

## **PRESENTER'S GUIDE**

# **"SAFETY ORIENTATION IN CONSTRUCTION ENVIRONMENTS"**

**Part of the Construction Safety Kit Series**

# **OUTLINE OF MAJOR PROGRAM POINTS**

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The following outline summarizes the major points of information presented in the program. The outline can be used to review the program before conducting a classroom session, as well as in preparing to lead a class discussion about the program.

- **When the day begins, there is always lots of work to do.**
  - Materials to unload.
  - Foundations to pour.
  - Those ever-present deadlines to meet.
  
- **After all, "time is money", and someone is always watching "the bottom line."**
  
- **But if we rush and aren't careful, we could very well:**
  - Cause an accident.
  - Damage valuable property.
  - Even suffer a serious injury.
  
- **Sure, we've got to get the job done, but the real "bottom line" is doing the job safely.**
  - That's where the phrase "Safety First" comes in.
  - It means that working safely has to be your top priority.
  
- **So we must learn to take precautions and:**
  - Protect ourselves from hazards.
  - Prevent accidents.
  - Prepare for emergencies.
  
- **Before you begin a task you have to be mentally prepared to work safely, no matter how simple or routine the job may seem.**
  - Concentration is the key.
  - If you give the task your full attention you are much less likely to make a mistake and cause an accident.

- **There are a number of things that can obstruct our focus.**
  - Anger and frustration are two of the culprits.
  - They can cloud your mind and impair your judgment.
  - A decision made "in the heat of the moment" could have disastrous consequences.
- **So if you ever feel frustrated or angry, take a break!**
  - Step back and take a deep breath..., or switch to another task for a while.
  - You can resume your original work when you are calm and in the right frame of mind.
- **Drugs and alcohol can also "alter" your state of mind and ability to focus on what you're doing.**
  - They have no place in the workplace.
- **But you have to be careful about what you do on your own time as well.**
  - The residual effects of a substance can cause someone to have an accident hours or even days after they last used it.
- **If you drink, do it in moderation... and don't drive.**
  - Make sure the effects of any alcohol you have had are long gone before you start to work.
- **Know your company's drug and alcohol policy... and follow it.**
  - Inform your supervisor immediately if you suspect a coworker is "under the influence".
- **Never operate equipment if you are taking medication that could affect your performance. You need to:**
  - Keep your mind clear at all times.
  - Concentrate.
  - Be aware of everything that goes on around you.
  - Then you'll be mentally prepared to work safely.
- **Preventing accidents is another important part of making safety a top priority.**
  - Most hazards can be spotted and eliminated before they become a problem.

- **Inspect your work area.**
  - Look for "hazards" that could endanger you or your coworkers.
  - Then take steps to remove or reduce the risk of a potential accident.
  
- **Walkways, stairs and exits should be kept clear of obstacles at all times.**
  - A simple stack of lumber could cause someone to trip and fall, or block an escape route.
  
- **Loose railings and unguarded openings in floors can be accidents waiting to happen.**
  
- **Look for fire hazards as well.**
  - Sparks from equipment, damaged electrical cords, even piles of wood scrap or cardboard can all be sources of ignition.
  - Correct situations like these as soon as possible.
  
- **As you reach the end of your shift you still have some "safety work" to do. Good housekeeping is important for accident prevention as well.**
  - Tidy up your work area.
  - Properly dispose of scrap.
  - Return left over materials to their assigned storage places.
  
- **Put all tools and equipment back where they belong.**
  - This eliminates clutter and makes things easier for everyone to find.
  
- **But not all housekeeping situations have simple solutions.**
  - If you encounter a problem that you can't solve yourself, talk to your supervisor.
  - They are there to help.

- **Looking for potential problems and reducing risks can help us to prevent accidents, but sometimes the possibility of a problem occurring can't be avoided.**
  - Wearing gloves, safety shoes and other personal protective equipment can help guard against injury.
  
- **Let's start at "ground level" and work our way up.**
  
- **Foot protection such as safety shoes should be worn on all job sites.**
  - Most safety shoes have soles that are designed for safe traction on specific surfaces, such as oily or wet flooring.
  - Many shoes have steel toes as well.
  - You need to choose the best shoes for the job you do, and wear them.
  
- **Gloves can improve your grip and protect your hands from potential hazards such as splinters, sharp edges and chemicals as well.**
  - Gloves can be made from many types of material, including cloth, leather, metal-mesh, rubber and plastic.
  - Each protects you from different hazards.
  - Make sure you know which type is right for the job that you're doing.
  
- **Sometimes eye protection may seem bulky and unnecessary.**
  - Eye injuries can be nasty, and far more "uncomfortable" and "inconvenient" than wearing safety eyewear will ever be.
  
- **Safety glasses and goggles protect against a variety of hazards.**
  - In certain situations, you may also need to add a face shield or use a welder's helmet.
  - Ask your supervisor about the type of protection you'll need for your job.

- **Hearing protection can often eliminate the harmful effects of hazardous noise.**
  - Earplugs, canal caps and ear muffs all provide different degrees of protection.
  - In extremely noisy situations, you can wear both plugs and muffs
- **When harmful dust, fumes, and vapors make the air dangerous to breathe, respiratory protection is what is needed.**
  - Respiratory hazards can do serious damage to your lungs.
  - Fortunately there are a number of types of protection that can help.
- **Filter masks, chemical cartridge respirators, and supplied-air respirators each protect you from different types, and degrees, of hazards.**
  - First determine what kind of protection you need for your work environment.
  - OSHA has established "Assigned Protection Factors" for different types of respirators, which can help you find the appropriate respirator for your job.
- **When you select your respirator, make sure that it is undamaged.**
  - If you are unfamiliar with the equipment, it's a good idea to practice using it before going into your work area.
  - For most respirators you will also need to undergo a "fit-test" to make sure they are sealing tightly to your face.
- **Protective clothing is something else you may need to use to stay safe.**
  - Aprons and full-body suits can defend against flying particles as well as contact with hazardous materials.
- **A good, strong hard hat is essential around overhead hazards.**

- **Keep in mind, most tasks create multiple hazards.**
  - Combine the safety gear you wear to make sure you get complete protection.
  - Talk to your supervisor if you have questions about the PPE that's right for you.
  
- **Safe work practices are just as important as the PPE that you wear on the job.**
  - Careless habits can have devastating consequences.
  
- **Tools are helpful in many of the jobs we do, but use a tool incorrectly, and somebody could get hurt.**
  
- **So you should always follow good "tool rules".**
  - Always use the right tool for the job.
  - Check that all the tools you use are clean and undamaged.
  - Make sure you know how to properly use the tools that you work with.
  
- **Power tools and other electrical equipment require special considerations.**
  - Inspect all power cords.
  - A damaged wire is both a shock hazard and a fire risk.
  
- **Too many plugs in one outlet can overload the circuit, blow out a fuse or even start a fire.**
  - So don't connect multiple power cords to a single receptacle.
  
- **Remember to unplug or lock-out electrical equipment before attempting repairs.**
  - If you don't, you may get a "shocking" reminder.
  
- **When you're working near machines with moving parts, make sure appropriate machine guards are in place.**
  - Remove loose clothing and jewelry that could get caught in the equipment as well.



- **If your job involves unloading or moving materials, be careful.**
  - If you have to move a heavy or unwieldy object, use a cart or dolly, or ask a coworker for help.
- **Only use powered equipment such as a forklift if you are trained and certified on it.**
  - Consult the operating manual if you have any questions.
  - Plan your route, take your time and always be aware of what is going on around you.
- **But safe work practices go beyond how we use tools and equipment.**
  - We need to be careful how we "use" our bodies as well.
  - Each job makes a different set of physical demands.
- **Knowing how your body "works" can help you avoid ergonomic injuries.**
  - First, keep your body in "neutral" positions as much as possible.
  - Select tools that are "ergonomically friendly" and whose weight, size and shape make them easy to use.
  - Adjust your work area to fit your size and shape.
  - Keep tools and materials within easy reach.
- **When you're lifting something, be sure to use proper procedures:**
  - Bend at the knees.
  - Keep your back straight.
  - Lift with your legs.
  - Always lift gradually, not suddenly.
- **If you are ever unsure about how to use a piece of equipment or perform a task, talk to your supervisor.**
- **No matter how careful we are... no matter what precautions we take... accidents can still happen.**
  - So we need to be prepared to act if an emergency occurs.

- **Be sure to read the Safety Data Sheets (SDSs) for any hazardous materials in your work area before you use them.**
  - SDSs should be kept in a central location for quick reference.
- **Clean up chemical spills immediately... but make sure that you know...**
  - What chemicals you are dealing with.
  - What tools and materials should be used in the cleanup process.
- **Water is almost always the first line of defense when someone is splashed by a hazardous chemical.**
  - So be sure you know where the sources of water are on your job site.
- **Fires are another major threat on a job site.**
  - Now-a-days they often involve toxic fumes and vapors.
  - This makes them more dangerous than ever.
- **Be familiar with your site's Emergency Action Plan.**
  - It will describe how to report fires and where to go if one occurs.
- **You can sometimes fight small fires yourself and prevent them from spreading, so make sure you know:**
  - Where the fire extinguishers are on your site.
  - How to use them.
- **Remember, there are different types of extinguishers for different types of fires.**
  - Be sure that you have the correct one for the fire that you're fighting.
- **Make sure that emergency telephone numbers are posted in plain sight, as well as stored in your cellphone.**
- **Know at least two evacuation routes that you can use if you ever need to leave your work area.**

- **Basic first aid and CPR can be valuable skills in many emergency situations.**
  - But don't try to do anything unless you have the proper training.
  - You could do more harm than good.
- **And never underestimate the seriousness of an injury.**
  - Seek medical attention as soon as possible.
- **Above all, the key to handling emergency situations is to stay calm.**

**\* \* \* SUMMARY \* \* \***

- **Prepare yourself to work safely... concentrate, be aware of what's happening around you and stay alert.**
- **To prevent incidents and injuries, look for hazards, and control or remove them when you find them.**
- **Always wear the correct PPE for the job that you are doing.**
- **Follow safe work practices, use proper procedures and eliminate careless habits.**
- **Be prepared to act quickly and effectively in emergencies.**
- **If you and your coworkers stay alert and follow safe work practices, you can help ensure that everyone goes home injury-free at the end of the day.**