

"For safety's sake—do something."

Safety Audits and Inspections

Safety inspections are a basic necessity of any safety program. Such inspections can prevent incidents, injuries, OSHA violations, or even fatalities. Safety audits and inspections are typically conducted by safety professionals, construction managers, department managers, and can even include employees as well. They are a great way for management to see and understand the work environment as well as identify hazards. They also encourage employee engagement. If someone audits your work area, understand that the goal is only to identify hazards and correct them. It's a partnership to help everyone go home safely and without incident. It is not a time to try and hide issues, but rather ask questions and learn from them.

TAKE A MOMENT TO THINK ABOUT:

- What to do if you find a problem in your work area?
- What is a hazard you discovered while walking through your work area?
- How would you handle an inspector notifying you that you are doing something unsafe?

SOME KEY POINTS TO SAFETY AUDITS AND INSPECTIONS

Safety Checklist: Having a good safety checklist to utilize as audit criteria is critical to ensure safety items aren't missed. A good checklist can also help a new employee or manager learn what hazards to look for on a job site.

Consistency: Audits and inspections must be performed periodically. Inspecting a job site or even an office setting once a year simply will not work to ensure a safe work environment. These must be performed regularly, or even daily, depending on the type of work environment.

Recordkeeping: Audits and inspections are required by OSHA and it is necessary that records are maintained. OSHA, county and state enforcement, external clients, or even internal stakeholders could ask for inspection records at any time. A company must be able to produce such records to maintain compliance.

Data Trends: In addition to rectifying immediate hazards, being able to trend such safety data will provide valuable metrics such as leading and lagging indicators. Analyzing this data and indicators can steer a company to change safety procedures and protocols to create a safer work environment for all.

Communication: It is important for the auditor or inspector to communicate hazards and issues that they find in a non-condescending or threatening way. Employees should also understand that the goal of these audits and inspections is to make the work environment safer.

Safety Scott says,

**"Safety always is
ALWAYS!"**