



Performing Job-Site Safety Audits

Why are on-site safety audits important and who benefits from them.

By Kevin Kolhonen

Job-site safety audits conducted by safety professionals help drive safety culture and maintain compliance with applicable safety requirements set by OSHA, other regulatory agencies, and general contractors. The balancing act of safety professionals at any company is to implement safety programs and to help field, office, and management staff understand and meet the common goal of everyone getting home safely at the end of the day. Safety audits give safety representatives a chance to talk with employees in the field and develop relationships with the people who are completing the work. This allows for conversation and trust to be built between both the office and field.

Why on-site safety audits are necessary

As safety professionals complete site walks at job sites, the idea is to ensure their company's crews are work-

ing safely and within the requirements put in place by their employer. Many companies have certain personal protective equipment (PPE) and safe work requirements that are always to be followed while completing work. PPE (such as hard hats, safety glasses, and gloves) are all non-negotiable for a lot of different companies across all different industries.

Some safety concerns from a working perspective include things like fall protection, confined space, and hearing conservation safety requirements to name a few. All these things are being evaluated while auditing sites during safety walkthroughs to determine where the risk is and how to both stop and prevent it from happening again.



Who benefits from job-site safety audits

Job-site safety audits help employers, foremen, and field workers all in different ways. Employers rely on safety professionals to visit sites and maintain their safety standards. This helps a company management team understand who is following safety requirements and who is not. This is important, as those not following safety initiatives put companies at liability and increase their risk of being injured.

Foremen benefit from safety inspections and as leaders of their crews, each one has a responsibility to ensure the safety and well-being of everyone conducting work under their supervision. As safety audits and inspections are completed, safety reps should have an open line of communication with each foreman, allowing for the foremen to understand who in their crew is a good performer or bad performer.

At a base level, field workers will also benefit from these types of safety audits. These are the men and women who are performing the work in the field — and the ones who are at risk of being injured while completing jobs. Safety representatives have a responsibility to remind employees of PPE requirements and stop unsafe work. But the biggest part of a safety representative's job is to explain why certain PPE is required or why certain work

being performed is considered unsafe. Unsafe work conditions at the site will also be reported to the project management team and acting general contractors.

The overall goal of a safety audit is simple: to reduce risk and keep people safe and free from injury.

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