

Demolition Safety Planning Meeting Kit

Planning for a demolition project is just as important as actually doing the work. According to Cal/OSHA, a qualified person experienced in all phases of the demolition should conduct the demolition planning.

BEFORE THE START OF A DEMOLITION PROJECT

Consider the following when planning any demolition project

- The planning methods that will be used to bring the structure down.
- The necessary equipment to do the job.
- Proper permits and public utility notifications.

The demolition contractor is responsible for planning the wreckage of the structure, the equipment to do the work, informing workers of hazards and safety requirements, and public safety.

HOW TO AVOID DANGERS/HAZARDS IN DEMOLITION WORK

Falls from height: During demolition and dismantling, workers can be injured falling from edges, through openings, fragile surfaces, and partially demolished floors.

Duty holders have a responsibility to assess, eliminate and control the risks of falls from height.

Injury from falling materials: Workers and passers-by can be injured by the premature and uncontrolled collapse of structures, and by flying debris.

A safe system of work includes:

- covered walkways.
- using high-reach machines.
- reinforcing machine cabs so that drivers are not injured.
- training and supervising site workers.

Uncontrolled collapse: The structural survey should consider

- the age of the structure
- its previous use
- the type of construction
- nearby buildings or structures
- the weight of removed material or machinery on floors above ground level

Risks from connected services: Gas, electricity, water, and telecommunications services need to be isolated or disconnected before demolition work begins. If this is not possible, pipes and cables must be labelled clearly, to make sure they are not disturbed.

Traffic management: Effective traffic management systems are essential on site, to avoid putting workers at risk of being hit by vehicles turning, slewing, or reversing. Where possible, vision aids and zero tail swing machines should be used.

Hazardous materials: Hazardous materials that should be considered include dust, asbestos, and respirable crystalline silica (RCS). There may also be material or contamination on site that has not been cleared, for example:

- acids from industrial processes
- paints
- flammable liquids
- unidentified drums
- microbiological hazards (especially in old hospital buildings).

Noise and vibration: Frequent exposure to loud noise can permanently damage a persons hearing. Noise can also create a safety risk if it makes it difficult for workers to communicate effectively or stops them hearing warning signals.

Fire: Fire is a risk where hot work (using any tools that generate spark, flame or heat) is being done.

BEST DEMOLITION SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

1. **Equipment** – Employees should always be knowledgeable of all aspects of work, regardless of their specialty or area of work. It's important that each and every employee understands what equipment should be worn and present throughout the demolition. Make sure that each employee also knows and understands how to use each piece of equipment properly. This quick and simple sweep to make sure each employee has all the proper equipment required can help save lives and prevent any or all future injuries as you go throughout the demolition. In addition, make sure that each employee has a hard hat, as well as a mask, gloves, and work boots.
2. **Final sweep** – Always do a final sweep before demolition begins. It's absolutely recommended to go into each and every room, including closets, bathrooms and hallways, to assure that everyone and everything is out of the building. It's necessary to assure that each worker is out of the building and at a safe distance before demolition begins. Likewise, make sure that the building is monitored by employees to make sure that unauthorized people do not get close to the demolition site. If others are present, make sure all equipment is equipped and readily available to any newcomers. Assign someone to assure the final sweep has been made. Make sure that everyone knows who to report to. Once the final sweep is done, notify the person in charge.
3. **Experienced and trained employees** – It's absolutely necessary that only trained and experienced employees handle the more dangerous and explosive materials. These employees should be qualified, professional, mature and experienced enough to handle the responsibility and carefulness required by those handling explosives.
4. **Brace ceilings and walkways** – If for any reason anyone needs to enter the building, it's necessary for every ceiling and

walkway to be braced. This will easily provide extra support in case an accident occurs, helping prevent a huge number of accidents, injuries and even deaths.

5. **Cleaning up debris** – Make sure that all employees are wearing and equipped with the proper equipment to clean up any and all debris once the demolition has taken place. This equipment includes gloves, a mask and work boots.

FINAL WORD

Everyone involved in demolition activities must know what precautions are to be taken on site. Workplaces where employees are involved in taking decisions about health and safety are safer and healthier. Your employees are often the best people to understand the risks in their workplace.