

RISK MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

Safety Inspections

INTRODUCTION

All managers, supervisors and employees carry out informal inspections or assessments of the workplace as they go about their normal work, but there is great value in undertaking specific reviews for the sole purpose of identifying loss producing situations and monitoring the effectiveness of existing control procedures.

There are a number of techniques available including basic safety inspections where an inspection team uses check lists to look at plant, working practices, personal protective equipment, fire precautions, etc.

These inspections can also form part of the assessment process required under current legislation, e.g. Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations.

To obtain maximum benefit:

- ◆ persons carrying out the inspection should have instruction on what to look for
- ◆ check lists should not be so restrictive that they prevent comment on other unsafe acts or conditions seen
- ◆ inspections should be undertaken on a routine schedule.

This Risk Control Note offers advice on the issues to consider and contains a specimen check list suitable for a general manufacturing environment. This can be readily adapted for other working environments.

INSPECTION CHECK LIST

Cranes and Lifting Tackle

Accidents from poor use of lifting equipment are common. Check points:

- ◆ Is the operator trained and authorised on the plant?
- ◆ Are correct lifting methods being used?
- ◆ Is lifting tackle in good order and well stored when not in use?
- ◆ Are safe working loads marked and statutory inspections in order?

Fork Trucks

Accidents cause numerous injuries and considerable damage. Check points:

- ◆ Is the operator authorised?
- ◆ Have routine checks/inspections been undertaken?
- ◆ Is the equipment being correctly used?
- ◆ Are pedestrian and fork truck routes segregated?

Machinery

Some dangerous parts are easy to recognize. Others may only become dangerous during repair, cleaning or test. Check points:

- ◆ Are all dangerous parts guarded from any approach?
- ◆ Are the guards in good condition and properly secured?
- ◆ Are guards tested, e.g. to check operation of interlocks?
- ◆ Are stop/start controls easily accessible and working?
- ◆ Have required statutory/company inspections been undertaken?
- ◆ Is equipment under repair suitably isolated?

Electricity

Electricity is safe when systems are competently installed and regularly inspected. Check points:

- ◆ Obvious signs of abuse or damage.
- ◆ Unnecessary use of trailing cables and adaptors.
- ◆ Portable equipment in sound condition.
- ◆ Control boxes, etc., suitably labelled.
- ◆ Poor standards in temporary installations.

Chemical/Materials Risks

These may have a short or a long term effect. Check points:

- ◆ Are containers sound, clearly marked and kept closed when not in use?
- ◆ Have safe working practices and emergency procedures been developed; do employees know them?
- ◆ Is ventilation and LEV equipment maintained, effective and properly used?
- ◆ Are open tanks adequately protected and bulk tanks banded?
- ◆ Are systems for vessel entry and cleaning being followed?
- ◆ Are there any hazards from waste materials?
- ◆ Does the atmosphere seem dusty, fume filled or noxious?

Protective Equipment

Check points:

- ◆ Is appropriate equipment available, properly used and inspected?
- ◆ Is it undamaged and a good fit?
- ◆ Are warning notices/instructions posted?
- ◆ Is emergency equipment properly located?
- ◆ Are there storage arrangements for items not in use?

Fire and Emergency Precautions

Check points:

- ◆ Are extinguishers and hose reels properly located?
- ◆ Are fire doors openable and unobstructed?
- ◆ Have fire/smoke stop doors been wedged open?
- ◆ Has the alarm been tested in the last 3 months?
- ◆ Are there routine fire evacuation drills?
- ◆ Are "no smoking" signs being observed?
- ◆ Are gas cylinders and flammable liquids correctly stored?
- ◆ Are quantities of flammables in workrooms kept to a minimum?
- ◆ Are there adequate arrangements for waste?

Manual Handling

Poor handling practices account for 25% of notifiable injuries. Cumulative strain is a common feature. Check points:

- ◆ What weights are being lifted?
- ◆ Are there features which make handling difficult, e.g. sharp edges, awkward shape, moving contents, poor floors, changes in level?
- ◆ Are established handling practices being used?
- ◆ Have employees received any training?
- ◆ Can manual effort be eliminated or reduced?
- ◆ Do the activities have a risk from repetitive movements?

Access Equipment

Check points:

- ◆ Ladders in good order, lashed and footed.
- ◆ Scaffold towers on level ground with wheels chocked.
- ◆ Handrails and scaffold boards correctly in place.

Hand Tools

These are tools for which the hand provides the motive force. Accidents arise from human error, incorrect tool for job, badly maintained equipment as well as deliberate misuse. Check points:

- ◆ Are the correct tools being used?
- ◆ Is the tool in good condition, e.g. handles secure?
- ◆ Are tools being modified, e.g. extension bars to spanners?

Workplace Conditions

Defects in workplaces account for the greatest proportion of accidents.

Check points:

- ◆ Are floors and stairs clean and free from slippery substances?
- ◆ Are floors, stairs, handrails mechanically sound?
- ◆ Is there adequate space for the activities?
- ◆ Are gangways clear with tidy material storage?
- ◆ Are racking systems sound and correctly loaded?
- ◆ Are stillages, boxes, crates in good repair?
- ◆ Is there a procedure to deal with spillages?
- ◆ Is there adequate lighting?
- ◆ Are tank covers, manholes, etc., in place?
- ◆ Are there unnecessary trailing cables and services pipes?

Welfare Provisions

Check points:

- ◆ Adequate first aid provided.
- ◆ Soap, towels, hot water, barrier creams in washrooms.
- ◆ Canteens and mess-rooms in a clean state.

Miscellaneous

There should be a section to allow comment on issues not covered above.

For further assistance on this or any other risk control topic please contact the Regional Survey Control Unit through your Royal and SunAlliance Regional Centre or through your insurance adviser.

SAFETY INSPECTION

DEPARTMENT:
INSPECTION BY:
REINSPECTION BY:

DATE:

CATEGORY	UNACCEPTABLE FEATURES	ACTION TAKEN
Cranes/lifting tackle		
Fork trucks		
Machinery		
Electrical systems		
Chemical handling/ storage/use		
Protective equipment		
Fire precautions		
Manual handling		
Access equipment		
Hand tools		
Workplace conditions		
Storage/housekeeping		
First aid		
Welfare facilities		
Miscellaneous		

Signed: