

Contractors must ensure safety

Contractors and subcontractors are just as responsible for the health and safety of workers as the organizations that hire them. If they don't take that responsibility seriously, the results can be catastrophic — injuries, fatalities, property damage and problems with insurance claims.

Examples of contractor employers:

- Construction companies.
- Utility service or repair companies.
- Janitorial services.
- Pest control services.
- Food service and vending companies.
- Transportation and shipping services.
- Raw product suppliers.

An organization that engages a contractor should develop a comprehensive contractor safety management program. This should be in writing and signed by both parties, to avoid misunderstandings about their roles and responsibilities.

In many instances, especially on larger projects, the major (prime) contractor is the best qualified to oversee and coordinate an effective health and safety program for all workers onsite.

Here are some key requirements of contractors in a typical agreement:

- Perform work in a manner that complies with all applicable federal, provincial/state, and local laws, rules and regulations.



- Perform all work in a manner that safeguards persons and property from injury and train all contractor and subcontractor personnel on all company and contractor safety programs, all job-related hazards and all safety laws, rules, regulations, or requirements applicable to the work.
- Inspect all materials, tools, equipment and facilities for safety prior to use.
- Require all contractor and subcontractor personnel performing work on behalf of the company, on either its own or customer sites, to be fit for duty and comply with the drug and alcohol programs of the company.
- Cooperate with the company to determine applicable regulatory requirements and appropriate control measures to eliminate or mitigate hazards specific to the work.
- Use the appropriate job hazard analysis methods for identifying and communicating known or potential hazards prior to commencing work.

- Maintain effective oversight of work crews to ensure compliance with company and regulatory safety requirements.
- Immediately inform the company of all safety incidents that occur during the performance of work by the contractor or any subcontractor.
- Promptly, thoroughly, and transparently investigate all safety incidents that occur during the contractor's work.
- Cooperate and provide reasonable assistance, and cause each of its subcontractors to cooperate and provide reasonable assistance to the company with any incident analysis or investigations the company conducts following a safety incident, as well as regulatory or agency investigations and inquiries that arise as a result of the safety incident.
- Supply the company with complete copies of all documents, photographs, witness statements, and other evidence related to the incident and all investigation materials promptly upon request.

Employees authorized to hire contractors should work with health and safety professionals to ensure an appropriate contract that also will establish not only the workers' compensation coverage requirements but also include minimum liability insurance and the compliance requirements specific to the contracted work.

Contracts should also include a section specific to each service or project that addresses any unique hazards and expected control measures that will be required.

Contractor Safety The Quiz

These questions are meant to help you remember what was discussed today — not to test your patience or challenge your intelligence. The answers are at the bottom of the page. Cover them up, and complete the quiz as quickly as you can.



Hold These Thoughts

A process called pre-qualification is used often to evaluate and select the most appropriate contractor and ensure the contractor meets all health and safety requirements before starting work.

Many organizations establish standards that almost always include a given level of insurance coverage, documentation of safety programs, policies and, most important, safety history. The task of gathering that information can be a problem, however, if it is spread among different departments and even different facilities.

To compound the problem, the task is typically a part-time function of the individuals involved. As a part-time task, it can receive all the efficiency and accuracy of a part-time effort.

Also, if the task is distributed among various departments and facilities, the usual result is disconnected silos of data and work flow with no central location where the information is accessible to those who need it.

If the data gathering in-house is successful, it should be housed in one location and have a minimum of two employees trained who can gather, update, and determine the status of each contractor.

A third-party solution is often preferable, since pre-qualifying is typically not a core competency of the organization that needs it.

Employees usually welcome a relief from the nightmare of trying to obtain, update, and review all the information required.

- 1 Contractors and subcontractors are just as responsible for the health and safety of workers as the organizations that hire them.
True False
- 2 Is the construction industry the only one that uses contractors and subcontractors?
Yes No
- 3 A contractor safety management program should be:
A. Brief. C. In writing.
B. Illustrated. D. Witnessed.
- 4 In many instances, the major (prime) contractor is the best qualified to oversee and coordinate an effective health and safety program.
True False
- 5 Which of these require compliance by contractors?
A. Personal hygiene.
B. Employee performance records.
C. All federal, provincial/state and local laws, rules and regulations that apply to the work being done.
D. Time cards.
- 6 A contractor should be required to inspect all materials, tools, equipment and facilities for safety prior to use.
True False
- 7 Which of these are typical requirements in a contractor safety management agreement?
A. Cooperate with the company to determine applicable regulatory requirements and appropriate control measures to eliminate or mitigate hazards specific to the work..
B. Maintain effective oversight of work crews to ensure compliance with safety requirements.
C. Immediately inform the company of all safety incidents that occur during the performance of work by the.
D. All of the above.
- 8 Does your workplace have a contractor safety management program?
Yes No Don't Know

ANSWERS: 1. True, 2. No, 3. C., 4. True, 5. C., 6. True, 7. D., 8. Your answer

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Safety Meeting For the Record



Date of Meeting: _____

Topic: _____

Location: _____

Department: _____

Start Time: _____ Finish Time: _____

Meeting Leader: _____

In Attendance:

Tips for Safety Meeting Leaders

Don't just read the safety talk. Nothing will turn off an audience faster than a speaker droning away with his or her nose in a paper. Our talks are used best as a guide, to bone up on the subject, as a 'hook' to grab attention. Try as much as possible to deliver the talk in your own words, with the printed copy as a backstop or ready reference. The more you can adapt it to your workplace the better.

Add current, local statistics or make reference to happenings in the news. A talk about fire protection, for example, might be enlivened by a quote from your community's fire chief. That little extra preparation provides a lot of extra impact.

It is a good idea to use props. 'Show and tell' is the best way to convey a message — and most people remember what they see at least as vividly as what they only hear. If you're talking about defective or hazardous hand tools, have samples to show. If the subject is the proper handling of steel drums, demonstrate how it should be done.

Better yet, have members of the group demonstrate, with directions from you. Visual aids such as charts or pictures can also be helpful, provided they're large enough to be seen clearly.

***Note:** TalksZone safety meetings are not intended to take the place of your own safety procedures. Always consult and/or review your procedures before attempting any work.*