

Unsafe Working Conditions

Introduction:

Unsafe working conditions can be present in every workplace. These are hazards that have the potential to cause injury or death to employees or customers, and occur when the work environment is too dangerous for employees to perform job tasks. Dangerous environmental conditions may include hazardous materials, exposure to chemicals, electrical and fire hazards, and broken machinery.

How workers perform their job tasks may be related to unsafe activities that can lead to unsafe conditions in the workplace. These conditions that put workers in harm's way can be caused by defective equipment, poor housekeeping, and inadequate training. Unsafe activities are the reason most accidents happen at home, in the workplace, or on the road. Think about some situations you may have experienced that have put you in unnecessary danger while on the job.

Discussion Points:

- Unsafe working conditions
- Unsafe activities can lead to unsafe conditions in the workplace
- Responsibilities of establishing a safe work environment.
- Reporting unsafe conditions and workplace hazards
- Workers' rights

Discussion:

Employers and employees must all understand the responsibility to establish a safe work environment. Focus should be on reducing injuries and fatalities in the workplace. This can be accomplished by employers developing a Safety and Health Program, and employees complying with company and OSHA rules and regulations. It is important that employers and employees work together to make safety and health a priority.

Employees should report any unsafe conditions and/or workplace hazards to their supervisor and document each report. Also, they may file a confidential complaint with OSHA and ask for an inspection if it is believed that working conditions are unsafe. Employees are protected under OSHA employee rights, and cannot be terminated, demoted, or punished for making any complaints.

It is a fact. Workers Do Have Rights! Employees have many rights related to safety and health, and employers are required to post the OSHA Job Safety and Health "It's the Law" poster in the workplace. This is a free workplace poster that outlines workers' rights under the Occupational Safety and Health Act.

To download a pdf of the OSHA Job Safety and Health "It's a Law" poster, <https://www.osha.gov/Publications/poster.html>

To learn more about workers' rights, <https://www.osha.gov/Publications/osh3021.pdf>

As always, stay safe out there!

December 14, 2020

