

Fire Risk

The risk of fire at a construction site can be higher than when the job is finished. This is because permanent fire protection systems are in different stages of development. Other measures that control the spread of fires (doors, walls, floors, Etc.) are also in different stages of development. This leaves the structure vulnerable.



Preventative Measures

- **Housekeeping-** wood, debris and other construction materials makes great fuel for fires. Ensure site conditions are kept clean.
- **Garbage receptacles-** keep these in a suitable location away from power and heat sources. Ensure the receptacle is suitable for the material being disposed of as well.
- **Temporary/permanent power-** this must be installed and maintained by a qualified electrician.
- **Keep panel area clear-** of debris, material, etc. Emergency termination may be required in the case of a fire.
- **Temporary/permanent heaters-** these generate heat. Different types do different things (radiant heat, open flame, fan, etc.) One thing they have in common is that they create heat, and subsequently can cause a fire if placed too close to material and debris.
- **Lighting-** some lights can generate extreme heat. Ensure these types are placed as per manufacturer's recommendation.
- **Smoking-** the ash of a cigarette, the butts, and the open flame to light can create fire. Ensure a no-smoking policy is implemented and enforced inside these structures. Create a designated smoking area.
- **Material Storage-** flammable products must be stored in a well ventilated area, away from incompatible materials. (i.e. oxidizers, etc.)
 - Don't store flammables near exits

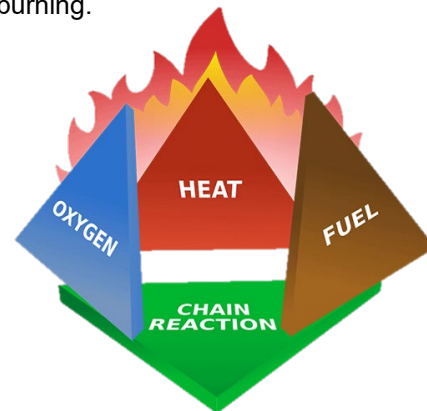
- **Hot work-** hot work permits help to negate risk from work that produces heat, sparks, and/or open flames. The permit categorizes the hazards, the type of work conducted, and minimizes the risk, ensuring the safety of the people in the area.
- **Fire watch-** this step ensures that a fire does not start. There is no better prevention strategy when hot work is conducted.
- **Fire Extinguishers-** having these nearby on construction sites can prevent the spread of a **small fire**. The wrong type can make fire worse or cause harm to the user.
- **Employee Training-** workers must be aware of fire hazards, and trained to detect the risks, use extinguishers, and know when to evacuate.

Plans in Place

OHS Regulation 25-2 (Fire Safety Plan) makes it mandatory for employers & contractors to develop a fire safety plan. This plan must be tested to ensure it works. Worker training must include the plan and its details.

Fire Tetrahedron

A fire needs four elements to burn: oxygen, heat, fuel and they trigger a chemical chain reaction. If we remove one or more of these elements, fire cannot start, spread or continue burning.



Pictures from: <https://activeexcavator.com/how-to-keep-a-clean-construction-site/>

<https://fire-risk-assessment-network.com/blog/fire-triangle-tetrahedron/>

Tool Box Talk

When accidents and incidents happen on the jobsite, we are always quick to point the finger at lack of training, not following practices or procedures, or even improper supervision. The idea that the hazards and dangers associated with the job were not properly communicated to all of the workers is often missed.

Tool Box Talks can go by many names, and although formats may vary, these meetings all serve one purpose: to inform employees and contract workers. Tool Box Talks are short, informal, meetings between management and the workers on a jobsite. The goal of these meetings is to reinforce current safe job procedures, inform workers of new and/or relevant procedures, review recent safety violations/incidents, and ensure workers are up-to-date on the information required to complete their work safely.

Always use a Tool Box Talk form to record the meeting topic, date, who was in attendance, and any follow-up actions to be taken. Not only do these forms help with consistency of record keeping, but they also ensure that nothing is missed. At the end of the meeting have management sign off on the form.

One of the most important aspects of a Tool Box Talk is giving workers an opportunity to voice their concerns and ask questions. All employees have a right to participate in health and safety as it relates to their work and it is the supervisor or manager's responsibility to create an environment for them to do so. Once the meeting is over, and the form is filled out, it should be filed with other documented Tool Box Talks.

Remember that Tool Box Talks are short and informal, they are not meant to be intimidating. Use the opportunity to have fun and stay on top of what is necessary to keep safety culture a strong part of the business.

For a full listing of Tool Box Talk topics, visit: www.scsaonline.ca/resources/tool-box-talks

For a copy of the Tool Box Talk form, visit: www.scsaonline.ca/pdf/Tool_Box_Meeting.pdf

About the Saskatchewan Construction Safety Association

The Saskatchewan Construction Safety Association (SCSA) is an industry-funded, membership-based, nonprofit organization that provides cost-effective, accessible safety training and advice to employers and employees in the construction industry throughout the province to reduce the human and financial losses associated with injuries. Registered March 20, 1995, the SCSA is, and has been since inception, committed to injury prevention. Serving almost 10,000 member companies with business offices in both Regina and Saskatoon, the major business units of the association are Advisory Services, Business Development, Corporate Services, Program Services and Training. The mission of the SCSA is constructing safety leadership in Saskatchewan and the vision is to create the safest construction environment in Canada.