

Worksite: _____ Instructor: _____ Date/Time: _____

Topic C033: Hazard Assessment

Introduction: A workplace hazard poses potential for harm. Workplace injuries and illnesses can be prevented by looking at workplace operations, establishing proper job procedures, and ensuring that all employees are trained properly. Identifying hazards and eliminating or controlling them as early as possible will help prevent injuries and illnesses. A hazard assessment or job hazard analysis is a technique that focuses on identifying hazards before they occur. Hazard assessment focuses on the relationship between the worker, the task, the tools, and the work environment.

A job hazard analysis can be conducted on virtually any area of the workplace with priority going to the following types of jobs:

- Operations with the highest injury or illness rates
- Tasks with the potential to cause severe or disabling injuries or illness
- Procedures complex enough to require written instructions
- Situations in which one simple human error could lead to a severe accident or injury
- Jobs that are new to the operation or have undergone changes in processes and procedures

Involving employees in the analysis process will help minimize oversights, ensure a quality analysis, and get all personnel to “buy in” to the solutions.

Involve all employees: It is very important to involve employees in the hazard analysis process. Workers have a unique understanding of their job, and this knowledge is invaluable for finding hazards. Involving employees will help minimize oversights, ensure a quality analysis, and get all personnel to “buy in” to the solutions.

Conduct a preliminary job review of the known existing hazards in the current work surroundings and ways to eliminate or control those hazards.

Review the workplace history of accidents and occupational illnesses that needed treatment, losses that required repair or replacement, and any “near misses” (events in which an accident or loss did not occur, but could have). These events are indicators that the existing hazard controls (if any) may not be adequate and deserve more scrutiny.

Immediate action must be taken to protect workers if any hazards exist that pose an immediate danger to life or health. A job hazard analysis is an exercise in detective work with the goal being to discover what could go wrong, what the consequences would be, how it could arise, whether there are additional contributing factors, and how likely it is that the hazard will occur.

To make the job hazard analysis useful, document the answers to these questions in a consistent manner. Describing a hazard in this way helps to ensure that efforts to eliminate the hazard and implement hazard controls target the most important contributors to the hazard. Good hazard scenarios describe where it is happening, to whom or what it is happening, what precipitates the hazard, what the outcome of the hazard would be, and any other contributing factors.

Hazard Control Measures: Information obtained from a job hazard analysis is useless unless hazard control measures recommended in the assessment/analysis are incorporated into the tasks. Supervisors should recognize that not all hazard controls are equal, and some are more effective than others at reducing the risk. The order of hazard control precedence is: Engineering Controls, Administration Controls, and Personal Protective Equipment.

Use of one hazard control method over another higher in the control precedence may be appropriate for providing interim protection until the hazard is permanently removed. In reality, if the hazard cannot be eliminated entirely, the adopted control measures will likely be a combination of all three items instituted simultaneously.

Conclusion: Rarely is a hazard a simple case of one singular cause resulting in one singular effect. More frequently, many contributing factors tend to line up in a certain way to create the hazard. If there have been “near-misses” or actual accident cases, then the likelihood of a recurrence would be considered high.

Regular weekly review of the workplace hazard assessment/job hazard analysis will ensure that it remains current and continues to help reduce workplace accidents and injuries.

Employee Attendance: (Names or signatures of personnel who are attending this meeting)

These guidelines do not supersede local, state, or federal regulations and must not be construed as a substitute for, or legal interpretation of, any OSHA regulations.