

TOOLBOX TALK: NEW ON SITE

Job or site _____

Date _____

Led by _____

Open with this

Whoever is newest here, do not say anything, just think of one thing you were shown this week that you still do not really understand. Everybody else: you were that person once and somebody let you stay that way.

The talk

The rule is short and it is not optional. The employer shall instruct each employee in the recognition and avoidance of unsafe conditions, and in the regulations that apply to their work, to control or eliminate the hazards they are exposed to. Shall. Each employee. Not the ones who ask.

It goes further for specific things. Anybody handling poisons, caustics or other harmful substances has to be instructed in safe handling and made aware of the hazards, the personal hygiene and the protective measures. Anybody handling flammable liquids, gases or toxic materials has to be instructed too.

There is even a rule about the site itself. Where there are harmful plants or animals, and that means poison ivy, wasps, snakes and dogs as much as anything exotic, anybody who might be exposed gets told what the hazard is, how to avoid it and the first aid for it.

None of that happens by osmosis. A new person watching an experienced one work learns the shortcuts first, because the shortcuts are what they can see. They do not see the twenty years of judgment underneath, and they cannot tell which part of what you did was the skill and which part was the risk you have decided you are willing to take.

So the first morning has a shape. Where the toilets are, where the water is, where the first aid kit is, where the muster point is, what the site address is, who the foreman is, what the hand signals are, and what they must not touch until somebody shows them. That is fifteen minutes and it is the cheapest fifteen minutes on the job.

And the ask on everybody else is one sentence. If you are the experienced one, you are the training. Whatever you do in front of them is what they will do when you are not there, including the bit you would never do if the foreman were watching.

Point at these before anybody starts

- The newest person on this site, and who their go to is by name.

- The first aid kit, the water and the toilets, said out loud for anybody here under a week.
- One tool on this site that nobody should touch without being shown.
- The hand signals this crew uses, demonstrated, not described.
- The site address, read out by somebody who started this month.
- Any harmful plant, insect nest or animal anybody has seen on this site.

The rules that apply

- The employer shall instruct each employee in the recognition and avoidance of unsafe conditions and in the regulations applicable to their work environment, to control or eliminate any hazards or other exposure to illness or injury.
- Employees required to handle or use poisons, caustics and other harmful substances shall be instructed in safe handling and use, and made aware of the potential hazards, personal hygiene and personal protective measures required.
- In job site areas where harmful plants or animals are present, employees who may be exposed shall be instructed in the potential hazards, how to avoid injury, and the first aid to be used.
- Employees required to handle or use flammable liquids, gases or toxic materials shall be instructed in their safe handling and use and made aware of the specific requirements that apply.
- Fall protection training under 29 CFR 1926.503 is the seventh most cited standard in the country, which means the training itself is what inspectors find missing, not only the harness.

Ask the crew

- Who is the newest person here, and what have they not been shown yet?
- Name one thing on this site a new person would get wrong by copying you.
- What is the site address, and can the newest person here say it?

Close with this

Nobody arrives knowing. They only arrive good at hiding that they do not.

Attendance

Everybody who was present signs, including subcontractors and anybody visiting the site.

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This talk is general safety information for a crew briefing, not legal advice and not a substitute for the training your employees are required to have. Standards are quoted for orientation only. Check the current text of the standard and your own state plan, which may be stricter than the federal rule.