

Safety Talks!

HANDOUT

Workplace Safety ■ T1906-04

Know Your Enemies — Workplace Hazards

WHAT'S AT STAKE

If you and your buddies were facing a dangerous, deceptive enemy, you'd want to find out all you could about it and share any information you come up with. The fact is you do have such a treacherous enemy - the workplace hazard.

WHAT'S THE DANGER

An unnoticed hazard can take your life in an instant, or cause you a lifetime of suffering and disability.

EXAMPLE

Ben received a mild shock from an electrically powered tool. "Take a lot more than that to kill me," he joked, and didn't report it. When a worker on another shift used the power tool, conditions were slightly different and the man was fatally electrocuted.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

Learn all you can about workplace hazards. Share information with your co-workers, because that helps keep all of you safe.

Participate in the training and communications which are the basis of a workplace injury prevention program. Your employer provides you with the information you need to identify and avoid hazards.

Also seek this information on your own and be continually alert to new dangers.

Realize that safety information is shared in a number of ways. One person explains things to another person, individually or in a group training session. Training workbooks, videos and live demonstrations make the information easier to remember. Trainees get

to try out procedures and safety equipment under the supervision of an experienced person.

Notice the signs and posters that pass along safety information. They point out hazards such as the possibility of objects falling from overhead or the presence of flammable liquid vapors. They also tell you what to do to avoid injury — wear your hardhat, or don't smoke. Signs also point the way to equipment to be used in case of an emergency, such as fire extinguishers, first aid kits and exits.

Study labels — another common source of safety information. On a container of chemicals, the label will tell you the contents, hazards and what to do in case of a spill or exposure.

Read the material safety data sheets for safety information about chemicals. It contains the same type of information as the label, but in greater detail.

Participate in giving your co-workers valuable information about the kinds of hazards lurking in the work area. Your company's system of reporting injuries, incidents and close calls is an important link in safety communications.

FINAL WORD

If you have safety information, share it. Keep the lines of communication open to defeat the enemy — the workplace hazard. ■

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. An unnoticed hazard can take your life in an instant.
☐ True ☐ False
2. Sharing workplace hazard information with your co-workers helps keep all of you safe.
☐ True ☐ False
3. Your employer gives all the information you need to avoid hazards, so you don't need to seek information on your own.
☐ True ☐ False
4. Signs and posters are a source of safety information.
☐ True ☐ False
5. Labels on chemical products give more information than material safety data sheets.
☐ True ☐ False

What Would You Do?

Tyler is a teenager newly hired to run errands for a construction crew. He notices the roofers haven't placed an adequate barrier around a skylight hole. "Someone could stumble onto that hole," he thinks, but isn't sure what a safe barrier would look like. However he knows that crew members are in a rush, and he expects they know what they're doing. What would be your next move?

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FOR THE LEADER

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BEFORE THE TALK 7 PREPARATION TIPS

- 1** Before this meeting review the hazard communication program in place for your company.
- 2** Be prepared to answer questions about chemical haz-com and other hazard topics.
- 3** Encourage your crew to report all injuries, incidents and close calls. This information is important in preventing future incidents.
- 4** Ask your crew to share its experiences of incidents in which someone knew about a hazard and didn't file a report, and consequences were suffered.
- 5** On the positive side, ask for incidents in which a hazard report was wisely filed and probably saved someone from serious injuries.
- 6** Prepare to describe or demonstrate the process of filing a hazard report.
- 7** Invite an emergency services worker to speak to your crew about common consequences (injuries) resulting from unreported workplace hazards.

■ For information on a variety of safety topics, check out Bongarde's online network for safety professionals at <http://www.SafetyXChange.org>

■ If you want the latest in job safety news, tips, photos, health-related articles, fatality reports and audio talks, sign up for Safety Smart! Weekly Briefing at <http://www.SafetySmart.com>

Date: _____

Location: _____

Meeting conducted by: _____

MEETING WAS ATTENDED BY: Each participant is to sign below, for record kept on file.

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Answers to T1906-04 Quiz:

1. True 2. True 3. False 4. True 5. False

AFTER THE TALK CHECKLIST

- Provided extra training to workers who did poorly on quiz

Date: _____

- Observed workers

Date: _____

- Refresher training

Date: _____

- Other (describe)

Date: _____