

Hanover County Safety & Risk Focus

Safety & Risk Self-Assessment

With the holiday season safely behind us, the focus of our efforts both at work and at home turn to the start of the New Year! The start of a new year always affords each of us the opportunity to step back and “start over” when it comes to goals and challenges we face.

In the world of safety & risk, a new year allows us as employees to take a step back and look at our workplace & work tasks with a fresh set of eyes to proactively identify and address risks & hazards in the workplace. One way to accomplish this is with a safety & risk self-assessment. A Safety & Risk self-assessment demonstrates a commitment to safety and allows managers to see for themselves how effective their safety & risk efforts are,

A self-assessment can be broken down into three parts: pre-inspection, onsite inspection and post-inspection.

Pre-inspection

- Plan to focus your inspections on areas where hazards have been identified. Check to see if previously identified hazards have been abated or if further action is needed.
- If your workplace has a safety committee, schedule a pre-inspection meeting and invite workplace safety representatives as well as other managers and supervisors to get their perspective on the worksite’s safety issues.
- Determine what safety equipment you will need to conduct the inspection.
- Lead by example: Wear appropriate personal protective equipment.

Onsite inspection Look for easily observable hazards first, such as:

- Tripping hazards
- Blocked exits
- Frayed/exposed electrical wires
- Missing machine guards
- Poor housekeeping
- Poorly maintained equipment

During the assessment, talk to employees at their workstations. They are the ones likely to know the most about the hazards. Encourage conversation by asking open-ended questions such as, “What’s the most hazardous task in your job? What makes it hazardous?” and “If you’ve been injured, what was the injury and how did it happen?” Another important part of an assessment is observing workers as they perform their job. Do they lift heavy objects? Do they stand/sit in awkward postures? Are they performing repetitive motions? If so, take notes and photos. Try to find solutions for hazards while you are conducting the inspection by applying your own creativity and inspiring the creativity of employees.

Post-inspection

Soon after the assessment, prepare an abatement plan containing a list of the hazards found, corrective actions needed and a timeline for implementation. Some complex hazards may require further evaluation, study, or engineering work to design and implement appropriate controls

Share the abatement plan with managers, supervisors and workers, and track progress by sharing or posting periodic updates to the plan. A walk around should be set up to be conducted on a routine basis (weekly, monthly, quarterly) based on conditions within your workplace that cause a higher than normal risk of injury or loss.

Safety & Risk Quote of the Month:



Safety & Risk Resources & Information:

Additional information & resources on Safety self – assessments are provided below:

- [Health & Safety Risk Assessment Video - HSE](#)
- [Safety & Risk Self-Assessment Tool \(Hanover County\)](#)

“Prepare & prevent instead of repair & repent!”