

TOOLBOX TALK #3

CREATE EFFECTIVE SAFE WORK PRACTICES



You may have created workplace policies and procedures, but have you ever asked yourself how effective they are?

According to “Nine Elements of a Successful Safety and Health System,” published by the National Safety Council, “Employers are more likely to follow safe work practices they understand.”

Effective safe work practices are:

Clearly stated. They use simple, easy-to-understand words in an active voice. Examples: “Wear hardhats onsite at all times” and “Report all injuries, no matter how slight.”

Positively phrased. Employees are more likely to follow a positive statement, such as, “Always wear gloves on the job” than they would a negatively worded version of that same rule, “Don’t forget to wear your gloves.”

Fair. Meaningless or excessively restrictive practices and selective enforcement can damage the credibility of all work practices.

Consistently communicated. Make sure you’re sharing safe work practices in every meeting, discussing them during performance reviews, integrating them into department procedures, publishing them in a company newsletter, posting them on posters throughout the workplace, handing out pocket cards with them, etc.