



Tool Box Talk

Workplace Building Materials Safety

November 2018

KNOW WHAT YOU ARE WORKING WITH

In the construction industry, workers come in contact and deal with a large variety of workplace building materials.

There are a number of factors to consider before starting a project, including the best materials for the job and the potential hazards associated with those materials.

Some materials are very large or heavy to handle, some are fragile, some break down over time depending on what they are exposed to, and others disperse harmful fumes or particles when handled or processed.



PLANNING EACH MOVE

Before materials are available on a worksite, determining how to load, transport, unload, and store the materials may be necessary. When loading and unloading materials, follow safe work practices and procedures to ensure these processes are done in a safe and efficient manner.

Materials should be moved only when necessary. When planning to move, ship, or receive materials, consider all parts of the operation:

- ✘ How will they be transported?
- ✘ Do the workers involved have the proper training required?
- ✘ Are there enough workers to do the job?
- ✘ Is the vehicle operator experienced with loading/unloading materials?
- ✘ Is the load size appropriate?

HOUSEKEEPING

A large number of workplace incidents can be attributed to poor housekeeping. Be sure not to clutter work areas or spaces and keep traffic flow efficient. Once materials are safely on site, it's necessary to determine where they can be safely stored before they are handled and used.

It may also be necessary to determine how to secure the materials so that they will not move in the event of strong winds or if contacted by a worker or machinery. Be sure to avoid moving the materials more than needed. Also ensure they are not blocking an entry/exit or creating a tripping hazard.

LEGISLATION

When it comes to working with hazardous materials in the workplace, federal and provincial law requires that any person exposed to hazardous materials in the workplace must be trained in Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) - WHMIS 2015.

Employers are responsible for developing safe work practices, ensuring hazardous materials are properly labelled, and that Safety Data Sheets (SDSs) are available for any hazardous materials on site. Additionally, employers must offer education and training about the materials in the workplace.

Employees are responsible for participating in WHMIS 2015 training, taking necessary measures to protect themselves and their co-workers, as well as properly identifying and controlling hazardous materials.

RESOURCES

For more information on this, and other safety topics, please visit the SCSA Resources webpage: www.scsaonline.ca/resources

Tool Box Talk

How To Use This Resource

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, non-profit 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.