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Contractor Safety

Whether you are a general contractor, sub-contractor or general industry employer hiring a contractor to do work, you will almost certainly have some share in the responsibility for **identifying hazards and communicating to employees the safe practices, tools, and equipment needed to perform the job safely.**

The employer and the contractor share an obligation to communicate planned work activities, the hazards involved, and the contracted tasks, as well as the training, tools, and equipment that all employees will need.

Before agreeing to work with a contractor, review the following data that gives insight to their safety culture and performance:

- [History of safety and environmental regulation violations.](#)
- Injury and loss history.
- Total Recordable Incident Rate.
- Experience modification rate (ex-mod).
- Job and task hazard analysis procedures and results.
- Written safety programs and policies.

Ensure that you outline requirements in the work contract and in contractor manuals so there is a **clearly communicated expectation** of workplace safety. Topics to consider include:

- Company and contractor safety responsibility and emergency contact information.
- A description and the location of hazardous areas, equipment, materials, and tasks at the worksite.
- Safety programs that govern the safe work practices for the contracted job.
- Equipment, tools, and supplies that the contractor or the employer need to provide.
- Personal protective equipment (PPE) required at the worksite and for job tasks.
- Training and certifications that contracted employees need prior to conducting work.
- Reporting requirements and procedures for injuries, illnesses, hazards, and safety concerns.
- The expectation for a drug and alcohol free workplace.

Data shows that most serious work related injuries in the field of construction are related to four general categories:

1. Falls from heights
2. Stuck or caught in between

3. Struck by falling or flying objects
4. Electrical hazards

Work around these types of hazards should typically be supervised or monitored by a competent person. Hazards related to the above factors can be found on most active construction sites. Ensure that your employees are knowledgeable about the risks related to working around these hazards by creating or utilizing training resources that include the following topics:

- Lockout/Tagout procedures for equipment on-site.
- A list of permit-required and non-permit-required confined spaces on-site.
- Heat illness prevention procedures.
- Trenching and excavation procedures and the location of utilities.
- A list of chemicals used on-site and access to safety data sheets.
- Areas where fall protection is required.
- Vehicle, driving, and traffic safety rules for the worksite.
- Good housekeeping methods.
- Worksite safety inspection processes and frequency of inspections.
- Worksite security procedures.
- Personal conduct requirements.

Training is important to familiarize employees with how to control job hazards and prevent injuries. Suggested initial and ongoing training topics include:

- A worksite safety orientation including a discussion of the hazards associated with the tasks of the job to be performed.
- The contents of contractor safety manuals.
- Pre-job briefings and shift meetings.
- Safety tailgate topics specific to the worksite and job tasks.
- Trainings that are required to control a hazard, condition, or behavior.

Ensure that you train general contractors on the worksite-specific emergency procedures and equipment. Knowledgeable employees and contractors can cooperate and make fast, quality decisions if they are prepared before an emergency occurs. The following topics and procedures at a minimum should be provided to employees and contractors:

- Fire prevention and evacuation plans.
- Emergency spill response and procedures.
- Exit routes and assembly areas for emergency evacuations.

- The location of emergency equipment such as fire extinguishers, first aid kits, and rescue equipment.
- Emergency contacts and communication methods.
- Rescue and medical duties for those employees who are to perform them.

Not sure you're familiar with the all the safety requirements for your construction business? Browse the construction safety orders in [California Code of Regulations Title 8](#).

Establishing clear expectations, communication, training, and monitoring all help employers and contractors work together in order to complete their jobs safely while also protecting the safety and health of all employees.