

Construction Safety Stand-Down

STOP. **REASSESS**
RISK. **RESET.**

Information sheet

For most of us the construction season is now well underway. The season thus far has brought a number of serious incidents. Take some time to STOP and look at your own safety programs, right now, before something serious happens at your worksite. Some of the things you may want to consider are outlined below.

Reassess Hazards

Work activity is continuously changing on a construction site and with this comes a change in hazards. When something changes, hazards must be reassessed and controls considered. Whether this be mid project, mid job or mid task.

- Are new activities taking place at the worksite?
- Does the current hazard assessment take in consideration the real and potential hazards that exist right now?
- Is a new hazard assessment warranted?
- Are the previously identified controls still in place and are they effective?
- Are hazards and controls regularly reviewed with workers?



Hazard Reporting

Everyone at the workplace has a responsibility to report hazards. Identifying hazards before they cause damage or harm, is the key to injury prevention.

- Is there a formalized process for workers to report hazards? A formal hazard reporting procedure ensures that hazards do not get lost in the shuffle.
- Are workers encouraged to take ownership of hazards? If a worker sees something unsafe and it is in his/her ability to correct it, they must act. If it is not within his/her ability to immediately control, he/she should make everyone in the area aware of the hazard, implement temporary controls if possible, and immediately report the hazard to his/her supervisor.
- Are hazards documented, assigned to an individual to follow up and monitored to ensure that they have been addressed?
- Are there any identified hazards at the workplace that have not been controlled?



Tools/Equipment

We rely on tools and equipment to get our work completed. Over time they can become



worn, and ultimately create a hazard.

- Are the right tools/equipment for the job being used?
- Are tools and equipment being regularly inspected and is maintenance being conducted in accordance with established standards? Maintenance standards are generally outlined by the manufacturer in the product manual and OHS Regulations require that these be followed.
- Where necessary, have workers been trained to use tools and equipment safely?

Training

To help prevent injuries and illness at the workplace, workers must be properly trained to do their jobs safely.

- Have workers received the necessary training? This includes safety training courses, training to use tools and equipment safely, training on safe work practices and job procedures, job specific training etc.
- Are training certificates current and do they meet the provincial standards, where a standard has been identified?
- Has a supervisor deemed workers "competent"? It is important to recognize that training does not equal competency. Training ensures that a worker received the necessary information to do the job safely; competency means that they have demonstrated their ability to apply the training in a particular situation.



Workplace Inspections

Workplace inspections must be conducted regularly at all workplaces to assist in identifying new or previously identified hazards and to ensure that established controls are still in place and continue to be effective.

- Are inspections being conducted frequently enough? The more activity at a worksite, the more frequently inspections should be conducted.
- Are workers involved in inspections? Are they being asked for feedback or asked if they have any health and safety concerns?
- Is the OHS Committee/WHS Representative participating in the inspections?
- Are inspections being effective in identifying hazards, or are they just a paper exercise? While the aim of a safety program is to have zero uncontrolled hazards in the workplace, the goal of an inspection is to identify any new or overlooked hazards so that they can be addressed.
- Are buildings, excavations, structures, machinery, equipment, workplaces and work practices being considered during inspections?
- Are hazards that have been identified during an inspection being communicated your workers?
- Is there a system to ensure that all hazards identified are followed up to correction.



Emergency Plans

While we strive to prevent emergency situations at the workplace through effective hazard controls, it is important to have a response plan, in the event controls fail. Potential emergencies can be identified by reviewing the company's hazard assessments.

- Is the emergency plan still relevant? If the hazards have changed at the worksite, the potential emergencies may have also changed.



- If the layout of your site has changed, your emergency plan may need to be updated.
- Are there adequate first aiders and first aid supplies?
- Have emergency drills been conducted?

Incident Reporting and Investigation

A near miss is a gift, one that gives you the ability to correct the issue before someone is injured or damage occurs.

- Are all workers aware of their responsibility to report all hazardous incidents, whether or not they result in loss?
- Is there a formal process for hazard reporting?
- Are all incidents being investigated to the degree warranted? A serious near miss is just as important to investigate as an incident resulting in injury.
- Have those individuals responsible for conducting investigations been adequately trained?
- Are investigations truly getting to the "root cause" of the incident?
- Are investigation reports followed up to ensure that recommended controls are implemented?
- Are "lessons learned" communicated to workers?
- Have incident reports been reviewed to identify trends? Reviewing all incidents on a regular basis to identify common themes such as time of day, age of worker, years of experience, type of injury, work activity, work area, department, etc. can allow you to focus your energy and resources in the most effective manner.

