

Weekly Safety Training Topic



SAFETY & HEALTH SERVICES

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COMPANY NAME: _____

GIVEN BY: _____

LOCATION: _____

DATE: _____

PREVENTING REPETITIVE MOTION INJURIES

Not satisfied with how low the rate of Muscular Skeletal Disorders was among its employees, Hensel Phelps decided to improve its ergonomics program. The company hired a consultant to implement a pilot injury prevention program at the Company's Victorville, California construction site. The consultant's team interviewed the individual employees to determine what specific job tasks each employee performed, and conducted an on-site analysis of the work being performed by the employees. The consultant then created customized injury-prevention programs for the employees and assisted with the implementation of the stretching and strengthening programs. The end result was that each employee's body was prepared to complete the job tasks the employee faces each day.

The establishment of a job-specific and employee-specific customized stretching and strengthening program resulted in 104,000 labor hours for this Construction Company with no reported work-related musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs).

OSHA has a four-pronged comprehensive approach to ergonomics designed to quickly and effectively address musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) in the workplace. The four segments of OSHA's strategy for reducing injuries and illnesses from MSDs in the workplace are:

1. **Guidelines**– OSHA will develop industry or task specific guidelines for a number of industries, including construction, based on current incidence rates and available information about effective and feasible solutions.
2. **Enforcement** - OSHA will conduct inspections for ergonomic hazards and issue citations under the General Duty Clause and issue ergonomic hazard alert letters where appropriate.
3. **Outreach and Assistance** - OSHA will provide assistance to businesses, particularly small businesses, and help them proactively address ergonomic issues in the workplace.
4. **National Advisory Committee** - OSHA will charter an advisory committee that will be authorized to, among other things, identify gaps in research to the application of ergonomics and ergonomic principles in the workplace.

How do I look for conditions that may contribute to musculoskeletal disorders?

Both work-related and non-work related conditions can either individually, or by interacting with each other, give rise to musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs). There are several approaches that may be used to determine whether conditions in the workplace might be contributing to employees developing MSDs. These approaches can be used individually or in combination.

Review and analyze injury and illness records to determine whether there is a pattern of ergonomic-related injuries in certain jobs or work tasks using:

- OSHA 300 Logs and supporting 301
- Workers' Compensation claims

Analyze the jobs or work tasks themselves to identify potential ergonomic problems before employee injuries occur. Determine if jobs present ergonomic risks that may contribute to musculoskeletal disorders.

Analysis tools may help in analyzing jobs. While there is no one size fits all approach, there are numerous non-OSHA, voluntary analysis tools that may be used to learn more about potential ergonomic risks associated with jobs.

Seek employee input about the existence of ergonomic problems related to particular jobs or work tasks. This may be accomplished, among other ways:

- by speaking with employees
- by conducting symptom surveys
- through use of employee questionnaires.

Be aware of common contributing conditions within your industry or job classifications. If other companies in the same industry have ergonomic-related problems, then it is possible these potential problems are also your concern. Obtain information from others in your industry:

- to see what problems others have experienced in their operations
- to gain a better understanding of potential problems that may exist in your workplace.

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