

Written and Communicated Safe Work Practices: Step Eight of the Ten-Step Business Safety Plan

Provide all employees with written safe work practices so they have a clear understanding of job requirements and responsibilities. Identify, document and publicize both general and job-specific safe work practices. Provide employees with a copy of the general safe work practices, and have all employees sign a statement indicating they have read and intend to follow the safe work practices.

Examples of general safe work practices expected of employees include:

- Practicing good housekeeping;
- Wearing personal protective equipment;
- Using good ergonomic principles;
- Wearing respiratory protection;
- Using and following lockout/tag out procedures;
- Using and following confined-space entry;
- Using hazard communication;
- Avoiding blood borne pathogens, if applicable
- Applying first-aid procedures (if trained);

Job-specific, safe work practices apply to operations that involve recognized hazards and address risks associated with the business. Publicize job-specific safe-work practices in the work area.

Safe work practices are essential for any organization because they prescribe the accepted behavior and practices the employer expects of employees. You may use a safety involvement team to develop an employee safety handbook. Ask employees for their input in composing the handbook. Include general, company-wide safe work practices and specific safe work practices that apply to each department, the company's safety policy or a statement on safety as viewed by the top official of the organization in the safety handbook. Each department manager, leader, etc., will review the safe work practices with his or her employees on a recurring basis, at least annually. To help ensure that safe work practice handbooks are read, have employees sign a statement certifying that they have read it, they are familiar with the safety rules and policies outlined in the safety handbook and agree to abide by them. Retain the signed document in the employee's personnel file.