



Construction Risk Advisor

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Improving Safety Through New-hire Orientation

According to industry experts, workplace injuries in the construction industry cost businesses over \$1 billion per week in 2018. Safety management remains a hugely important factor in the construction industry, but it's not only for the obvious reasons of protecting your employees. Your safety management performance can also directly affect being awarded contracts as well as negotiating them.

As an employer in the construction industry, preventing potentially fatal accidents is a process that starts long before an employee even reaches a construction site. Your responsibility to protect your workers begins from day one, long before they start what will be their everyday work.

The Importance of Orientation

One of the best methods for protecting your employees from the beginning is to have an effective and extensive orientation process. While onboarding new employees is an important step for all companies, those in highly regulated industries should prioritize it even more.

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In the construction industry, new hires fall victim to a disproportionate number of injuries. According to industry experts, more than 50% of injuries involve employees with less than 12 months of experience.

While there are universal factors across construction, even if a new hire has prior experience in the industry, it is important to introduce them to your company's culture, past experiences and specific projects.

Ponder the Process

With new employees being at greater risk for injuries, it's imperative that companies take the time to ensure that orientation is well-thought-out. Consider these steps as part of your hiring and onboarding plan:

1. **Pre-employment screening**—This can include drug and alcohol screening as well as checking training certificates and credentials, motor vehicle records and driver qualifications.
2. **Safety onboarding**—Provide an accident-prevention program, a safety procedures manual and hands-on training for specific safety skills.
3. **Mentorships**—Pair up new hires with experienced workers so they can be immersed in your company's safety policies and have consistent reinforcement.
4. **Check-ins**—Schedule regular reviews with new hires to make sure that the training was adequate and effective for them.

Value Your Workers

Having successful safety policies and introducing them effectively is very important, not only to ensure the wellness of your workforce, but also to help your company secure contracts. Protect your present and plan for your future by making orientation a priority.