

SAFETY MEETING TOPIC

This form shall be completed and kept on file

Job Name _____ Location _____ Job No. _____
Meeting Leader _____ Title _____
Date Held _____ Place _____ Time _____
Subject of Meeting _____ SAFETY RESPONSIBILITY _____

Many years ago, safety wasn't even an after thought of most businesses. Employees were expected to work hard and watch out for their lives. If they were injured on the job, that was their problem. Very few companies allowed for an employee to recover and come back to work. Things have changed since then. Today, safety is everyone's responsibility, from the top level of management all the way through the work force.

In 1970, the Occupational Safety and Health Act was passed by congress and put into law. One of the reasons for this action was the high number of work related fatalities occurring each year. Our federal government recognized its responsibility to step in on behalf of the employee and make the employer accept his role as a provider of work place safety.

However, the Act was not intended to rest the burden squarely on one set of shoulders. Instead, it clearly states that the employer and the employee must each take responsibility for safety. Basically, we must provide a safe work place, but you have to follow safety rules as well. Of course, there is a little more to it than just that.

MANGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Our highest level of management has the ultimate responsibility for safety in the work place. They must be aware of changes in Federal requirements and set policy accordingly. Some of their basic responsibilities are:

- To provide a safe and healthful work place.
- To set safety policies.
- To provide training with regard to job safety
- To ensure compliance with safety rules

Obviously, safety has to start somewhere and that should be with our upper management. They're the ones who provide the jobs and it should be their responsibility to make sure that safety considerations have been addressed in those jobs. Because they set work rules, it only makes sense that they set the safety rules as well.

But it isn't enough just to set rules. The best rules in the world are useless if you don't know what they are. Of course knowing the rules doesn't always mean that you'll follow them. For that reason, we have the responsibility to enforce the rules in an effective manner. This may include retraining, rewards for good effort and even varying levels of discipline.

idea of how to better deal with a safety hazard, let us know. Our safety program will be better in the long run for your involvement.

INSPECTIONS

Inspections are the best way to recognize potential safety problems. As part of our safety program, we need to thoroughly inspect the work place on a regular basis. Such an inspection would entail looking for problems, hazards and unsafe work practices, from one end of our operation to the other. But a big inspection is only part of the equation. Every day that you come to work you should perform an inspection of your own area. Check your tools or equipment. Look for things that are out of place or unusual which might cause an accident. How's the housekeeping? Is there anything on the floor which you might trip or slip on. A quick check before every shift could make a big difference in whether your day is injury free or not.

CORRECTING HAZARDS

Sometimes we can correct a hazard by simply unplugging something from an overloaded circuit or wiping a spill off the floor. Other times more work might be required to take care of a problem. Knowing when to correct something and when to have someone else do it is very important. Whenever you recognize a problem that's beyond your scope of responsibility, make sure that you bring it to our attention so we can have it corrected.

TRAINING

Training is another form of communication. Through training we communicate ways in which to better do a job or ways in which jobs can be done more safely. While it is our responsibility to provide you with safety training and to know when it is required, you can help yourself by asking for information when you are unsure of a procedure or process. Also, if our training is not giving you as much information as you feel you need, you should let us know so that we can make adjustments.

DISCIPLINE

There is a right way and a wrong way to do everything. Unfortunately we don't always do things the way that we're supposed to. On some occasions we even find we've hired an employee who refuses to follow safety rules no matter what we say. The problem in both cases is that we jeopardize not only our own safety, but the safety of others as well. For that reason, failing to follow safety rules must be dealt with. Even OSHA requires that we discipline problem employees. Of course, we don't want to depend on discipline alone. WE need to recognize good behavior as well as correct the bad.