

IMPORTANCE OF SAFETY PLANNING

It goes without saying that any construction project carries an element of risk therefore it is the role of any contractor to ensure this is minimized wherever possible, so the job gets completed on time and on budget, without injury.

BEST PRACTICE ON SITE

OSHA requires that a Job Hazard Analysis (JHA) is carried out on each construction project to ensure tasks are carried out safely. Although they don't need to be filed in writing, this is undoubtedly good practice and means everyone understands any potential hazards, regardless of language barriers, experience, specialisms and working processes.

Performing a JHA or a Job Safety Analysis (JSA) not only ensures the right people have the right information regarding any potential risks onsite, but they keep workers safe, reducing or eliminating down time due to avoidable accidents.

"A Job Safety Analysis needs to happen daily with every subcontractor. This puts everyone on the same page when they step on site and means they understand any risks and how we plan to mitigate against them. This means putting clear documentation in place that forces everyone to keep any risks at the forefront each day, keep everything transparent and ultimately keep everyone safe."

–Joseph Spanjer, Safety Director

By meeting the requirements stated by OSHA, and going one step further by documenting things properly and sharing safety information on every project, this can be achieved.

REDUCING THE RISK

INVESTING TIME

Some contractors feel a JSA stalls work but that's really not the case. The small investment of time up front can actually save time in the long run, as a site won't be temporarily shut down due to an avoidable accident or complacency.

JHA reporting will highlight and provide guidance against potential hazards which may be encountered during construction, setting out a clear checklist stating the tasks for the day, the duties to be performed, and what needs to be done in order to perform them safely.

EXCELLENT COMMUNICATION

Whether through poor communication or as a result of language barriers, misunderstandings can happen in any industry. Within construction any mistakes can have a catastrophic impact – both financially and legally.

JSA checklists need to be translatable for everyone on site, with named competent individuals assigned to communicate, in any relevant language, to all workers under their management that day. This means there is often a requirement for bilingual speakers to be responsible for reading and then disseminating information from the checklist.

BEYOND THE FOCUS FOUR

OSHA categorizes the main types of safety risks under four headings.

1. Falls
2. Caught in or between
3. Struck by
4. Electrocution

Any JSA should address these risk areas, specifying that workers must be wearing appropriate clothing such as hard hats and high visibility vests, that toe boards must be in place, whether or not heavy machinery will be moving around the site, etc. Are subcontractors aware of power lines that may be in the way of scissor lifts and are they competent to avoid danger from electrocution?

“So much of this comes down to the level of understanding that each contracted team has of the construction environment they will be entering on a particular day. Taking it one step further, the number one reason to have the JSA in place every single day is to avoid complacency, which can creep into the workplace without a clear process.”

REDUCING RISK ON SITE

Communication on any construction job is key and keeps everything moving forward. By meeting the requirements stated by OSHA, and actually going one step further by documenting everything, this can be achieved. Share information, be transparent and everyone will stay safe.



WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR SAFETY PROGRAM?

Contact our Safety Director Joseph Spanjer at jspanjer@burtonconstruction.com