in hazard recognition helps employees better understand the hazards they may be exposed to on a day-to-day basis. This one pager provides ideas for educating your workforce on workplace hazards.

HAZARD IDENTIFICATION

A hazard identification process identifies, evaluates, and prioritizes hazards. Organizations commonly accomplish hazard identification through a variety of processes, such as:

- Utilization of a hazard reporting program
- Scheduled and unscheduled inspections (e.g., annual safety & health (S&H) office inspections, quarterly routine self-inspections, leadership walkthroughs, S&H committee on-the-spot inspections)
- Throughout the design, planning, and implementation phases of new or revised processes, procedures, equipment, or machinery (e.g., baseline S&H assessments, management of change)
- In routine and non-routine task analysis (e.g., job hazard analysis, activity work analysis)
- Before work, looking at equipment set up and the surrounding work environment
- During work, staying cognizant of sudden workplace changes or abnormal conditions
- When conducting incident investigations (including near-misses).



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HAZARD

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

Steps to Consider in Your Hazard Recognition Process

Steps taken from Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)

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- Collect existing information about workplace hazards
 - Inspect the workplace for safety hazards
 - Identify health hazards
 - Conduct incident investigations
 - Identify hazards associated with emergency and non-routine situations
 - Characterize the nature of identified hazards
 - Determine interim control measures to use
 - Prioritize hazards for control

One root cause of workplace incidents is the failure to identify or recognize hazards that are present, or that could have been anticipated.
—OSHA

The goal of hazard identification is to find and record hazards in the workplace. Identify workplace hazards prior to determining training needs. Use a team approach, including people both familiar and unfamiliar with the work area (to gain different perspectives) and document your findings.

EDUCATION & TRAINING TOPICS

Your organization must ensure managers, supervisors, non-supervisory employees, and contractors can recognize hazards and hazardous conditions in your workplace and in the tasks they perform.

If you plan to conduct hazard recognition training in-house, evaluate your workplace hazards beforehand and tailor your training around general work-related hazards and those specific to assigned jobs. Consider educating your workforce on the following topics:



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HAZARD RECOGNITION

IDENTIFYING AND AVOIDING RISK

Definition of a Hazard	Definition and Examples of Unsafe Conditions and Behaviors	General Work-Related Hazards	Hazards Specific to Assigned Work Areas
Processes in Place to Identify Hazards ¹	Concepts and Techniques for Controlling Hazards ²	Awareness of Hazards During a Change in Facilities, Equipment, Processes, Materials, and Work Environment	When and How to Wear Required Personal Protective Equipment
Hazard Reporting Process	Existing Safe Work Procedures	Importance and Use of Hierarchy of Controls	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.

EXISTING RESOURCES

You can use various resources to support your training needs:

Service/Agency Hazard Recognition Training Programs	Manufacturer Operating Instructions and Manuals	Trade or Safety Associations (e.g., NFPA, NSC, ASSP)
OSHA 10-hour training	OSHA 30-hour training	OSHA Hazard Identification Training Tool

NFPA = National Fire Protection Association

NSC = National Safety Council

ASSP = American Society of Safety Professionals

You can also use information, documents, and images from within your own organization to create site-specific hazard recognition training, as needed:

Safety Data Sheets	Industrial Hygiene Sampling Results	Reported Hazards and Employee Concerns
Hazard Analysis Results	Inspection Findings	Mishap Investigation Findings

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