



Heads Up!

Awareness keeps you safe

Safety awareness is the foundation of a safe workplace. Follow these steps:

- **Plan** each job before you start. Think about the tools, materials, equipment, and procedures you'll be using and the safety precautions you need to take.
- **Look** for possible problems. With the right precautions everything should be fine. But consider what could go wrong and hazards you might encounter.
- **Get** all the information you need to do the job safely. Never begin a job unless you know what to do and how to do it.
- **Wear** required personal protective equipment (PPE) to keep you safe. Never skip this step. PPE could prevent a serious injury—or even save your life.
- **Organize** your work area, keeping clean and clear of potential hazards such as things people could trip over, slip on, or bump into; materials that could catch fire; and chemicals that could release hazardous vapors or explode.
- **Inspect** tools, equipment, and PPE before using to ensure they are in good condition and safe to use.
- **Follow** safety rules. An important part of safety awareness involves knowing the safety rules that apply to every job you perform and following them at all times. This also means no fooling around and no taking shortcuts.
- **Focus** on what you're doing. If your mind is on something other than the job, the risk of making a dangerous mistake increases greatly. There's too much at stake for you to give your job anything less than your full attention.
- **Remain alert** for unsafe conditions and unsafe acts. When you encounter unsafe conditions, remove, repair, or report them. When you see unsafe acts, speak up and express your concern to those taking risks.
- **Be prepared** for emergencies. Know what to do in the event of a fire or other emergency. Make sure you know where fire alarms, extinguishers, and emergency exits are located.

Facts About Workplace Safety

According to OSHA and the Bureau of Labor Statistics there are more than 6 million workplaces and 93 million workers in this country, and on a typical workday:

- 17 workers are killed on the job by traumatic injuries
- 137 more workers die of occupationally-related illnesses
- 17,138 workers are injured

Annually, over 4 million U.S. workers suffer work-related injuries or illnesses. Among the most common injuries are:

- Sprains, strains, and tears (427,740)
- Injuries to the back (250,870)
- Falls (234,450)

Over 5,000 employees die every year as a result of their work-related injuries or illnesses. Over 1,000 of those deaths are the result of highway accidents. And nearly 1,000 are the result of falls.

June is **National Safety Month**. Let's all pledge this month to work more safely and do everything we can to prevent accidents in our workplace.

DON'T WAIT FOR AN ACCIDENT!

One of the best ways to prevent accidents is to perform daily safety inspections. Don't wait for an accident to discover hazards. Inspect your workstation, work area, PPE, tools, equipment, and materials before each job.

Three Levels of Protection

One of the best ways to protect your safety and health on the job is to be aware of all the protections available to you so that you can take full advantage of them to fend off workplace hazards. Along with your common sense and alertness, there are three levels of protection.

- **The first is engineering controls.** These are things that are built in to our facility, equipment, and processes—for example: ventilation, machine guards, emergency stop controls, ergonomically designed workstations, and vapor barriers.
- **The second level is administrative controls.** These are procedures worked out by our safety experts and involve steps like rotating workers and limiting the amount of time a worker can perform a particular job to minimize exposure to hazards. Administrative controls also include safe work practices and work rules designed to prevent accidents and injuries.
- **The third level of protection is personal protective equipment (PPE).** When neither engineering controls nor administrative controls—nor a combination of the two—is sufficient to reduce hazards to safe levels, then we require you to wear PPE, which serves as a personal barrier against hazards we can't completely control by other means alone.

In any work situation, make sure you always know what the hazards are and what protections are available and required.

Allergy Meds at Work

Know the side effects

While there are many effective medicines to alleviate allergy symptoms, know their possible side effects and how they could affect your work performance. For example, many common **antihistamines**, such as Claritin, Benadryl, Tavist, Allegra, and Zyrtec, may cause drowsiness. Don't take these medicines before driving or operating heavy machinery.

In addition, some **eye drops**, such as Visine-A and Opcon-A, may cause watery eyes, mild stinging or burning, and headaches. These side effects may affect your vision and be dangerous on the job.

Some **decongestants**, such as Sudafed or Claritin D, may cause lightheadedness, insomnia, and nervousness, which can adversely affect your work.

Prescription medicines may have other side effects. If you need to take allergy medications while at work, follow these steps:

1. **Read the label** for possible side effects.
2. **Consult with your doctor or pharmacist to find a medicine that treats symptoms without side effects** that affect your work.
3. **Consult with your doctor to determine the best time to take medicine**, e.g. before bed, so that it treats your symptoms without affecting your work.
4. **Inform your supervisor about your medication.** You may be able to adjust your schedule to accommodate allergy medication.

Extension Cord Safety

Extension cords are commonly used at the worksite and at home. Did you know that there are many different types of cords for many different uses? You should ensure that you use the right one for your equipment and work conditions to prevent electrical shock and fires by doing the following:

- Make sure the cord's power rating is at least as high as the power tool's or device's power rating. The cord's power rating is a number listed on the cord jacket as either "amps" or the wire gauge (a number followed by "AWG").
- Cords approved for outdoor use are typically identified by "Outdoor" or "W" on the cord jacket. Never use indoor cords outdoors.
- Some cords are designed to resist moisture, heat, or chemicals. For example, cords with plastic jackets are recommended for use around solvents or oils. Oil-resistant cords will have the letter "O" stamped onto the jacket.
- Don't use the flat, two-wire cords meant for light duty that have only a single layer of insulation with any power tools.
- Use a cord of the right length for the job. Don't plug one cord into another to make a longer one—this can cause a fire.

Once you've found the right extension cord for the job, make sure you follow these safety procedures:

- Inspect extension cords before each use to make sure the cord and plug are in good condition.
- Insert the plug fully into the outlet, and uncoil the cord to reduce the risk of overheating.
- Make sure electrical equipment is turned off before you plug it into an extension cord.
- Never use a damaged or frayed cord.

The ABCs of AEDs

Know how to use these life-saving devices

The first week in June is **National CPR and AED Awareness Week**. You may already know that CPR stands for cardiopulmonary resuscitation. But now you also need to know that AED stands for automated external defibrillator. And what does that mean exactly?

What are AEDs?

AEDs are computerized medical devices that can check a person's heart rhythm. They can recognize a rhythm that requires a shock and advise the rescuer when a shock is needed. The AED uses voice prompts, lights, and text messages to instruct the rescuer. More and more workplaces are purchasing AEDs to have another vital first aid tool to protect their employees. If your workplace has an AED, consider getting trained on how to use the AED so you'll be confident in how to operate the device successfully in an emergency situation.

Why Are They Becoming So Widespread?

The reason AEDs are becoming widespread in the community and workplace is that sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) is responsible for between 300,000 to 400,000 deaths every year in the United States. However, prompt treatment with an AED to restart the heart can save many lives. Although costs vary, many models are available for between \$1,500 and \$2,000, which means most ambulances and first-response vehicles are now equipped with AEDs—as are more and more public places, such as sports arenas, shopping malls, doctors' offices, and many workplaces.

How Do They Save Lives?

SCA occurs when ventricular fibrillation (VF) takes place or when the heart stops beating altogether. Causes include:

- Heart attack
- Electrocution
- Asphyxiation (loss of consciousness and death caused by inadequate oxygen in the work environment, such as in a confined space)

Most often cardiac arrest is due to VF, the uncoordinated beating of the heart, which can be restored to a normal rhythm if treated early with electric shock (defibrillation).

- The sooner defibrillation is started, the more likely the victim will survive.
- The optimum time for defibrillation is 3 to 5 minutes after the onset of the cardiac arrest.

Even with an AED at hand, emergency personnel should be called immediately—follow-up treatment at a medical facility will be required.