Nine Basic Construction Safety Rules Meeting Kit

Construction worksites are an incredibly dangerous place to be. There are many safety hazards around every corner. To keep the workplace a safe environment, use these five helpful tips.

1. **Always wear your seatbelt** when in a vehicle or heavy equipment. Seatbelts are critical to preventing serious injuries and death while driving or operating. Motor vehicle crashes are still the number one cause of fatalities on the job in the United States.
2. **Always inspect equipment and tools.** Take the necessary time to inspect the tools and equipment you are using for work tasks. Properly repair broken tools or replace them all together. Make sure equipment is in good working order and all safety devices such as kill switches or equipment guards are in place and properly functioning.
3. **Always use fall protection when working at heights.** OSHA reports that excluding highway motor collisions, falls are the leading cause of fatalities in the construction industry. Guardrails or utilizing a full body harness with a self-retracting lanyard are two common safeguards to mitigate fall hazards.
4. **Stay of out the blind spots of heavy equipment.** Struck-by incidents, caught-in between incidents, and run over incidents occur too often when heavy equipment is operating near ground personnel. Always keep your distance, communicate, and use eye contact to ensure an operator sees you when around their equipment.
5. **Never put yourself in the line of fire.** Just like being in the blind spot of heavy equipment, there are many other ways you can find yourself in harm’s way at a construction site. Being underneath lifted loads, next to a pipe being cut that has stored energy, or working underneath equipment that is not properly cribbed up are three other examples of being in the line of fire.

6. **Utilize proper housekeeping measures to keep work areas clean.** Housekeeping is critical in preventing injuries and property loss. Injuries such as slips, trips, falls, lacerations, sprains, strains, etc. can be reduced from keeping work areas organized and clean. Property damage and loss such as tools or materials being crushed due to improper storage is another common result of poor housekeeping.
7. **Make sure chemicals are properly labeled and stored.** OSHA issues many citations regarding the hazard communication standard every year. Improper labeling and storage can lead to injuries or property loss due to fires, corrosive properties, etc.
8. **Communicate hazards to others.** Never just assume someone knows the hazards of a work task, especially if they are new or new to the task. As conditions change communicate what needs done and what hazards the change in plans could bring.
9. **Stop work when needed to address hazards.** Always stop work when needed to get hazards mitigated to make it safe to continue. Whether you need to involve other personnel such as a supervisor or you need to take time to get the right tool for the job, always take the time to do so.

The Basics of Safety

Leaders in the field of occupational accident prevention have concluded that there are specific reasons why accidents occur. They found that worker safety is dependent on worker behavior and human factors. They developed safety rules worth repeating over and over again.

- **STAY ALERT** – and stay alive. The more awake a worker is, the less likely he or she is to get hurt. If you are unsure how to operate equipment or perform a task, ask your supervisor. Don’t guess and muddle through. Make sure you know in advance the correct, safe way to do it.
- **WEAR THE RIGHT CLOTHES** – work clothes should fit properly. Anything that can catch in machinery or trip you up is hazardous. Wear protective clothing and equipment as

required.

- **USE THE RIGHT TOOLS** – if you need a hammer, get a hammer. It may be handier to use a pair of pliers, wrench or screw driver, but you are more likely to get injured.
- **LEARN HOW TO LIFT** – Lifting takes more than muscle; it is an art. Don’t try to show how strong you are; you may end up in a hospital. Get help to handle anything that is too heavy or cumbersome for you.
- **DON’T BE A PRANKSTER** – practical jokes and horseplay can be dangerous, especially around heavy machinery. If you feel the urge to play, resist it until after work.
- **BE TIDY** – Good housekeeping reduces hazards in the workplace or your home. Always put away tools when they are not in use. Keep the floors clean, pick up scraps and wipe up spills. A slip or trip can be fatal.
- **REPORTING IS IMPORTANT** – Never fail to report accidents, defective equipment and or unsafe conditions.
- **GET FIRST AID IMMEDIATELY** – if you’re hurt – even if it seems minor. Neglect of an injury may lead to serious infection, weeks of lost time, and possibly permanent injury.
- **BACK YOUR SAFETY PROGRAM** – If you have an idea you believe will reduce accidents, tell your supervisor about it. Set an example by obeying safety rules. Cooperate with your safety committee.
- **NEVER TAKE A CHANCE** – Next to sheer carelessness, short cuts are probably the biggest killer of all. To save a minute or two, you may lose a lifetime. Whatever you are doing, if you are not doing it safely, you are not doing it right!

FINAL WORD

By following the five tips above, you can ensure that your construction site is a safe and efficient place to be. These are just a few suggestions for workplace safety; there are many more considerations that you should take into account when trying to protect your workers. However, no matter what you do and what changes you make, safety should always be your first priority.