

OHS Program:

7. What are workplace inspections?

Workplace inspections are an important activity in an OHS program that provide an opportunity to identify, evaluate and control hazards. Checklists should be developed to address specific hazards associated with people, equipment, materials and environment in the workplace. Inspections also help monitor the effectiveness of controls and provide a check to see if any new hazards have been created.

Requirements

OHS legislation requires employers to do regular workplace inspections. How often inspections are done depends on workplace hazards. To build an effective workplace inspection program a process should be developed to:

- Assign responsibility for managing and administrating the program
- Address all legal and manufacturer obligations that relate to workplace and pre-use inspections
- Identify the nature, scope, timing and responsibilities for inspection activities
- Educate and train those who will be doing inspections
- Develop checklist to record inspections
- Communicate results to workers
- Assign responsibility for implementing controls and follow-up
- Address hazards in a time frame appropriate to the level of risk
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the workplace inspection program

Tips for effective management:

Effective OHS programs have processes for conducting workplace inspections. When employers do regular inspections they are more likely to provide a healthy and safe workplace for workers. When writing practices and procedures, make sure to:



- Appoint a senior member of the organization to promote the activity
- Appoint a competent person to manage the process
- Consult with workers and the OHS committee when developing checklists, reviewing the results of inspections and evaluating the effectiveness of the program
- Consider all workplace health and safety hazards in the checklist
- Educate workers on their roles and responsibilities in workplace inspections
- Assign a priority level to the hazards to get those with the highest risk fixed first
- Develop a process for tracking the status of inspection findings
- Post the results of inspections in the workplace where all can see

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