



Toolbox Talks

Spotlight on Safety



Foreman/Supervisor Commitment to Safety

To have a successful safety and health program, foremen must be actively involved. Their attitude and behavior can make or break the plan to achieve an injury-free workplace. Employee safety depends on a foreman's unconditional support and commitment to preventing accidents. Foreman must always make safety part of their everyday activities. Imagine telling the family of a worker that he/she was seriously injured or killed on a job by an accident that could have prevented it if the foreman had just taken a few minutes to address a safety issue? A safe job is a productive high-quality job that you can take pride in.

Let's take a look at what a safety "To Do" list might look like:

- ▲ Talk to new employees each day about the hazards they may encounter that day.
- ▲ Discuss safety and health issues or problems with the crew during the morning production meeting to ensure they are aware of the potential jobsite safety hazards.
- ▲ Watch for safety and health hazards when touring the areas where your crew is working. Eliminate the hazards immediately.
- ▲ Insist that workers wear their hard hats, safety glasses, and high visibility vests, and buckle their seat belts when operating equipment.
- ▲ Demonstrate through action that the company is concerned for the well being of each and every member of the crew.
- ▲ Set production priorities, but place safety at the top of the list because an unsafe job is really not a productive job.
- ▲ Investigate all accidents for cause, but remember that there is a reason employees work unsafely or are careless, so find out why and fix it.
- ▲ Observe employees for unsafe behavior. Discuss any unsafe behavior with them on the side so they are not embarrassed in front of their fellow workers. Being considerate of their feelings demonstrates not only a concern about safety in general, but also about them as individuals.
- ▲ Attend all safety meetings and learn everything about safety and health issues applicable to the type of work the crew is performing.
- ▲ Review the OSHA regulations or other safety documents for information that will ensure the jobsite is in compliance with OSHA.
- ▲ Call upon your company's safety director when necessary. His/her job is to help foremen with safety and health issues.

Overall job safety and the safety of the crew depend a lot on the foremen. The attitude, behavior and commitment that you display to safety will make a difference. The crew will follow the foreman's lead, so if he/she places safety at the top of the list, they will too!