Working Alongside Subcontractors Meeting Kit

No matter what industry you are in you are inevitably going to work around subcontractors or vendors quite often. The services of other companies are necessary to move work forward. Like any new addition or change in a workplace, subcontractors can create many hazards for everyone working there. It is important to consider the hazards created when utilizing subcontractors and what can be done to mitigate the hazards.

WORKING WITH SUBCONTRACTORS HAS DANGERS

Any amount of new work tasks, no matter how small, will create additional hazards in that workplace for the employees who work there every day. The actual work tasks being completed by the subcontractor along with what is already occurring at the worksite will determine the specific hazards that need addressed.

The employees of the subcontractor can also be put in danger by the work that your company is completing. Subcontractors are often not familiar with the worksite as a whole or the specific work processes occurring in the facility or at the jobsite they are completing their work in. Even if you were experienced in your position, the unfamiliarity of the work environment made work more dangerous.

WORK WITH SUBCONTRACTORS

Meet Prior to Starting

Each day on a construction site can be different. Tasks get completed and need to keep moving on to the next step. Meet with the subcontractors at the beginning of each day, that way you can arrange a good schedule. One that is safe for all crew members who are working.

Speak Up

If you are working and notice something not done correctly, don’t hesitate to take it to a supervisor. When a subcontractor’s employee isn’t following protocol, make it known. This is going to help the worksite be safe and avoid unnecessary injuries.

Communication Will Help

Talk to them about the safety precautions that are in place. Safety precautions are going to vary depending on the work getting done. The subcontractors can’t follow them if they are not made aware of them.

Stop Work For Hazards

When a hazard has been brought to attention, all work needs to stop. This way the issue can be safely taken care of. You always want to avoid injuries to crew members at all costs.

Get Their Point Of View As Well

Talk to the subcontractor and see how they normally work. Figure out what their expectations are and how they execute their jobs. This way you can work together and make a plan to work for both people.

Delegate Work Area Limits

If you have several workers present in one area, it will become a hazard. Too many workers in one area at the same time becomes a safety hazard. Talk with the subcontractor and make a plan for your crews. Have designated times that each task is to be executed to avoid injuries.

Subcontractors

Subcontractors are needed to finish many jobs when it comes to construction work. This is a common practice that is done in this field. It will increase the hazards of the site due to having extra bodies present.

That is why communicating with each other is so important. All aspects should be talked about. Not once, but throughout the

entire project. Take time to discuss the project with subcontractors before they begin their work. Discuss topics such as:

- **Concerns**
- **Hazards**
- **Plans**
- **Mitigation**

BEST PRACTICES WHEN WORKING WITH SUBCONTRACTORS IN FIELD SERVICE

- Talk to your peers in the industry and ask about recommendations and use industry listing websites to find the right subcontractor for your needs.
- Meet with the subcontractor prior to work beginning for the day to discuss work plans.
- Communicate your work crew’s scope of work, the hazards created by the work you are doing, along with the safeguards that need to be implemented and followed in order to mitigate those hazards.
- Ask the subcontractor for their scope of work as well as their plan to mitigate the hazards of their work.
- Establish work area limits for each work crew and delineate walking paths if necessary.
- Schedule or work around each other’s work tasks when possible to avoid taking unnecessary risks. (An example of unnecessary risk due to poor planning: The subcontractor working in an aerial lift at the same time your crew is installing pipe nearly directly underneath of the lift.)
- Continue to keep open communication between each work group affected by the subcontractor’s scope of work each day as well as the entirety of the project.
- Speak up to a supervisor if the subcontractor’s employees are not following site specific safety rules or procedures.
- Always stop work whenever a hazard is created that could injure anyone in that work area.

FINAL WORD

Subcontractors are necessary for the completion of work in every industry. Even if they are an outstanding company with an excellent safety record the mere fact that they are completing additional work in your workplace means new hazards will be present. Take the time up front to address work plans, concerns, hazards, mitigation actions, etc. to help to ensure the job goes smoothly. If conditions change where people are at risk for injury or property can be damaged, always use stop work authority to get the situation corrected before proceeding.