



Safety Scene

Recordkeeping: Proper Training & Employee Training Records (Part 1 of 2)

by Molly E. Butz

Why keep records of safety training?

The safety and health of employees should always be among the top priorities at any company. One way to ensure the safety and health of the employees at your component manufacturing facility is through proper safety training. Safety training can help your employees develop the skills they need to recognize and understand the hazards they face on the job. It's a commitment both the employer and the employee need to make.

Training should be developed for new and existing employees alike. New employees need to learn to be aware of the potential hazards in their new work environment and how these hazards affect not only them, but their coworkers and the facility in which they are working. Experienced workers, on the other hand, need training that focuses on changes in the workplace, for example, a new piece of equipment or a new process.

However, one of the most important steps in good training is often the one that gets forgotten: recordkeeping.

Although many of the OSHA standards state specifically that an employee training record must be kept for a given topic, some of OSHA's standards do not require that there be any training records at all. Nevertheless, it's a good idea to keep a thorough training record for all of your safety training. One good way to accomplish this is by using a well-designed database to keep track of your various training activities.

It is important to note that while not all OSHA standards affect component manufacturers, there are a few that require specific documentation of employee training, including: personal protective equipment, lockout/tagout, fire extinguishers and powered industrial trucks (forklifts). For these safety topics, you need to be certain you have the proper documentation.

Benefits of Good Recordkeeping

- Good training records can be of great value when evaluating injury and accident rates and other safety trends within your facility. Before and after comparisons will help you determine whether your training has been successful.
- Making your training efforts visible through signed training records is another

at a glance

- Safety training can help your employees develop the skills they need to recognize and understand on-the-job hazards.
- Training should be developed for new and existing employees alike.
- Training records can be of great value when evaluating trends in injury and accident rates.

Keeping good employee training can mean a lot to OSHA, should an unfortunate accident occur. In the Southeast, a component manufacturer's employee was fatally injured. OSHA classified the situation as a "serious" violation and fined the company \$6,300. After reviewing the company's safety training program and records, OSHA reduced the fine to \$5,040 because the company provided evidence that they had, indeed, properly educated their employees about the appropriate work practices and related hazards of the machinery involved in the accident.

case study

way to show your employees that you're committed to safety. This continues to build on the safety culture in your plant and reinforces safe working behaviors.

- Should an accident occur at your component manufacturing facility, your training records are some of the first documents OSHA will ask to see. And, ultimately, your training records may reduce or eliminate a fine from OSHA (see Case Study).

Training records can be maintained in a variety of ways—from a simple, dated attendance sheet that your employees use to sign-in when they come to the safety session, to an individual sheet for each employee that goes into their personnel file. (See **Support Docs** at www.sbcmag.info for training record example forms.)

No matter how you approach it, it's critical to:

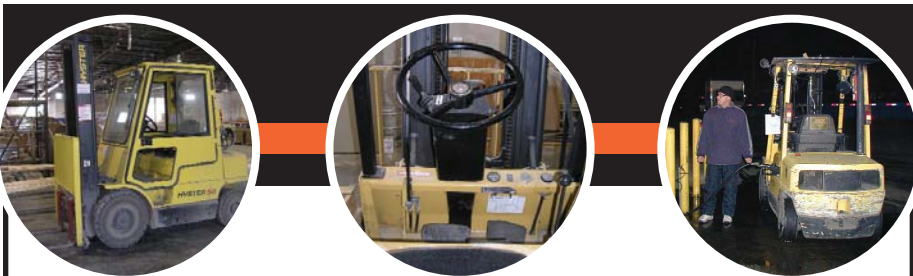
- Provide the proper training.
- Provide training in a language the worker will understand.
- Document, document, document!

Stay tuned for Part 2 in next month's issue: "Complying with OSHA's Record-keeping Requirements." From how to fill out the work-related injury log, to calculating Injury and Illness rates, you'll know everything you need to be ready for the first of the year! **SBC**

To pose a question for this column or to learn more about WTCA's Operation Safety Program, contact WTCA Staff at 608/274-4849, email wtca@woodtruss.com, or view the Operation Safety demonstration online at www.wtcatko.com.

Sources:

- "For the Record: Are Your Documents in Order?" May 25, 2005, www.occupationalhazards.com
- Fact Sheet: Safety and Health Training www.osha.gov



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