


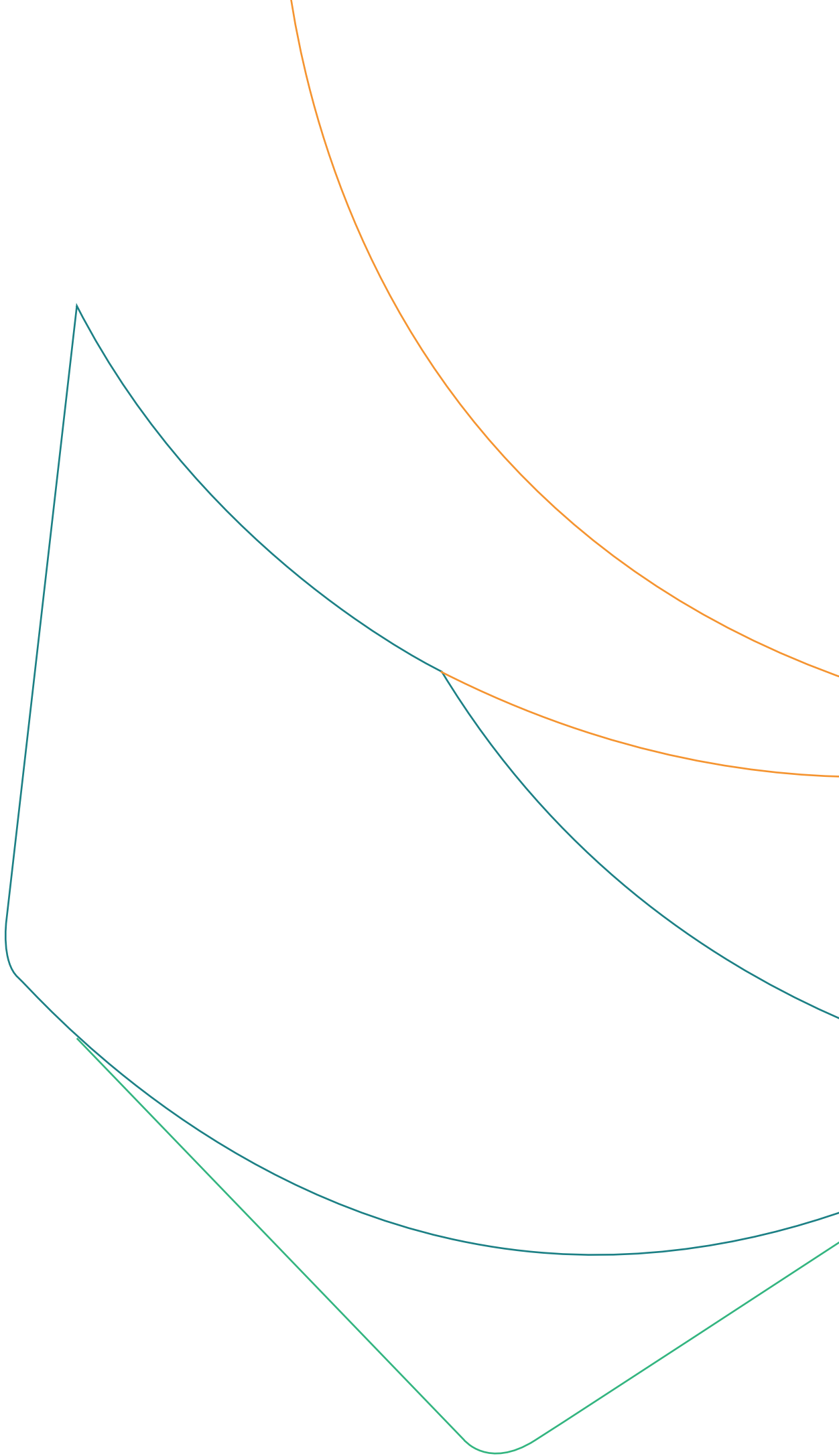


National Council for  
Occupational Safety & Health



# Guideline Introductory Guide for Toolbox Talks Meetings

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## Introduction

Toolbox Talks are among the most important field communication tools in the workplace. Their aim is to enhance occupational safety and health awareness among workers through short, direct discussions held before the start of the daily work or when performing specific tasks.

These talks help reinforce the idea that safety is a collective responsibility and work to build an effective preventive culture that reduces the likelihood of accidents and injuries.

This introductory guide comes to clarify the concept and importance of Toolbox Talks, as well as to explain the mechanism for implementing and organizing them systematically to ensure their effectiveness and continuity in workplaces.



## 1. Toolbox Talks Meeting

### 1. Toolbox Talks Meeting

This is a regular preparatory meeting, lasting from 5 to 15 minutes, held by supervisors to talk with workers about the job they are doing and how to do it in the safest way possible, and to spread the culture of occupational safety and health.

The Toolbox Talks meeting is a brief session used to discuss work-related safety topics, particularly those related to incidents. It is an opportunity to provide safety, awareness, and training in a concise and brief manner.

The objectives of Toolbox Talks meetings are:

1. Helping workers identify and control hazards that can be found on construction sites.
2. Advising workers about present or potential risks to their health and safety.
3. Holding Toolbox Talks regularly is the way to reinforce the message that occupational safety and health issues are important for both employers and workers.
4. Toolbox Talks are not a substitute for advanced training according to the facility's HR plan, but they are an auxiliary means to promote safety and health culture, and the topics presented may be the only training on safe work practices.
5. Remember that workers with experience in safety and health within the facility are a regular part of the safe work process, and other workers and newcomers should learn from them. This is a good way to enhance safety and health awareness.

## 2. Contents of the Toolbox Talk Meeting

1. Work Practices
2. Machine Operation
3. Tools
4. Materials
5. Directions / Attitudes
6. Safety Hazards

And talking about anything that needs to be addressed, if there was an accident, a brief explanation of what happened, where it happened, and how it can be prevented in the future (lessons learned) should be provided. Colleagues should be encouraged to suggest topics.

## 3. How to Manage a Toolbox Talk Meeting Effectively:

1. Hold the meeting near the work area.
2. Read and prepare the discussion material in advance.
3. Be cautious about asking someone else to read the discussion materials—they may not read them well.
4. Hold the meeting at the beginning of the shift and select the topic carefully; it should be related to workplace safety and health.
5. Do not pick a wide-ranging topic, such as «hand tool safety,» that cannot be covered in one short meeting. Instead, focus on one tool.

## 4. Benefits of Toolbox Talks Meetings

1. They address actual safety issues.
2. They continuously reinforce new safety and health matters in the facility.
3. They create a partnership atmosphere between facilities and promote knowledge and experience sharing.



4. Statistics show that continuous safety and health awareness reduces incidents.
5. Toolbox Talks should be held every week, preferably at the beginning of the week to refresh minds on safety and health issues.
6. They address regulations and procedures that must be followed in occupational safety and health.
7. They help reduce accident risks and near misses.
8. They can effectively eliminate workplace hazards.
9. They encourage incident reporting.
10. They can provide evidence of measures taken to reduce risks.
11. They present a variety of topics according to the schedule prepared by the safety and health officer.
12. They help analyze the causes of incidents and wasted time, such as slips, entrapment, falls, and poor workplace arrangement.
13. They help avoid failure to conduct initial workplace inspections.
14. They build a database of Toolbox Talks meetings—a basic reminder step in training and advanced training processes.
15. They assess risks in major industrial accident environments.

## 5. Hazard Identification and Recognition

Why is it so important to identify hazards? To prevent accidents!

Accidents cannot be prevented in the workplace if hazards are not identified.

It cannot be expected that facilities will remain hazard-free if these hazards are not clarified (recognized). Therefore, hazards must be identified and acknowledged

What does hazard identification mean exactly? It means recognizing the risks present in the workplace. Each work area has its own set of fixed hazards. Examples of fixed hazards include:

1. Worn points on conveyor belts.
2. Electrical hazards.
3. Small holes in flooring.
4. Entrapment risks.
5. Forklift movement.
6. Use of overhead cranes.
7. Leaks from machines.
8. Use of sharp hand tools.
9. Chemicals.
10. Transporting workers to and from the work environment.

## 6. Improving Communication Mechanisms

Communication in facilities is improved by identifying and recognizing hazards and adhering to the following procedures:

1. Placing safety signs (e.g., to indicate prohibitions of hazardous activities, like smoking in areas where flammable materials are stored or used).
2. Providing notice boards displaying the latest safe working policies, procedures, news, emergency responder contacts, and fire emergency instructions, etc.
3. Designing posters with information relevant to occupational safety and health (such as posters that explain the proper personal protective equipment for each hazard).
4. Holding regular meetings to talk with workers about the jobs they do and how to perform them safely.
5. Holding short Toolbox Talks on specific occupational safety and health topics related to the task at hand.
6. Conducting individual (formal or informal) meetings with workers.



In addition to improving communication, the following procedures should be followed:

1. Forming a workplace team to identify hazards.
2. Documenting hazards.
3. Reminding workers weekly about fixed and new hazards during the Toolbox Talk.
4. Posting specific hazards on a workplace board.
5. Sharing hazard information between facilities and alerting visitors to these hazards.
6. Covering hazards in pre-shift or production meetings.
7. Focusing on the importance of a maintenance program to correct defects and malfunctions in machinery and equipment used in the production process.
8. Conducting field meetings at each workstation in case of multiple workstations for holding Toolbox Talks.

Consideration of Changing Hazards, such as:

1. Hazards may change daily.
2. Parts stacked in unusual places.
3. New operations.
4. New urgent job (subcontractor).
5. Introduction of new tools.
6. Maintenance work being carried out.
7. New employees/workers.

Training new employees in safety is not enough, and the following procedures must be taken:

1. Inform new workers of all identified hazards in the workplace before starting work.
2. Emphasize the importance of working safely.

Toolbox Talks are an «added value» to the occupational safety and health program. They are cost-effective and help reduce workplace risks.

## Topics

Toolbox Talks are used for topics that cover a wide range of short training subjects in occupational safety and health, and to remind employees weekly or according to the facility system before starting work. These topics include:

1. Occupational Safety and Health Basics.
2. Office Safety.
3. Scaffolding Safety.
4. Ladder Safety.
5. Slip and Trip Hazards.
6. Lifting Hazards.
7. Back Safety during Various Work Postures.
8. Carbon Dioxide Hazards.
9. Carbon Monoxide Poisoning, the Silent Killer.
10. Lack of Attention.
11. Demolition Hazards.
12. Wearing Personal Protective Equipment.



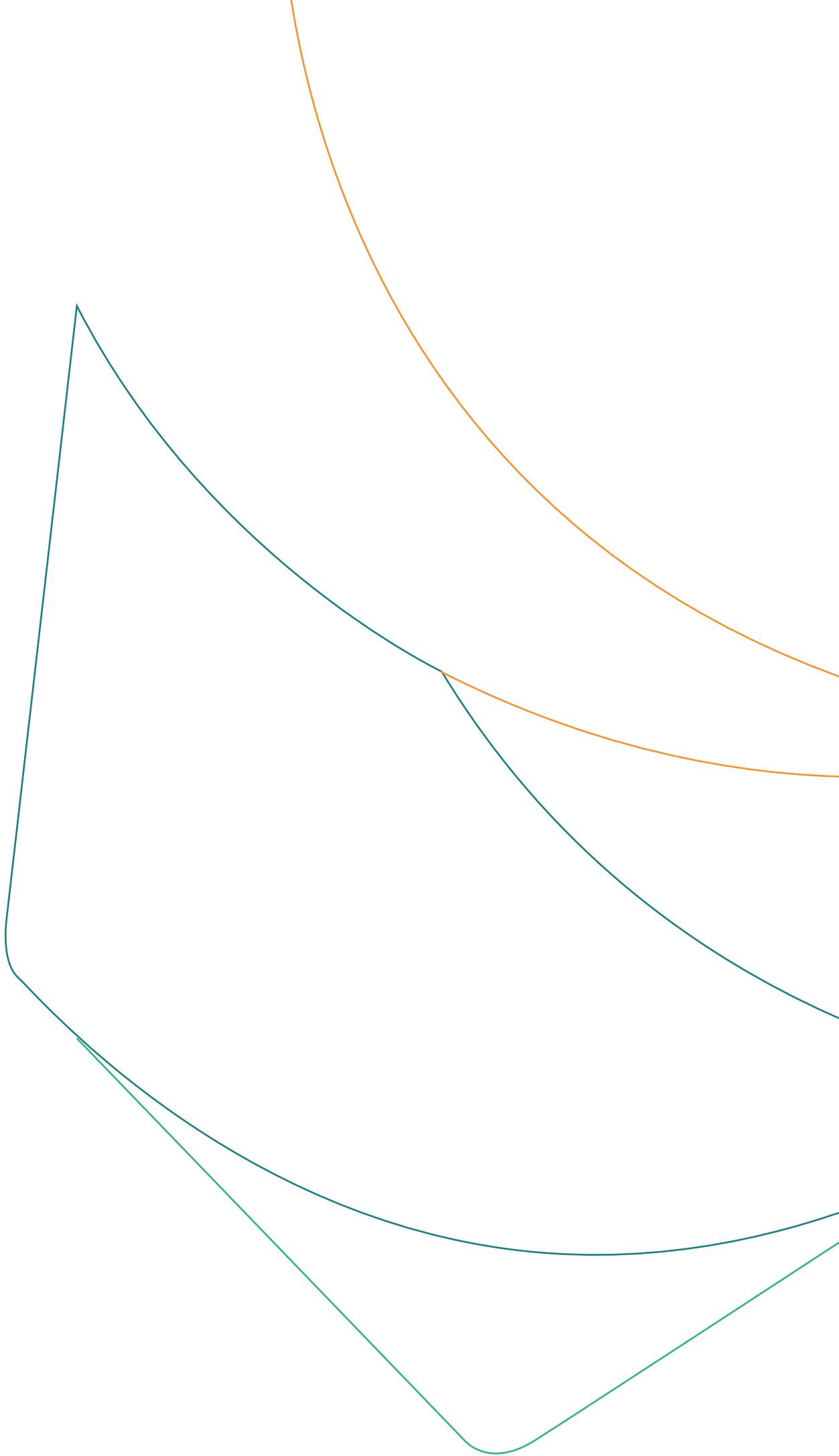
13. Electrical Connection Maintenance.
14. General Safety: Attitudes and Behavior.
15. General Safety: Harassment.
16. General Safety: Work Pressure.
17. General Safety: Fatigue.
18. Safe Use of Handcarts.
19. Awareness Hazards.
20. Workplace Organization.
21. Accident Reports and Investigations.
22. Machine Operation Safety.
23. Safe Work in Confined Spaces.
24. Lockout Program and Data Registration for Energy System Maintenance.
25. Electrical Safety.
26. Electric Welding Hazards.
27. Gas Welding Hazards.
28. Fall Hazards.
29. Stacking Hazards.
30. Hand Tool Operation.
31. General Fall Protection Equipment.
32. Personal Fall Protection Equipment.
33. Safe Operation of Power Tools.
34. Safe Operation of Forklifts.
35. Shift Worker Awareness.
36. Night Work.
37. Eye Protection Facts.
38. Signals.
39. Unsafe Behavior.
40. Unsafe Acts.
41. Sulfuric Acid Solution Warnings.
42. Instantaneous Ignition.
43. Hydraulic Hose Leak Hazards.
44. Use of Fire Extinguishers.
45. Ventilation Safety.
46. Watch Your Step.
47. Chemical Hazards.
48. Chemical Safety Tags.
49. Chemical Material Safety Data Sheets.
50. Hoisting Rope Safety.
51. Fire Fighting.
52. Bitter Cold Weather.
53. Hot Weather and Heatstroke.
54. Trench Work Hazards.
55. General Safety Tips.



- 56. General OSH Training.
- 57. Special Equipment Training.
- 58. Working at Heights.
- 59. Working Alone.
- 60. Communication.
- 61. Employee's Responsibilities.
- 62. Work Area Hazards.
- 63. Driving Tips, Transfers and Trailers.
- 64. Hazards Identification.
- 65. MSI & Ergonomics.

**Remember, safety is 50% awareness and 50% physical action  
If the worker has awareness, physical action will follow.  
If there is no awareness, there is no safety!**







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