

Tailgate/Toolbox Topics



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Division of Occupational Safety and Health
California Department of Industrial Relations

Setting Up a Tailgate/Toolbox Safety Meeting

Tailgate or Toolbox safety meetings are 10-15 minute on-the-job meetings held to keep employees alert to work-related accidents and illnesses.

Tailgate/toolbox safety meetings have proved their worth by alerting employees to workplace hazards, and by preventing accidents, illnesses and on-the-job injuries.

Why Have Them?

In both the tunneling and construction industries, tailgate safety meetings are required by Title 8, Sections 8406 and 1509 of the California Code of Regulations.

While tunneling and construction are the only industries that specifically require tailgate safety meetings, all California employers must have a safety program that includes employee training in safe work practices.

Tailgate/toolbox safety meetings can be used to address actual problems on the job or in the shop. The supervisor leading the meeting can draw on the experience of workers, and use that experience to remind all employees – especially newer ones – of the dangers of working with particular kinds of machinery, tools, equipment and materials.

What to Talk About?

Talk about work practices, machinery, tools, equipment materials, attitudes, and anything else that may cause or contribute to a work-related accident or illness. Keep the topic relevant to the job or tasks at hand.

An excellent source for construction related topics is the publication *Cal/OSHA Pocket Guide for the Construction Industry*. Supervisors can choose individual sections or topics and relate them to their specific site requirements. Copies can be ordered from the Division of Occupational Safety and Health.

Choose a topic you think needs safety review. If you notice that spills aren't being cleaned up promptly, discuss it. If there has been an accident or a near-accident on the job, talk about it. What happened? Where did it happen? How can it be prevented from happening again?

Encourage employees to suggest topics. They often know best - what and where the dangers are.

How to Run a Good Meeting

1. Hold the meeting on the job, preferably where everyone can sit and relax.
2. Hold meetings at the beginning of shift or after a break.
3. Choose the topic carefully. Topics should be about health and safety problems on the job. Research the problem before the meeting. For machinery, consult the manufacturer's operations manual. For handling toxic substances, get a copy of the material safety data sheet. Your company's insurance carrier is another good source

of information. Cal/OSHA also supplies a wide range of printed material on worksite safety and health.

4. Don't choose too broad a topic.
5. Encourage employee participation - keep your meeting short.

Sample Topic for Tailgate/Toolbox Safety Meetings:

Why are guards left off machines?

Guards are placed on machines to prevent workers from contacting moving parts. They are required by Cal/OSHA regulations.

Many California workers are killed or injured every year because guards are removed and not replaced.

Why are guards left off? Ask the group to give reasons.

Some common ones are:

- ♦ I didn't have time to replace the guard.
- ♦ I wanted to make sure the machine was working okay. I just never got around to replacing the guard.
- ♦ I put on a new drive and the old guard didn't fit.
- ♦ I had to remove the guard to adjust the machine.
- ♦ I couldn't work with the guard on. It slowed me down.
- ♦ Listen I've run these machines for years without guards and I've never been hurt.

These excuses have been given countless times. After the accident has happened, the guard is replaced and strict rules are enforced. Of course, it's too late for the victim. The purpose of meeting on this topic is to make sure rules are enforced before an accident can happen.

Resources:

Cal/OSHA Pocket Guide for the Construction Industry. Copies can be ordered from the Cal/OSHA publications website at:

<http://www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/puborder.asp>, or obtained from a Cal/OSHA District Office.

Cal/OSHA Construction Safety Orders can be reviewed at: <http://www.dir.ca.gov/Title8/sub4.html>

Note: The information provided is not meant to be either a substitute for or legal interpretation of the occupational safety and health regulations. Readers are cautioned to refer directly to Title 8 of the *California Code of Regulations* for detailed information regarding the regulation's scope, specifications, and exceptions and for other requirements that may be applicable to their operations.