

*"For safety's sake—do something."*

## What is the purpose of a Pre-Task Plan?

Pre-Task Planning is a necessary part of the job to perform tasks safely, without injury or incident. Chances are you have heard of at least one of the following terms:

- *Pre-Task Plans (PTP)*
- *Job Hazard Analysis (JHA)*
- *Safe Plan of Action (SPA)*

These terms (no matter which your company uses) typically mean the same thing. The goal of such safety programs is to define the scope of work, analyze the hazards associated with the scope, develop, and implement controls to negate those hazards, and perform the work within those hazard controls. These safety programs are typically utilized for high-risk work such as hot work or utilizing fall protection. Often, tasks that fall outside of your typical job duties are included as well.

**Following are steps to a well-thought-out Pre-Task Plan.** The purpose of these documents is not to create additional work, but to identify the steps to completing a task, and the associated hazards of each step. Once identified, a corrective action plan is put into place.

- **Define the scope of work:** A clear understanding of the work assignment is critical to each day's work. This step requires all employees performing the task to review the pertinent documents (e.g., written procedures, drawings, and specifications) or to walk through the task before listing the steps to be performed for the day to ensure the task is clearly understood.
- **Analyze the hazards:** It is critical for employees to identify situational or potential hazards. To identify the hazard, each crew member should discuss how someone may be injured while performing the task. Examples could include materials being used, equipment / tools being utilized, work locations, worksite conditions, and a host of other conditions.
- **Develop and implement hazard controls:** Once the hazards have been identified, the crew should then devise solutions to eliminate the hazards by implementing control measures. Specified methods, tools, and equipment might be used to reduce or eliminate the hazards. When the hazards cannot be eliminated, safeguards must be put in place. Examples include the erection of guardrails if work is performed at elevation or the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
- **Perform work within hazard control:** This step requires crew members to discuss how work will be performed within the identified hazard controls. Once all hazards are identified the work must not be changed and employees shall not deviate from the controls in place. If the work conditions or tasks change, a new Pre-Task Plan should be started and reviewed by all on the job.

**Safety Scott says,**

**"Safety always is  
ALWAYS!"**