

CSI Country Wide Case Study Safety Strategy Discussion

Construction Safety Investigator



Instructions

The objective of this tool is to provide field supervisors with information to proactively engage workers and discuss safety related concerns that they may encounter. Safety discussions should not be limited to the subject above and should pertain to the activities that workers will be involved in that may have the potential for safety related exposures.

Case Day:

October 2009

Accident Type:

Welding Accident - Torch Cutting Fire

Relevant laws, rules and codes may include:

29CFR 1926.20(a)(1), 1926.21(b)(2), 1926.352

Case:

A warehouse building which was under construction was accidentally set on fire by an iron worker who was cutting a hole in the roof with a torch.

Accident Detail:

An iron worker went to the roof of a warehouse building which was under construction. While cutting the hole in the roof, the roof caught fire, quickly spreading across the entire roof and the rest of the building, generating massive amounts of black smoke.

While cutting, the heat and flames of the torch used by the iron worker ignited the roof membrane. Because the membrane material is petroleum based, it is extremely flammable.

Reconstructive Safety Evaluation:

- What are some of the possible causes of the accident being discussed?
- What actions could have been taken that might have prevented this accident from occurring?

Accident Scene Conclusion:

The investigation revealed that the fire was entirely preventable and that the iron worker should not have been on the roof with his welding equipment. There was no approved hot work permit in place and the worker was not supposed to begin work at that time. No hot work should have taken place once the membrane was put down.

Preventive Safety Measures Include:

- All operations are preplanned using a Job Safety Task Analysis (JSTA) to ensure potential safety hazards associated with an operation are identified and appropriate steps are taken to eliminate or control them.
- Workers should be trained in the hazards of the work they are to perform, the personal protective equipment and safe work procedures necessary to perform their assigned tasks.
- A fire protection program is in place which includes procedures for evaluating, scheduling and directing welding and cutting operations and ensuring appropriate extinguishing equipment and emergency fire services are readily available.
- A hot work permit system in place to ensure that all necessary steps are taken to control potential fires such as ensuring all flammable or combustible materials are either removed from the area or appropriate protective measures are in place to prevent a fire.

Attendance Roster

Reference: This case is fictitious, and any resemblance to any persons, living or dead, is entirely coincidental. However, the type of accident described in this case summary happens all too often on construction sites.

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