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7 steps

to
hazard
identification

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7 Steps

to Hazard Identification

—a Workbook,

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Illustration and design by
j. fred decker

California University Institute of Industrial
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INTRODUCTION

Since the passage of the Occupational Safety and Health Act in 1970, a major problem has been inspection of workplaces. This is largely due to an inadequate number of compliance officers to inspect the 4.1 million workplaces in America.

Many unions have recognized this dilemma and are beginning to develop health and safety educational programs for their members. The Labor Occupational Health Program began assisting unions in the training of workers in occupational health and safety in September of 1974. We have conducted educational courses for workers in a wide variety of occupations. Over the years, we have found that the best source of identifying hazards in a specific trade is interviewing the people performing the work.

The 7-step method to hazard identification was developed by the L.O.H.P. to assist workers in identifying the hazards of their particular occupation. You need not be a safety specialist to correctly identify occupational health and safety hazards. First, list those health and safety hazards that immediately come to mind. There are three general categories provided for this purpose: obvious, questionable and hidden. Then just follow the simple 7-step procedure outlined in this workbook and you will soon discover the true hazards of your occupation. To make your list more complete, we suggest you exchange completed booklets with your co-workers and benefit from their thoughts and experiences.

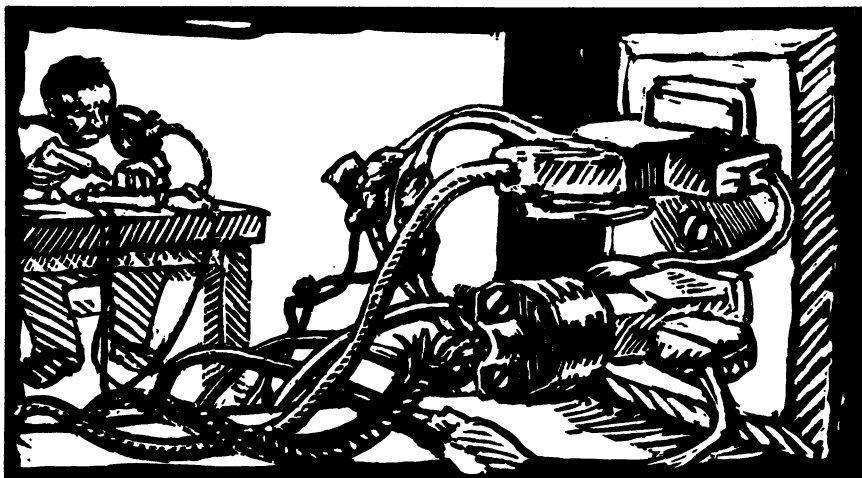
The 7-step workbook is designed to be used in classroom training, shop steward training, as well as company work-group safety meetings. The procedure has proven very successful in aiding workers in becoming more aware of the hazards of their trade.

Obvious Hazards:

Any workplace condition which is conspicuous or unmistakable and threatens the health or safety of a worker.

List obvious hazards on your present job:

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are approximately 20 lines visible. The paper has a slightly textured appearance and some minor discoloration or shadows, suggesting it's a scan of a physical document. There is no handwriting or printed text on the page.



Some hazards are as obvious as they are common.

List obvious hazards on your previous jobs:

Questionable Hazards:

Any workplace condition which causes suspicion or doubt as to whether it may threaten the health or safety of a worker.

List questionable hazards on your present job:

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.



This worker is wondering if he should lift the rug by himself... (maybe he can; maybe he can't).

List questionable hazards on your previous jobs:

Hidden Hazards:

Any workplace condition which is concealed or not immediately recognizable, but threatens the health or safety of a worker.

List hidden hazards on your present job:

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Undetected *fumes and gasses* can quickly build up to dangerous *levels*.

List hidden hazards on your previous jobs:

The 7 Steps to Hazard Identification

Before applying the 7-step procedure, let's review the three types of hazards. They are:

OBVIOUS HAZARDS — Such as unguarded machinery, poor housekeeping, frayed electrical cords, ungrounded electrical equipment, unshored trenches, improper storage of flammables and explosives, broken ladder rungs, poor lighting, and faulty equipment, etc.

QUESTIONABLE HAZARDS — Such as lifting equipment with no noted capacities, hot work environments, noise, stress, vibration, fumes, uncertified first-aid kits, working alone, no emergency procedures, insufficient training, etc.



HIDDEN HAZARDS — Such as overloaded cranes, faulty alarms on explosive meters or toxic gas warning systems, odorless gasses such as carbon monoxide, invisible respirable dusts, etc.

Depending upon workplace procedures, questionable hazards in one place of employment could be hidden or obvious hazards in another. An example might be working with solvents. **A well trained worker would recognize dangerous solvents and consider them an obvious hazard. However, an inadequately trained worker might wonder whether such solvents are hazardous; therefore the potential hazard would be questionable. Finally, a worker with no training in working with solvents may not even recognize the dangers and, thus, the hazard becomes hidden.**

It is important that you keep these three types of hazards in mind as you proceed through the 7-steps to hazard identification. As you move on to the following pages in this booklet, **constantly check** each job situation that comes to mind to determine whether it could be a hidden, questionable or obvious hazard.

List the hazards in the space provided before proceeding to the next question.

After completing the entire 7-step procedure, **make a master list** in the space provided. This will eliminate duplication and provide you with a personal list of hazards connected with your job. You may want to compare your list with those of your co-workers which should produce a complete and accurate accounting of the hazards in your workplace.

Let's move on now to the next page and **begin to identify** the hazards of your trade. Remember in answering the questions to seek out **OBVIOUS, QUESTIONABLE and HIDDEN HAZARDS**

Step 1: Is there something about my job that frightens me?



Obvious Hazards:

Questionable Hazards:

Hidden Hazards:

Step 2: Do my co-workers perform tasks that appear dangerous to me?



Obvious Hazards:

Questionable Hazards:

Hidden Hazards:

Step 3: Have I had any injuries, or near misses that could have injured me?



Obvious Hazards:

Questionable Hazards:

Hidden Hazards:

Step 4: Do I take risks I feel are part of the job?



Obvious Hazards:

Questionable Hazards:

Hidden Hazards:

Step 5: Have I ever asked for help when I felt a job was unsafe to perform alone?



Obvious Hazards:

Questionable Hazards:

Hidden Hazards:

Step 6: Have I ever refused to perform an assigned task because I felt it was hazardous?



Obvious Hazards:

Questionable Hazards:

Hidden Hazards: •

Step 7: Have I ever changed a procedure to avoid a potential injury?



Obvious Hazards: •

Questionable Hazards:

Hidden Hazards:

REVIEW

Now that you have completed the 7-step procedure, you can use the following pages to make a master list of all the hazards you have identified. Your master list can also be exchanged with co-workers for comparison.

You may want to present final list of hazards to appropriate parties for resolution, i.e., union safety committee, supervisor, company safety department, union grievance committee, business agent, etc.



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