

A Workplace Accident and Injury Reduction (AWAIR) Program for Small Construction Employers



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Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry
Occupational Safety and Health Division

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Minnesota Statutes 182.653, subd. 8, requires that each employer in certain specified industries establish a safety and health program known as “A Workplace Accident and Injury Reduction (AWAIR)” program.

Key to an AWAIR program is the establishment of the goals and objectives of your safety and health program. The goals should be clear and state what you want to achieve through your safety program. Objectives are specific actions you will take to reach the goals of your program.

Your AWAIR program must also describe:

1. how managers, supervisors and employees are responsible for implementing the program and how continued participation of management will be established, measured and maintained;
2. the methods used to identify, analyze and control new or existing hazards, conditions and operations;
3. how the plan will be communicated to all affected employees so they are informed of work-related hazards and controls;
4. how workplace accidents will be investigated and corrective action implemented; and
5. how safe work practices and rules will be enforced.

Your program must be in writing and must address all five points.

You must review your program at least annually and document how the five points are applied in your company to achieve your goals and objectives.

The attached program is a sample AWAIR program. If you choose to use the sample program as a model, you must adapt it to fit your needs and your company. The sample program includes a checklist you can use to evaluate your worksite. The checklist is not all-inclusive, but lists some basic safety and health issues commonly found at construction sites.

The checklist mentions the need for other programs. For example, if your company uses respirators, you will need a written respirator program that describes your specific use of and procedures for respiratory protection. Another example is the requirement for a competent person when scaffolds are being used. The checklist does not go into specifics regarding scaffold regulations because that person should know the required regulations.

A Workplace Accident and Injury Reduction (AWAIR) Program for [company name]

It is our policy at [company name] to ensure a healthy workplace for all employees. We have implemented the following safety and health program. Managers, supervisors and employees are all responsible for implementing this program. We have committed resources to ensure safety on our jobsites. Our goal is to reduce the number of accidents and injuries, and that requires cooperation in all safety and health matters among employees, their fellow workers and management. Only through this cooperative effort can we establish and maintain an excellent safety record.

Employees are responsible for cooperation with all aspects of this safety and health program, including compliance with all rules and regulations for continuously practicing safety while on the job. The safety director, project managers, superintendents and supervisors have our full support in enforcing the provisions of this policy.

[Insert name and title] is our safety director. The director will report directly to the company president. All supervisors and liaisons will report safety concerns to the director. The site supervisors are responsible for safety and health at each worksite. Each site supervisor will choose an employee to act as the safety and health liaison for that site. Employees will report all safety and health concerns to their supervisors. The safety director will set up training programs and provide the necessary personal protective equipment (PPE).

Management will set accountability measures for meeting safety and health responsibilities.

Safety will be planned into each site using the attached list as a starting point. **Each site is unique.** The *Construction site safety checklist* will be used initially and adjusted for the specific location and job. The site checklist will be revised as the site changes. Supervisors will inspect each area of the worksite daily using the revised checklist. The safety director will make random site inspections and review the results with management.

Each employee will be trained about safety and health at the time of hire, at the start of each job and as needed.

Safety meetings will be scheduled at least monthly, with safety topics chosen by the safety director. Attendance is mandatory at all safety meetings. Toolbox meetings and other on-site safety meetings will be arranged by the supervisor biweekly or as needed. Safety suggestions and safety audits will be reviewed at that time.

The site supervisor will investigate all accidents and near-miss events. The site supervisor will write the accident report with assistance from the liaison. The written reports will note corrective or preventive action taken. Training or retraining will be done as needed.

The safety director will review all accident and near-miss reports, supervisor and site audits, and this program, and will make recommendations to management about how to improve the company's safety and health efforts on an annual basis.

Safety is a very important part of our overall company program. A violation of our safety and health rules will be treated with the same disciplinary action as our other policies described in our company handbook under “Disciplinary actions” (i.e., drug abuse, absenteeism or tardiness).

Our employees are our most important assets. We are serious about safety and health and keeping you gainfully employed here at **[company name]**.

Construction site safety checklist

Date: _____ Site: _____

Trailer/site

- First aid
- Posting requirements (OSHA, WC, EEOC, wages, etc.)
- Program review
- Fire extinguishers
- ERTK program
- Site emergency plan
- Site security plan
- Environmental – any special situations
- Potable water and toilet facilities
- Other

Public protection

- Barricades
- Flagging
- Traffic controls
- Other

Fire protection

- Fire protection plan
- Gas cylinder storage
- Storage of flammable liquids
- Welding equipment
- Safety cans
- Other

Housekeeping

- Daily debris removal
- Clear access to exits and stairs
- Site areas clean
- Cords in walkways
- Adequate lighting
- Other

Personal protective equipment

- Respirator program
- Ear protection
- Eye protection
- Footwear
- Gloves
- Hard hats
- Proper clothing
- Other

Electrical

- GFCI
- Grounding
- No exposed live parts
- Hard usage three-wire cords
- Overhead lines
- Other

Fall protection

- Site fall protection plan
- Floor holes
- Wall openings
- Guard rails
- Stair rails
- Perimeter rails
- Harness and lanyards
- Other

Excavations/trenches

- Competent person
- Gopher State One Call
- Access/egress
- Cave-in protection (slope or box)
- Daily inspections
- Soil testing
- Spoil pile
- Other

Cranes

- Condition
- Load charts
- Annual inspection
- Frequent inspection/operator
- Swing radius
- Other

Ladders

- Condition
- Extends at least three feet above landing
- Secured
- Other

Heavy equipment/tools

- Forklift
- Aerial lifts
- Skid steer
- Generators/compressors
- Heaters
- Other

Scaffolds

- Competent person
- Daily inspections
- Mobile scaffold requirements
- Fabricated frame scaffold requirements
- Other

Miscellaneous/other factors

Note: This list is not all-inclusive.