Toolbox Talk

eComply®

Accident Prevention in the Workplace

Introduction:

Accidents are unplanned events that result in injury, illness, death, or property loss. Workplace accidents present many challenges for company owners, including health care costs, costs for employee compensation, cost for repair or replacement of damaged equipment or property, a loss of productivity, and reduced morale among workers. The best way to prevent workplace accidents is by creating a safe work environment.

Discussion Points:

- What can employers do to prevent accidents in the workplace?
- What are the hazards of my job?
- What are the company's safety and health rules?
- How can employees avoid accidents in the workplace?
- Workplace accidents are preventable; safety is everyone's responsibility.

Discussion:

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, there are more than 2.7 million nonfatal workplace injuries and illnesses, and more than 4,700 fatalities reported by private industry employers annually. The most common causes of non-fatal injuries are overexertion; slips, trips, and falls; contact with equipment; violence caused by persons or animals; and transportation accidents. Sprains, strains, and tears account for the most common non-fatal injuries, and multiple injuries with fractures account for the most common type of non-fatal injury leading to missed time from work. The most common causes of fatal accidents are transportation accidents; followed by violence and other injuries caused by persons or animals; slips, trips, and falls; contact with equipment; exposure to harmful substances or environments; and fires and explosions.

Creating a safe work environment includes developing and creating an accident prevention plan or safety plan, having a general awareness of the safety risks in the environment, implementing safety practices, education and training, using personal protective equipment, and creating a safety culture. An accident prevention plan includes identifying, assessing, and preventing hazards in the workplace, which involves conducting inspections and implementing preventative actions.

Common safety violations cited by OSHA include inadequate fall protection, inadequate hazard communication standards, and inadequate respiratory protection. These can cost the company thousands of dollars per violation. OSHA fines include general violations up to $7,000 per violation, serious violations up to $25,000 per violation, repeated violations up to $70,000, and a minimum penalty of $5,000 for failing to report a serious injury, illness, or death of an employee.

Accidents are preventable, and it is everyone's responsibility to actively engage in safety practices to create a safe work environment.

As always, stay safe out there!

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