Workplace Safety
It’s Everyone’s Concern

Compiled for Ce-Classes.com
Learning Objectives

- After completing this course, participants will:
  - Identify why workplace safety is important for all employees
  - Describe causes of workplace accidents
  - Identify strategies for preventing workplace accidents and improving safety
Workplace Safety

Why should you care about safety?

- Added Expenses
- Lost Wages
- Pain
- Workman’s Comp
- Loss of Benefits (sick time)
- And other reasons

Use this font size and location for any citations for the content on the page – if you need 2 lines for the citation that is OK.
Common Concerns

- Getting hurt isn’t fun
- Nobody likes getting hurt
- It interferes with all aspects of your life
- Not all pain is gain

Hogan, 2012
Costs of Accidents on the Job

- There are both direct and indirect costs
- You end up paying some of them

Hogan, 2012
Costs of Accidents on the Job

- Direct Costs
  - Medical Costs (including worker’s comp)
  - Indemnity Payments

Hogan, 2012
Costs of Accidents on the Job

- Indirect Costs
  - Time Lost (by worker and supervisor)
  - Schedule delays
  - Training new employees
  - Cleanup time / equipment repairs
  - Legal fees

Hogan, 2012
Costs of Accidents

- The Iceberg Effect
- On average, the indirect costs of accidents exceed the direct costs by a 4:1 ratio

Hogan, 2012
Common Concerns

- Legal issues and liability
- The agency may not be the only party liable for accidents

Hogan, 2012
Common Concerns

- If you didn’t follow policy or contributed to the violation of safety rules or regulations:
  - You can be named in a lawsuit
  - Criminal charges may be filed against you
  - You can be cited by an enforcement agency
  - You can be fined by an enforcement agency
  - Your lab/workplace can be shut down by an enforcement agency

Hogan, 2012
Personal Liability

- Because of personal liability, you can be named as a defendant in a lawsuit.
- Working for the agency or company does not protect you.
- If you violated agency safety policy – the agency lawyers won’t defend you either.

Hogan, 2012
Personal Liability

- You can have criminal charges filed against you.
- Negligent supervisors and employers have been charged with manslaughter

Hogan, 2012
Legal Issues and Liability

- You can be cited by an enforcement agency
- State Department of Labor (DOL)
- DOL can inspect agencies
- EPA
- Federal OSHA has authority to get involved
Legal Issues and Liability

- You can be fined by an enforcement agency
- State DOL will issue citations first
- EPA can levy fines...
Cease and desist orders: if the violations are serious enough, agencies such as DOL, OSHA, and the EPA can (and will) shut down the job site until the problems are corrected.
How Do You Protect Yourself

- There are things that you can do to protect yourself from personal liability

Hogan, 2012
What Causes Accidents

- Accidents are caused by:
- Unsafe conditions
- Unsafe acts

Hogan, 2012
Accident Causes

- **Unsafe Conditions**
  - Easiest to correct (and very cost effective)
  - Easiest to prevent
  - Safety audits
  - Safety inspections
  - Maintenance schedules for equipment
  - Encouraging employee reporting
  - Good housekeeping

Hogan, 2012
Accident Causes

- Unsafe Acts
- Most difficult to address
- Changing behavior isn’t easy
- Best prevented by developing a “safety culture”
- Don’t do anything you wouldn’t do in front of your supervisor – a good rule of thumb.

Hogan, 2012
Employees should be evaluated on their safety performance

- Doing a job correctly includes doing it safely
Establishing Accountability

- Charge back systems
- Safety goals
  - Accident costs
    - Equipment damage
    - Lost time
  - Accident rates
    - First aid #s
    - Workers comp #s
  - Loss ratios (including automobile rates)
- Safety Activities
  - Safety meetings, inspections, using PPE

Hogan, 2012
Defining Responsibilities

Employee responsibilities include:

- Recognizing safety hazards
- Reporting safety hazards
- Maintaining good housekeeping
- Working safely
- Using personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Making the most of safety training

Hogan, 2012
Defining Responsibilities

- Employer responsibilities include:
  - Providing personal protective equipment

  From OSHA 1910.132: “Protective equipment, including personal protective equipment for eyes, face, head, and extremities, protective clothing, respiratory devices, and protective shields and barriers, shall be provided, used, and maintained in a sanitary and reliable condition wherever it is necessary by reason of hazards of processes or environment, chemical hazards, radiological hazards, or mechanical irritants encountered in a manner capable of causing injury or impairment in the function of any part of the body through absorption, inhalation or physical contact.”

Hogan, 2012
So what does all this mean?

It means that safety is everybody’s business.

From the moral aspect to the legal aspect, we all benefit from a safe work environment.
Responding to Accidents

- Do not attempt to move someone who may have broken bones or a neck injury – unless not doing so endangers their life.
- Ensure that you or someone nearby by calls 911 for help.
Preventing Accidents

- This is linked to unsafe conditions
- Keeping your environment clean and functional is key
Preventing Accidents

- Call maintenance or correct/clean up
  - Wet floors
  - Spills
  - Cluttered or obstructed areas or walkways
  - Poorly lit work areas
Common Workplace Safety Concerns

- Electrical shock
- Slip and fall
- Blood borne pathogens
- Repetitive injuries
Other Workplace Hazards

- Electrical hazards include
  - Electrical shock
  - Electrical burns
  - Electrocution
Electrical Shock

- Occurs when current passes through the body.
- Shock can range from mild (tingling) to deadly (electrocution) depending upon:
  - The amount of current
  - The path of the current through the body
  - The amount of time the body is exposed
Electrical Safety Tips

- Keep cords out of the line of traffic
- Unplug equipment by pulling the plug not the cord
- Do not use equipment with faulty cords or visible damage to wires
- Do not use electrical equipment in wet areas
- Do not overload outlets
Falls

- Can occur due to
- Uneven surfaces
- Wet (or just cleaned) floors
- Elevated surfaces
Blood Borne Pathogens

- If a co-worker or client is bleeding
- Use universal precautions when handling any blood or other body fluids.
Repetitive Injuries

- Doing the exact same thing over and over again – without a break or stretching can lead to injury
- Ergonomics can help reduce the risk of repetitive injuries
If an Accident Occurs

✈ Even if everyone follows all the rules – accidents do happen
If an accident occurs

- Remain calm
- Rescue anyone who needs assistance
- Call for help if needed
- Secure the area so that no one else gets hurt
Safety Cultures

- Establish accountability for safety
- Define safety responsibilities
- After an accident staff should look for causes and solutions to prevent future accidents
Ways to Prevent Injuries

- Ergonomics
- Training
- Being alert
Ergonomics

- Ergonomics is the study of the design and arrangement of work areas – the purpose is to ensure that work can be done and risk of injuries reduced.
Ergonomics

Employees should:

- Maintain proper body alignment when lifting or working
- Set up their personal work area to prevent personal injury
- Avoid repetitive motions that can cause injuries over time
Ergonomics

- Stretch or take a short walk during a break
- If possible rotate tasks so that you can avoid repetitive strain
Training

- Complete all the agency required training and
- Follow policies and procedures
- They are designed to protect you and others
Be Alert

- Paying attention to your own environment and being aware of potential dangers or hazards is one of the most important things you can do.
References