

What is Preventative Maintenance?

The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines prevention as “The act or practice of stopping something bad from happening.”

Preventive maintenance is the regular and routine maintenance of equipment and assets in order to keep them running and prevent costly, unplanned downtime from unexpected equipment failure. A good preventive maintenance program also involves keeping an inventory of critical equipment, records of past inspections, and the servicing of equipment.

What are the Benefits of Preventative Maintenance?

Companies can use the principles of preventive maintenance to achieve various benefits, such as:

- Prevent equipment failure before it occurs
- Reduce the risk of accidents
- Diminish excess depreciation of equipment
- Prevent untimely breakdowns of critical equipment
- Eliminate unnecessary inspections and maintenance tasks
- Save money by extending the useful life of assets
- Prepare for and prevent future issues from occurring

Preventative Maintenance Program (COR Requirements)

Preventative Maintenance is a key component of a COR compliant safety program. These key pieces are noted in the COR audit tool. (Audit tools can be found under resources, at scsaonline.ca) The numbers listed here correspond to the Audit questions in section seven.

Does the preventative maintenance program of facilities, tools, equipment, and vehicles include:

7.1 Having an inventory list of critical equipment that the organization has control of is an important part of the program

7.2 Documenting maintenance activity and ensuring worker understanding of the maintenance activities that are carried out to specifically meet manufacturers and regulatory standards are important to the success of the program.

7.3 A maintenance and inspection schedule, as well as inspection checklists, that includes all the critical equipment identified on the inventory list will help ensure all items are maintained.

7.4 The equipment inspections or corrective actions should include a detailed description of the maintenance that was conducted to correct the identified problem and include the date, time, and signature.

7.5 and 7.6 A written system for removal of defective tools or equipment from service, and worker understanding and compliance with the system, is another important part of the program.

7.7 Training records or other documentation should support qualifications and prove competency.

Legislative Requirements

Maintenance is mentioned well over 60 times throughout the Occupational Health & Safety Regulations. When searching for the legislative requirements, General duties of employers 3-1 and Maintenance and repair of equipment 3-14 are great places to start.

Other Requirements

Preventative maintenance is a key part of a due diligence defense. There are minimums set out in the regulations, but many times we are expected to exceed them. These are known as industry practices and may come in the form of CSA standards, ISO standards, etc.

Another key driver is manufacturers recommendations. This may be what is legislated in some cases. It also might be a component of warranty.

Sources:

- <https://home.akitabox.com/blog/preventive-maintenance-101>
- <https://www.safetymssi.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Preventative-Maintenance-TT.pdf>
- https://safety-culture-training.com/Safety-Topics_Blog/preventive-maintenance-safety-topic-dec-2018-wk1.aspx
- <https://scsaonline.ca/resources/safety-documents>

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.