

PLANNING AHEAD – ASSESSING RISK

February 21, 2017

An important thing to do in any situation is to notice the conditions in which you are working and consider the potential for what could go wrong. Then plan ahead. Know ahead of time what conditions will determine when you will stop the job and then stick to that plan. From someone working in a manufacturing plant to someone driving home, you need to assess the potential risks, what you will do to avoid them and what you will do if they become too prevalent.

Predict problems and then take necessary actions to eliminate or minimize the problem. Use the **SAFE** module to help you plan for safety.

Spot Hazards

Both employers and employees need to regularly check for hazards. Procedures should be put in place to have this done on a regular basis. By involving your workers in the process of identifying hazards and developing safety solutions, they will be more committed to making the solution work. Have your workers inspect and identify hazards in the workplace along with you.

Asses Risk

Risk concerns the expected value of results of a situation or event. The value of those results may be positive or negative. In our industry, the measure of risk can be rated as high, medium or low. Once the risk has been assessed, through your regular safety checks, you can determine whether to take immediate action of a hazard or identify those that can be monitored and fixed at a later time. Regular assessment can help with budgeting time and resources for immediate or future repairs.

Find Safer Ways

Once the hazard has been spotted and the risk assessed, you can now implement ways or develop controls to reduce the risk. If you are able to control a hazard at its source, do so. This will ensure you eliminate the risk from the workplace and it will help you work safely. Controlling a hazard at its source could require substitution of a material with non-hazardous ones, isolation of hazards, addition of safety features to existing equipment, redesign of the work processes, or purchase of new equipment. If the hazard cannot be removed or controlled, personal protective equipment (PPE) should be used as the last line of defense. Often times, the safer way may be a combination of controls.

Everyday

Perform regular safety checks on a daily basis. Once appropriate measures have been taken to rectify a safety hazard, monitor the situation and inspect it regularly. Make sure that the solutions used are working and not creating any further risk.

Safety must be everyone's top priority. Make changes now for better outcomes tomorrow.

An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.