⊕12 Work Procedures and Permits

Projected Implementation Date: December 2013

Integrating safety and health into operations and maintenance by:

- Organizing and conducting work in a predictable manner.

- Specifying ways to carry out an activity or process.

- Using more controlled procedures for those activities or processes that are high risk or require a permit.

The two main elements of this module are safe work procedures and permits to work.

Safe work procedures are a specified way to carry out an activity or a work process. Safe work procedures should be written and may include video-based instructions that outline the steps necessary to complete routine and some non-routine work tasks in a safe manner. They are generated from risk assessment processes such as systematic job and task SJT. (See Module 4 Fatality Prevention / Risk Management.) The keys to making work procedures effective are:

- Use workers who do the work to assist in procedure development

- Use the procedures for training, particularly for on-the-job training

- Ensure front line supervisors and/or managers audit work against the procedures

Permits to work offer a more controlled procedure for tasks that are either high risk or mandated by regulation to require a permit.

Misuse or avoidance of safe work procedures and permits should be addressed through corrective discipline. Conversely, adherence to safe work procedures and permits should be recognized with positive reinforcement.

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The Role of Line and Senior Management

Because line and senior management have the greatest ability and resources to prevent incidents, companies with world class safety and health performance often say "safety is a line function." Line and senior management supervise and manage workers who are generally at greatest risk; they have the largest impact over equipment and the facility environments, and they control the resources necessary to make the safety and health management systems (SHMS) work.

One of the most effective points of focus for line management in the **CORE**Safety SHMS is the integration of safety and health into operations and maintenance activities. Achieving the 0:50:5 goal means work tasks are conducted in an organized and predictable manner. And when they are not predictable, as with non-routine work, there should be procedures to assess the risk and procedures to make the work task as controlled and predictable as possible.

If the safe outcome of the task is uncertain, it should not be attempted until there is certainty.

Examples include, but are not limited to: hot work, confined space entry, high voltage electrical work, lifting and rigging, energy isolation, surface trenching, handling explosives and shot-firing, mobile equipment operation, mobile equipment maintenance, ground control, methane-rich environments, mining in seismically-unstable areas, among others.

Expectations

12.1   Standard operating procedures (SOPs) are developed for routine and repeated non-routine work based on work procedures and outcomes of systematic job and task (SJT) analyses.

12.2   SOPs are used as the basis for on-the-job training and audited against by front line supervisor or managers. Competency verifications are also based on SOPs.

12.2   General and specialized S&H rules should be developed, communicated to all employees and contractors and enforced through a fair and equitable disciplinary policy.

12.3   Risk-specific and/or general work permit programs should cover all high risk work (whether routine or non-routine) and include sign-off authority and operational limitations.

12.4 Protocols (more detailed SOPs) should be developed for high-risk tasks that warrant the highest level of control owing to the difficulty in minimizing risk and high consequences.

12.5 Ensure safe work procedures and permit to work is fully integrated with Module 4.

12.6 Ensure all contractors and vendors are trained on and comply with the work permit and safe work procedure requirements.

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Regulation

Partial or full MSHA and/or OSHA regulatory requirement: ✓ Yes ☐ No

Metrics

Percentage of job tasks with a documented SOP and/or JHA.

Resources

CORESafety resources can be found with the latest updates at:
coresafety.org/resources/module12

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Notes