

Contractor Safety Quiz



QUESTION

What are the most effective ways to monitor contractor safety performance'

ANSWER

Periodic inspections, jobsite walk ' through and annual audits are the most effective and practical methods to evaluate and monitor contractor safety performance.

WHY IS IT RIGHT

PREVENTION

When contractor perform services at employer worksite, a detailed contract and contractor safety program protects the health and safety of both employees and contractors. The employer and the contractor share an obligation to communicate planned work activities, the hazards involved, and the contracted tasks, as well as the training, tools, and equipment that all employees will need.

A **Strong Contractor Safety Program**'one that prequalifies contractors before they are hired and monitors and manages ongoing safety performance'can ensure that contractors are adequately equipped to mitigate hazards.

This can help to prevent worker injuries, protect corporate reputation, support compliance with government regulations, and avoid hefty fines associated with violations.

'We're in an industry with a lot of regulations,' said a NAEM participant committed to strengthening contractor safety management. 'We're responsible for our contractors and held accountable for their performance. We need to manage them because we have strong performance and safety numbers and we want to keep it that way.'

Business drivers for creating a more strategic contractor safety management program include the following:

- Rising safety incident or injury rates.
- Regulatory requirements.
- Benchmarking best practices.

- Environmental, social and governance reporting/stakeholder expectations.
- Enterprise risk management.

BEST PRACTICES

Five Best Practices to Master Contractor Safety Management

1. Ensure that safety and expectations are communicated through induction training.

Safety training is one of the most impactful tools companies have for sharing their safety culture throughout their workforce, including their contracted workers. What better way to ensure your workforce's safety readiness than to train them before they set foot on a job site'

Onboarding or induction training communicates safety expectations and trains workers to safely perform job duties before they come to work. Typically instructor-led, the detailed training efficiently and effectively prepares contractors to safely operate machinery and understand how to mitigate the unique safety hazards of their jobs.

It often includes the company's safety and emergency procedures, work permits, and site requirements. Requiring contractors to complete induction training provides assurance that they are prepared with the most effective, relevant training for the jobs they are hired to do. Use of badging or other technology-based tools to enable easy verification of training completion before a contractor goes to work is key to ensuring compliance.

2. Build safety requirements into contracts and accounts payable processes.

Contracts help to clearly establish your organization's expectations regarding its contractors' safety preparedness and performance. Legal contract language should require their compliance with federal, state and local regulatory requirements, along with company-specific health and safety requirements. This may include participation in the company's safety prequalification program administered through a third-party provider and maintenance of an acceptable safety score in their contractor management system.

In addition, some organizations also tie meeting contractor safety requirements into their accounts payable processes to help motivate and enforce contractor compliance. For example, when contractors don't maintain their compliance, as evidenced by an acceptable safety score in the contractor management system, payment is withheld until compliance is achieved.

3. Establish and track contractor safety KPIs.

Key performance indicators (KPIs)'such as total number of safety-related incidents and lost time rates'are one of the newest tools for advancing contractor safety.

EHS leaders rely heavily on safety metrics to create awareness of safety adherence and motivate workers to improve their performance. Many companies leverage a third-party software provider to host a digital dashboard that features the company's key safety-related KPIs for its contractors.

Clearly visible analysis of KPIs that represent safety adherence and progress can help decrease serious incident rates by holding department directors accountable for them. Regularly scheduled meetings to discuss performance metrics, including any incidents that occurred along with their root causes and corrective actions, can help teams strategize for continued improvement.

4. Leverage audits and incorporate safety performance into post-project evaluations.

Periodic on-site inspections, jobsite walk-throughs and annual audits are effective ways to monitor contractor safety performance. These can be conducted by internal resources or some organizations leverage an outside vendor to perform these audits, supplementing their internal resources to give them more eyes in the field.

Organizations with advanced contractor safety programs go beyond contractor prequalification and monitoring by integrating safety performance into post-project evaluations and close-out conversations. The company relies on the same general contractors for various projects, so they can regularly evaluate their performance and collaborate with them on subcontractor management to monitor and continually improve safety adherence.

The results of contractor safety audits and post-project evaluations can also be shared with supply chain, providing that part of the organization with additional metrics to monitor contractor performance, manage the relationship, and make decisions regarding inclusion in future bid invitations.

5. Leverage technology and third-party vendor support.

Gathering, verifying and auditing contractors' health and safety metrics and safety programs are not quick or easy tasks. According to EHS Today's 2019 National Safety Survey, leveraging technology for assistance is one of the most prominent industry trends. Technology, such as contractor management software solutions, modernizes contractor safety management for more efficient, effective results.

Survey respondents with advanced programs rely on third-party providers with technology solutions that are backed by safety expertise to bring added capacity. A provider with expertise in contractor safety management can help standardize the prequalification process across the organization and provide clear visibility into whether a contractor company meets its safety expectations when assessing potential hires. This type of solution also frees up internal resources by handling time-consuming collection and review of safety program information from contractors and, at the individual worker-level, can provide a clear picture of contract workers' training and readiness to work, and to help flag workers in need of additional training.

WHY IS EVERYTHING ELSE WRONG

HOST WORKSITES / HOST EMPLOYER

An increasing number of workers today are assigned by staffing agencies to work at specific **HOST WORKSITES** under the direction and control of the **HOST EMPLOYER**. Examples include seasonal workers, such as delivery drivers and warehouse workers, who may be placed in both short – and long-term assignments. In these

situations, it is important for the staffing agency and the host employer to communicate and coordinate to provide and maintain a safe work environment for their workers.

In other situations, some workers are employed by a **host employer** and others by a contractor or subcontractor. Examples include electrical or mechanical contractors working in a facility, a vendor installing or maintaining equipment, or long-term contractors providing building cleaning and maintenance. OSHA refers to these as “multiemployer” worksites. In these circumstances, it is important that each employer and contractor consider how its work and safety activities can affect the safety of other employers and workers at the site.

TEMPORARY WORKER / MULTIEMPLOYER

In both temporary worker and multiemployer situations, safety is enhanced if employers establish mechanisms to coordinate their efforts and communicate effectively to afford all workers equal protection against hazards. These mechanisms include measures to ensure that all workers on site (and their representatives) can participate in preventing injuries and illnesses. Failure to take these steps may undermine safety programs. For example, if the different employers have inconsistent policies for when and where to wear personal protective equipment, workers may mistakenly believe that the equipment is not needed, leading to injury. Inconsistent safety policies may also cause workers to question the credibility of safety and health programs, resulting in less meaningful employee engagement and participation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To ensure the safety and health of all parties, the following procedures be implemented.

- **Establish Effective Communication**

Each **host employer** establishes and implements a procedure to ensure the exchange of information about hazards present on site and the hazard control measures in place. Thus, all workers on the site are aware of worksite hazards, and the methods and procedures needed to control exposures to them.

How It Is Done

- The **host employer** communicates with contractors and staffing agencies to determine which among them will implement and maintain the various parts of the safety and health program, to ensure protection of all on-site workers before work begins. These determinations can be included in contract documents that define the relationships between the parties.
- The **host employer** establishes and implements procedures to exchange information with contractors and staffing agencies about hazards present in the workplace and the measures that have been implemented to prevent or control such hazards.
- The **host employer** gathers and disseminates information sufficient to enable each employer to assess hazards encountered by its workers and to avoid creating hazards that affect workers on the site.
- **Contractors and staffing agencies regularly give the host employer** any information about injuries, illnesses, hazards, or concerns reported by their workers and the results of any tracking or trend analysis they

perform.

- Each **contractor** establishes and implements a procedure for providing the **host employer** with information about the hazards and control measures associated with the work being done by its workers and the procedures it will use to protect workers on the site.
 - The **host employer** gives contract employers and staffing agencies the right to conduct site visits and inspections and to access injury and illness records and other safety and health information.
 - The **host employer** communicates with **contractors** and staffing agencies and their workers about nonroutine and emergency hazards and emergency procedures.
 - Information is communicated before on-site work starts and, as needed, if conditions change.
- **Establish Effective Co-ordination**

Host employers, contractors, and staffing agencies coordinate on work planning, scheduling, and resolving program differences to identify and work out any concerns or conflicts that could impact safety or health.

How It Is Done

Host employers:

- Include in contracts and bid documents any safety-related specifications and qualifications and ensure that contractors and staffing agencies selected for the work meet those requirements.
- Identify issues that may arise during on-site work and include procedures to be used by the host employer and contractors and/or staffing agencies for resolving any conflicts before work starts.

Host employers coordinate with contractors and staffing agencies to:

- Ensure that work is planned and scheduled to minimize impacts on safety.
- Ensure that staffing agency workers are adequately trained and equipped before arriving on the worksite.
- Harmonize their safety and health policies and procedures to resolve important differences, so that all workers at the site have the same protection and receive consistent safety information.

Host employers and staffing agencies:

- Work together to deal with unexpected staffing needs by ensuring that enough trained and equipped workers are available or that adequate lead time is provided to train and equip workers.
- Make sure that managers with decision-making authority are available and prepared to deal with day-to-day coordination issues.
- How to contact the contact or staffing firm if they have a safety concern.
- What to do in case of an emergency.