

Safety First: Preventing Accidents in the Industrial Workplace

Thanks to comprehensive injury prevention programs, today's industrial work environment is safer than ever before. But despite extensive safety measures, accidents can still occur at any time. According to the National Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries, almost 6,000 American employees are killed on the job each year. Another 50,000 die from illnesses caused by exposure to hazardous or unsafe working conditions, and 6 million sustain non-fatal workplace injuries. These incidents have a massive impact on all industries, costing businesses billions of dollars every year.

When an employee is injured on the job, the effect can be widespread. The worker and the worker's family are now forced to cope with the sudden loss of income and benefits. The business may find itself in a position where financial compensation is required, in addition to the loss of manpower.

Doing everything you can to prevent injuries in the workplace is an intelligent investment that will benefit both the company and the people it depends on. Follow these tips to create an industrial injury prevention program that saves money while keeping your employees happy and safe.

Preventing Eye Injuries In The Workplace

More than 2,000 people injure their eyes at work every day, making eye incidents one of the most common work-related injuries. 1 out of every 10 of these cases requires missed recovery days, and 10 to 20 percent of all cases lead to temporary or permanent blindness.

The easiest way to instantly reduce the risk of eye injuries is to provide adequate safety eyewear to all employees. Proper eye protection addresses all of the common causes of eye injuries: flying objects, particles, chemicals, and tools. Make a careful assessment of the hazardous areas in your workplace, and then provide at-risk employees with safety goggles, full-face respirators, glasses, or welding helmets depending on the conditions.

Just how effective is safety eyewear? Prevent Blindness America's "Wise Owl" Program has recognized over 86,000 individuals whose sight was saved or protected by proper eye protection at work. Take advantage of this inexpensive investment to reduce the frequency of preventable eye injuries in the industrial environment.

Preventing Hearing Loss In The Workplace

Hearing loss is another common condition that can be prevented by taking simple safety precautions. Address hearing safety by providing employees who work in loud environments with ear plugs or ear muffs designed for their level of exposure. Make sure to routinely check hearing equipment for wear and tear that might reduce its effectiveness.

Some tasks require time spent in an environment louder than 85 decibels. If your employees work in these conditions, provide frequent breaks in addition to mandatory hearing protection. Reducing the amount of time spent in extremely loud settings can help prevent permanent damage to the sensitive inner ear.

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Make sure that employees who work in loud industrial environments have their hearing tested regularly. Experienced ear specialists and audiologists can diagnose conditions in their early and most treatable stages.

Preventing Falls In The Workplace

To prevent dangerous falls in the industrial workplace, examine work areas carefully to uncover hazardous conditions before employees ever step foot near them. Address obvious hazards with safety railings, harnesses, ropes, nets, or scaffolding. Routinely check these safety measures to make sure they are in good functioning order. If any unsafe conditions develop, do not wait to fix them! Prioritize safety and take care of them immediately, and do not allow any employees near the work area until the hazard is removed.

You can also take preventative measures against falls by ensuring proper lighting throughout the workspace. The easier it is to see, the less chance of a misstep or accidental fall. Staircases should be well-lit and completely free of any obstacles.

Make an effort to educate workers continuously about safety in the workplace. Use appropriate signage in higher-risk areas, and make sure employees are well-trained in the proper use of safety equipment. Workers will appreciate your efforts to keep them out of harm's way.

Preventing Head Injuries In The Workplace

Many head injuries occur when workers slip, trip, or fall - so it's important to follow the fall prevention guidelines outlined above. In addition, head injuries can be prevented by distributing hard hats and head safety equipment to protect workers in areas where objects are being moved overhead. Outline expectations to employees to make sure that objects are never moved when unprotected workers are present.

Hard hats should always be used in environments with exposed beams, pipes, or low-hanging obstacles. It's easy for busy employees to get distracted in the midst of work and bang their heads in these types of conditions, so make hard hats mandatory.

Training Employees and Promoting the "Safety First" Mindset

Complimenting effective safety gear with high-quality training significantly cuts the risk of industrial workplace accidents. Establish a focus on safety and consistently promote a "safety first" message to all employees as soon as they start working for your company. By encouraging this mindset, you can train employees to maintain a high level of awareness and caution that will help them naturally avoid accidents.

It's a good idea to schedule regular audits to stay on top of important safety issues throughout the year. Information gathered from these comprehensive safety checks can be used to create updated training and educational material that will further reduce the risk of accidents. It's your responsibility to dictate a responsible and safety-oriented mindset in all employees. Use regular internal communication to your advantage and reinforce the message repeatedly. When safety is clearly the company's number one priority, it becomes the top priority of its employees as well.

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