FIELD LEVEL HAZARD ASSESSMENTS

TOOLBOX SAFETY TALK

A **Hazard Assessment** is a written assessment that applies to the work site or work activities reviewed. It must show the workplace hazards and the methods used to eliminate or control the hazards identified. The assessment must show the date and who completed the assessment. Sometimes, you can establish these hazard assessments ahead of conducting the task.

A Risk Assessment is an evaluation of the risks associated with hazards that you identified. You must look at how likely (probable) and serious (severe) the risk may be. The risk assessment process helps with decision making and dealing with the identified hazards to ensure worker safety. You typically conduct this right before the activity takes place to determine which hazards you must control based upon their likelihood and severity.

FIELD LEVEL HAZARD ASSESSMENTS

These assessments establish which tasks workers can safely perform at the work site **before work begins**. They account for information that is only available at the site. Like any hazard assessment, the Field Level Hazard Assessment looks at:

- the **people** who are working that day (shift):
  - Are they the right people to do the work?
  - Do they have enough experience, training and supervision?;
  - Are they rested well enough to do the job safely?
- the equipment:
  - Is it in safe operating condition?;
- the **materials** workers are using:
  - Is it approved for the job according to engineers manufacturers?,
- the **environment**:
  - Does the weather or temperature affect how to do the work safely?
- the procedures:
  - Do they match the conditions of the day?

Without the assessment, workers cannot appropriately manage for specific hazards of the day.

AT THE WORK SITE: FIELD LEVEL HAZARD ASSESSMENT

Together, the supervisor and the workers:

- look at the work;
- think about each job step and identify possible hazards;
- assess risk in relation to the conditions of the day;
- identify ways of controlling the risk, or reschedule the day's work until controls are in place; and
- document observations, the risk assessment, and controls.

ARE YOU PERFORMING FIELD HAZARD/RISK ASSESSMENTS?

- Review the process your organization uses to do the assessments at a worksite on the day (or shift, if applicable).
- Do you have a field level hazard assessment form? Can you use a notebook or toolbox log book to document?
- Do you have checklists that reflect the type of work your organization performs?
- Are your supervisors and workers documenting the conditions of the day (shift)?
- Where and how does your organization file and maintain the documentation?

REVIEWING FIELD LEVEL HAZARD/RISK ASSESSMENTS

You can use the Field Level Assessments to improve your Occupational Health and Safety Program. Reviewing them can identify:

- trends that you may need to address in your OHS program.
- Do you need a policy, more training, or contractor management considerations?
- Review recommendations for hazard controls to be put in place.