

Stairs and Walkways

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Stairways and walkways in all businesses can be the cause of injury accidents. These passageways do not typically get the maintenance they need, since they are 'only' access ways and not production areas. Here are ten safety tips to help eliminate exposures at your company.

1. Always keep one hand free to use the handrails, both up and down the stairways.
2. Keep all stairs and walkways clear of debris and potentially slippery substances such as: ice, snow, water, oil, or grease.
3. Keep passageways free of tools, equipment and other materials. Always practice good housekeeping in these non-production areas.
4. When walkways and stairs are provided-use them. Don't short cut your safety to save a few steps or a few seconds. Hopping off loading docks or jumping over piping saves no time or money if you are injured and cannot work.
5. Shop or warehouse mezzanines should be equipped with standard railings to protect open sides. Railings should have top rails with a vertical height of 42 inches, mid rails, posts, and toe boards. Your company may have a small office located within a larger building with its roof area used for storing materials. Review the space's access and guarding. Make sure it has a full stairway or ladder access and is equipped with perimeter railings. It is also wise to have an engineer calculate the maximum load the roof area can handle.
6. Standard handrails must be provided for stairs with four or more steps. Handrails should be 30 to 34 inches from the top of the stair tread, measured in line with the face of the riser.
7. Handrails can become loose and may need to be re-secured or replaced. Do not assume someone else will repair or report it. Immediately mention any problem to the right person, such as your supervisor, or take the time to fix it yourself.
8. Where there are elevation changes in walkways highlight the change so it is plainly visible. Distinguishing the change alerts those unfamiliar with the walkway to the hazard.
9. Secure electrical cords and hoses so that they do not lie across walkways. If electrical cords must be laid across walkways, use approved cord covers whenever possible. Consider setting up a caution sign or flagging to alert

- individuals of cords or hoses in their path until a permanent 'approved' solution can be put into place.
10. Take small steps on wet and icy walkways. Use handholds to stabilize yourself when they are available. Asphalt and oiled surfaces can also be hazardous because rainwater may produce oil sheen and create slippery walking conditions.

Unlike some exposures, stairway hazards or slippery walkways can appear overnight. Take action to remedy the problem when you see it.

GENERAL SAFETY REVIEW

This is a time to review all safety concerns, not just today's topic. Keep your notes on this page before, during and after the safety meeting.

Are you aware of any safety hazards from any other crews? Point out any hazards other crews are creating that this crew should know about. Tell the crew what you intend to do about those hazards.

Do we have any other safety business? Discuss any past issues or problems. Report any progress of investigations and action taken.

Have there been any accidents, near misses or complaints? Discuss any accidents, near misses, and complaints that have happened since the last safety meeting. Also recognize the safety contributions made by members of the crew.

Please remember, we want to hear from you about any health and safety issues that come up. If we don't know about problems, we can't take action to fix them.

ENDING THE MEETING

Circulate Sign-Off Form.

Assign one or more crew member(s) to help with next safety meeting.

Refer action items for follow-up.

Do you have any Safety Recommendations?

Do you have any Job Specific Topics you would like us to discuss?

Comments
