Safety FOCUSED

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Winter Worker Safety Tips

Worker safety is a concern year-round, yet special precautions should be taken during the winter months.

Benefits of a Smoke-free Workplace

Tobacco usage is the most preventable cause of death globally. A smoke-free workplace benefits all employees.

A strong workplace safety culture is especially important during the winter months when cold weather is a threat to outdoor workers.

A monthly safety newsletter from

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Winter Worker Safety Tips

Winter weather can create various hazards that include slippery surfaces and roads, strong winds and frigid temperatures. These conditions can promote an increase in workplace accidents that include hypothermia, frostbite and falls. However, many of those injuries can be prevented with the right preparation and presence of mind.

Prevention techniques are most effective when everyone in the organization makes safety a priority. The following measures can help keep you safe at work during the winter months:

- Keep walkways, stairways and other work areas clear of hazards, such as water on floors and snow on sidewalks.

- For hazardous areas that cannot be addressed immediately, mark them with temporary signs or barricades to warn others.

- If working in a cold climate, wear footwear with heavy treads for increased traction, and make yourself visible to drivers by wearing a bright vest or jacket.

- Recognize the signs of hypothermia and frostbite.

- Determine controls to reduce hazards, such as relocating or removing dangerous environmental factors.

Benefits of a Smoke-free Workplace

According to a recent World Health Organization (WHO) study, smoking costs the global economy more than $1 trillion per year in health care costs and lost productivity. Furthermore, the number of tobacco-related deaths is projected to increase from 6 million to 8 million annually by 2030.

Tobacco usage is the most preventable cause of death globally. Still, the number of smokers worldwide is rising. Employees who smoke not only put their own health at risk, but also risk the health of their co-workers through secondhand smoke.

There are numerous benefits to having a smoke-free workplace, including the following:

- A smoke-free workplace reduces the risk of lung cancer for smokers and for those exposed to secondhand smoke (exposure increases the risk of lung cancer by 12-19 percent).

- Being smoke-free reduces the risks of heart disease, stroke and upper respiratory infections.

- A smoke-free workforce helps your company's bottom line, since employees who smoke cost their employers significantly more in medical expenditures, property insurance and workers' compensation than nonsmoking employees.

- Health insurance rates for nonsmokers are about one-and-a-half times lower than the rates for smokers.

- Employees who do not smoke take fewer sick days. Smokers miss an average of 6.2 days per year as a result of illness, whereas nonsmokers only miss an average of 3.9 days.

- Nonsmokers tend to have more energy, improved focus, whiter teeth, fresher breath, and increased senses of smell and taste.

SECONDHAND SMOKE EXPOSURE IN THE WORKPLACE
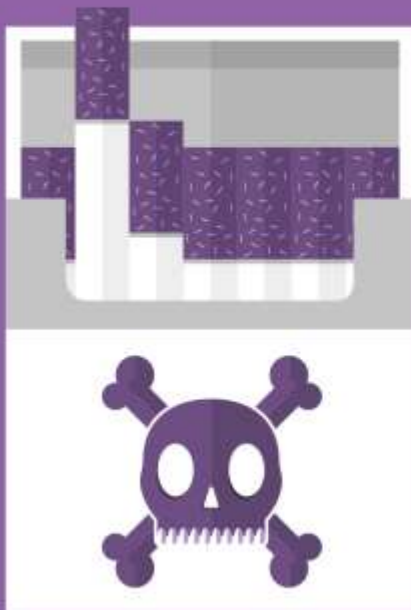
Secondhand smoke contains more than **7,000** chemicals. Hundreds are **toxic**, and **about 70** can cause cancer.