



COUNTY OF NORTHERN LIGHTS

POLICY

BEHAVIOUR BASED SAFETY OBSERVATIONS

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INTRODUCTION

County of Northern Lights is committed to an incident free workplace with the objective of protecting their employees, their property and equipment, the environment, and all visitors and customers that the company interacts with.

County of Northern Lights acknowledges job-related injuries and fatalities occur every day in the workplace. These injuries often occur because employees are not trained in the proper job procedures.

County of Northern Lights recommends a way to prevent workplace injuries is to establish proper job procedure and train all employees in safer and more efficient work methods.

Establishing proper job procedures is one of the benefits of conducting a job safety analysis by observing the procedure of conducting each specific job by:

1. carefully studying and recording each step of a job,
2. identifying existing or potential job hazards (both safety and health),
3. determining the best way to perform the job,
4. reduce or eliminate these hazards

An added benefit of improved job methods is frequently reduced costs resulting from employee absenteeism and worker's compensation, and can often lead to increased productivity.

County of Northern Lights does maintain a comprehensive inventory of "best practice" job procedures which were developed following hazard and risk assessments. A job observation of each of the tasks will enhance the contents of the job procedures.

A job observation must be performed by County of Northern Lights employees for all jobs in the County of Northern Lights workplace, whether the job task is special (non-routine) or routine. Even one-step jobs such as those in which only a button is pressed can and perhaps should be analyzed by evaluating surrounding work conditions.

To determine which jobs should be analyzed, the job injury and illness reports will be reviewed. A job observation should be conducted first for jobs with the highest rates of disabling injuries and illnesses and given top priority.

Jobs where close calls have occurred should be given secondary precedence. Observation of new jobs and jobs where changes have been made in processes and procedures will follow. Eventually, a job safety analysis will be conducted and made available to employees for all jobs in the workplace.

After selecting a job for analysis, a discussion of the procedure with the employee performing the job explaining the purpose of the job. The employee must be told that the job itself is being studied and not checking on the employee's job performance.

The employee must be involved in all phases of the analysis from the reviewing the job steps and procedures to discussing potential hazards and recommended solutions.

CONDUCTING THE JOB OBSERVATION

A job observation is essentially a process where one person observes another person performing a job, and then discusses with that person some of the safety actions or procedures they have witnessed, and any areas for improvement in the way they are working or the controls they have put in place to manage any hazards.

Usually the observation process involves three stages:

1. Find, approach and observe the job.
2. Discuss the observed behaviors with the person or team performing the job.
3. Complete a form to record the safe and unsafe behaviors observed.

Safe job observations may be carried out by any County of Northern Lights employee, and will be aimed at observing an County of Northern Lights employee's peers or fellow employees performing their jobs.



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Although the specifics of job observation vary from task to task and site to site, there are some key elements that management and employees can work on to make the overall system more valuable in improving safety culture.

The main value to be found in the job safety observation process is actually in the discussion which takes place, not in the observing or the paperwork (although these are both vital to the overall process).

Just as important is a review of the findings of the job observation immediately following the exercise. The findings of the job observation must be recorded in detail in written form using the Job Observation Record form.

This feedback must be presented to all employees involved in that specific task.

The records of observations of the various jobs will be analyzed with the information dissected as to trends occurring within County of Northern Lights job structure. The job health and safety trends will be formatted in a professional presentation as to maximize retention.

Management, which is tasked with analyzing this information, will respond immediately with appropriate steps to curb or delete any unsafe procedures made obvious during observing the various jobs at County of Northern Lights. The management will provide accolades to employees observed performing their job in a healthy and safe manner.

Any trends resulting from job observations, both positive and negative shall be presented to the employee during a scheduled Safety Meeting.

Following are some tips in performing a Job Observation:

Discussion

By engaging in a discussion about safety, we are not only addressing any specific issues that were observed on the job and giving the person feedback, but we are also making a habit of thinking and talking about safety – one of the biggest keys to a comprehensive safety program.

Make sure that you enter into a discussion with the person and job you are observing. Even if everything is being done correctly, you can still talk about why people did certain things and what was their thought process.

Questions

You don't need to be an expert on the particular work area or task being observed. In fact, sometimes the best observers are those who are not familiar with the work being carried out.

The best way to start your discussion with the person you are observing is with a question, something like: "What is the job you are working on here?" Follow this up with more questions to find out what is going on, why people are doing certain things, and what they have thought about in regards to hazards and safety.

Questions such as these are quite useful:

1. "What hazards have you identified on this job?"
2. "How could someone get hurt doing this job?"
3. "Is there a procedure for this job?"
4. "How could someone get hurt later on after you've left the area?"

By probing with questions you will learn more about the job itself, the hazards involved, and can dig into the reasons behind people's behaviors or lack thereof. Safety observations should be less about telling, and more about asking and engaging.

Behaviors

Always focus only on what you can physically observe – hazards, environmental conditions and behaviors. Stay away from discussing or assuming what people's attitudes, thoughts, or intentions are.

The safety discussion we have as part of the observation should focus on the specific behaviors that you physically observed, and why you think those behaviors were safe or not.



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If we focus only on facts and behaviors, and ask lots of questions instead of giving instructions, we will find the observee much more open to discussing their own behaviors and suggesting improvements.

A Team Observation

A great way to improve the effectiveness of your observations is to do them with someone else. To gain the benefit of a fresh set of eyes, try performing an observation in your job with someone else who has no knowledge of your job.

For example, grab someone from County of Northern Lights's shop and take them with you to do observations together. You gain the benefits of a fresh set of eyes looking at how your people are working, and you can also gather feedback from the other person on your own performance while doing the observation and having the subsequent discussions.

Different Jobs

The job such as pre-tripping your truck you are familiar with is probably the easiest place to do a job observation, its close by and there's always something going on.

But it is important to get out to all the different parts of the facility and seek out people doing jobs that would not normally be observed, jobs that are one-offs, or jobs that you are unfamiliar with.

Give Praise

There is an early perception when job observations are introduced that they are only aimed at catching people out doing the wrong thing. Make sure in your observations, that you are also looking to catch people doing the right thing.

Give praise or positive feedback when you see things being done correctly, hazards being controlled, or instances where people have gone beyond the procedure with safety ideas they've thought of themselves.

Certainly we always need to be addressing any areas of non-compliance or where improvements are needed, but with a little positive feedback included in each observation, people begin to look forward to being observed.

Records

It is vitally important accurate records be taken of each job observation. In addition to dates, listing the employees involved and the task observed, the steps taken to perform the job and their potential hazards must be recorded. These records will be filed and available for employee review.

The recommended safe procedures of performing the task must be written in detail. County of Northern Lights has provided a specific form on which to record this information. All spaces on the form must be filled in.

Job Observation Questions

Before actually beginning a job safety observation, take a look at the general conditions under which the job is performed and develop a checklist.

As the major thrust of the business of County of Northern Lights is transportation using semi-trailer units, the job observations will primarily be of job concerning the operation of tractor-trailer unit.

Below are examples of questions which should be asked:

General Information

1. Are all employees operating vehicles and equipment properly trained and authorized?
2. Are job procedures known and are they followed or modified?
3. Are employees wearing proper personal protective equipment for the jobs they are performing?
4. Are employees trained in the event of an emergency situation?

Naturally this list is by no means complete because each job has its own requirements and environmental conditions. Questions should be added to the list by each observer. Photographs taken of the job procedures will enhance the development of the analysis of the individual jobs.



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Breaking Down the Job

Nearly every job can be broken down into job tasks or steps. In the first part of the job safety analysis, list each step of the job in order of occurrence as the employee performs the job.

Be sure to record enough information to describe each job action, but do not make the breakdown too detailed but with enough detail to grasp the achievement of the job. Later, go over the job steps with the employee.

Identify Hazards

After recording the job steps, examine each step to determine the hazards that exist or that might occur. Ask yourself these types of questions:

1. Are there hazards that would require the use of personal protective clothing and equipment that are appropriate for the job?
2. Are work positions, machinery, open pits or sumps, and hazardous operations adequately guarded?
3. Are lockout procedures used for machinery deactivation as required?
4. Is the worker wearing clothing or jewellery, or have long hair that could get caught in the machinery or otherwise cause a hazard?
5. Are there fixed objects that may cause injury, such as sharp edges?
6. Is the flow of work organized (e.g. is the worker required to make movements that are too rapid)?
7. Can the worker get caught in or between moving parts or equipment?
8. Can the worker be injured by reaching over moving machinery parts or materials?
9. Is the worker at any time in an off-balance position?
10. Is the worker ever positioned on the semi unit in a way that is potentially dangerous?
11. Is the worker required to make movements that could lead to or cause hand or foot injuries, or strain from lifting the hazards of repetitive motions?
12. Can the worker be struck by an object or any part of the semi unit?
13. Can the worker fall from one level to another?
14. Can the worker be injured from lifting or pulling objects, or from carrying heavy objects?
15. Do environmental hazards (dust, chemicals, radiation, welding rays, heat, or excessive noise) result from the performance of the job?

Repeat the job observation as often as necessary until all hazards have been identified.

RECOMMENDED SAFE PROCEDURES AND PROTECTION

After each hazard or potential hazard has been listed and have reviewed them with the employee performing the job, determine whether the job could be performed in another way to eliminate the hazards, such as combining steps or **changing** the sequence, or **whether** safety equipment and precautions are needed to control the hazards. An alternative or **additional** procedure is to **videotape** the worker performing his or her job and analyze the job procedures.

If safer and better job steps can be used, list each new step, such as describing a new method for disposing of material. List exactly what the worker needs to know to perform the job using a new method. Do not make general statements about the procedure, such as "Be Careful". Be as specific in the recommendations.

A training program using the new job observation format has been developed to retrain County of Northern Lights employees in any new procedures, especially if they are working within hazardous situations.

If no new procedure can be developed, determine whether any physical changes such as redesigning equipment, changing tools, adding machine guards, personal protective equipment, or ventilation will eliminate or reduce the danger.

If hazards are still present, try to reduce the necessity for performing the job or the frequency of performing it.

The recommendations will be reviewed with all County of Northern Lights employees performing this job. The employee's ideas about the hazards and proposed recommendations will be valuable.



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Be sure that they understand what they are required to do and the reasons for the changes in the job procedures.

REVISING THE JOB OBSERVATION PROGRAM

A job observation can do much toward reducing incidents and injuries in the workplace, but it is only effective if it is reviewed and updated periodically. Even if no changes have been made in a job, hazards that were missed in an earlier analysis could be detected.

If an illness or injury occurs on a specific job, a job safety analysis should be undertaken immediately to determine whether changes are needed in the job procedure. In addition, close calls has resulted from a County of Northern Lights employee's failure to follow job procedures, this should be discussed with all employees performing the job.

Any time a job hazard analysis is revised, training by County of Northern Lights in the new job methods, procedures, or protective measures should be provided to all employees affected by the changes. A job safety analysis also can be used to train effectively new employees of County of Northern Lights on the steps and job hazards.

TRAINING

All employees of County of Northern Lights will be trained in performing job observations. The training material will adhere to the policy written in this section as the guide. The training program will focus on the interaction between the observer and the employee being observed performing a specific task. A sample Job Observation Report has been developed for training purposes.

New employees of County of Northern Lights will be required to take this training upon hiring.

Chief Elected Official

Chief Administrative Officer