

## **Section 5: SAFETY INSPECTIONS**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Periodic safety inspections offer an effective way to identify and correct potential hazards in the workplace and enhance safety awareness. It is recommended that a supervisor and/or an employee familiar with the work area conduct in-house safety inspections on a regular basis, depending on the type of work done.

You don't have to be a safety expert to perform a safety inspection of your workplace. Most safety hazards are recognizable to any person who looks for them.

### **APPLICABILITY**

This policy applies to all King County departments and divisions.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES**

Each department, division, and work group is responsible for conducting inspections of their work site(s).

Safety and Claims Management (206-477-3350) can provide inspection assistance on request.

### **PROCEDURES**

You know your own workplace better than anyone. Look at the conditions in your workplace and how you and your co-workers do things and ask yourself, "Is it safe?" What could you be doing differently? If there are conditions or procedures that seem hazardous, they may not be as safe as they could be or should be. Trust your own judgment.

Clean up or correct any safety hazards or other recognized deficiencies immediately, if possible. Any perceived hazards that require further action should be reported to your supervisor and/or submitted to the Safety Committee for their review. Imminent hazards should be reported immediately to your supervisor and your department's Safety and Health Professional or to Safety and Claims Management at 206-477-3350.

### **CONSTRUCTION PROJECT INSPECTIONS**

For construction projects lasting over one-week, walk-around safety inspections must be conducted jointly by one member of management and one member of the crew, elected by the employees as their authorized representative. The walk-around safety inspections must be conducted weekly and be documented.

## **OFFICE INSPECTIONS**

Attachment 1, the "Office Inspection Checklist" can be used for typical office areas and most indoor work environments. Upon request, Safety and Health Professionals from King County Safety and Claims Management will assist you with safety inspections. Your department's Safety and Health Professional can also help you create or modify a checklist specific to your workplace to use for your own periodic inspections.

## **REGULATORY COMPLIANCE INSPECTIONS**

If your work place is visited (inspected) by an inspector from the Washington State Department of Labor and Industries, Division of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSH), your supervisor and King County Safety and Claims Management (206-477-3350) should be notified immediately.

When DOSH performs an inspection of a King County workplace, it is usually in response to an employee complaint. **It is a violation of Washington Administrative Code to discriminate against an employee for filing a safety or health complaint.** The State Safety Inspector is required to contact the person in charge of the job site, and has the right to interview employees privately.

The following DOSH Inspection List identifies what to do in the event of an unexpected visit from a Department of Labor and Industries inspector.

### **DOSH INSPECTION LIST**

- Notify Safety and Claims Management (206-477-3350) immediately. Also contact a management representative within your department.
- Determine the reason for the inspection. If it is in response to an employee complaint, request a copy of the complaint.
- Do not deny the inspector access, but ask him or her to wait a reasonable amount of time until a Safety and Health Professional and a representative of your department's management can participate in the inspection.
- Once the inspection is formally opened, answer all questions politely and honestly, but as directly and concisely as possible.
- Where possible, correct any noted deficiencies on the spot or before the conclusion of the inspection.
- Note where the inspector takes pictures and if possible, take duplicate photos yourself.

- If the inspector takes any samples, ask him or her to explain what it is and why s/he is taking it.
- If the inspector requests a copy of the OSHA 300 log of injuries and illnesses, contact Safety and Claims Management at 206-477-3350, and they will provide a copy.
- At the conclusion of the inspection, ask the inspector if he or she intends to issue any citations and document the exact regulatory citation(s)

**Attachment 1**

**OFFICE INSPECTION CHECKLIST**

<b>LOCATION / ITEM</b>	<b>OK</b>	<b>NOT OK</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
<u><b>AISLES, STAIRWAYS AND EXITS</b></u>			
Exit signs visible, unobstructed, and illuminated (20 foot candle minimum)			
Emergency lighting is operational			
Exit doors are not locked from inside			
Stairways have hand railings on both sides			
Minimum 44-inch wide clearance			
Cords/wires are placed out of path or protected			
Surface level changes are highlighted			
Free of obstructions; file drawers do not open into aisles			
<u><b>DOORS</b></u>			
Glass doors have safety glass; decals 4.5 feet from floor and centered			
Doors swing away from passageway			
<u><b>LIGHTING</b></u>			
20 - 40 foot candles for ambient light; 30 – 100 foot candles for reading			
20 foot candle minimum for halls and stairways			

LOCATION / ITEM	OK	NOT OK	COMMENTS
<u>AIR QUALITY</u>			
Temperature 70 – 74 degrees F			
20 cubic feet per minute fresh air provided per person; CO <sub>2</sub> levels below 1000 parts per million			
Water leaks are repaired immediately, and water-damaged ceiling tiles and/or carpeting is thoroughly dried or replaced			
Copiers and printers are vented or separated from employee desks			
<u>ELECTRICAL</u>			
Electrical outlets properly wired and grounded			
All switch and outlet covers in place			
All appliances UL listed and have ground wire			
Extension cords have ground wire and are same size or greater than the appliance cord			
Sufficient number of outlets or power strips to eliminate or minimize extension cords			
Power cords in walking spaces are rubber covered or taped down (not put under carpeting)			
Floor stacks are protected by furniture or other obstruction			
GFCI in all wet locations			
All repairs made by qualified personnel only			

LOCATION / ITEM	OK	NOT OK	COMMENTS
<u>FLOORS</u>			
Slip-resistant finish			
No tripping hazards			
Rugs/carpets free of holes and tears, and securely fastened			
Floor free of holes or depressions			
Wet floor signs used by custodians			
<u>PARKING LOTS AND SIDEWALKS</u>			
Surfaces maintained			
Trip hazards highlighted			
Lighted at night			
<u>COMPUTER WORKSTATIONS</u> (For workstation evaluations and group training, call Safety and Claims Management at 206-477-3350)			
Desk, monitor, and keyboard heights proper			
Adjustable chairs with good back support available			
Foot rests/ wrist rests available where needed			
Mouse positioned close to keyboard			
<u>STORAGE</u>			
Floors kept clear			

LOCATION / ITEM	OK	NOT OK	COMMENTS
Overhead sprinklers and smoke detectors clear			
No storage on top of higher files or overhead bins			
File cabinets and bookshelves anchored to walls and/or floor			
Heaviest items on middle-to-lower shelves			
Flammables/combustibles in fire safety cans/cabinets (quantities out limited to immediate use only)			
<u>MISCELLANEOUS</u>			
Open only one file drawer at a time; close after use			
All personnel trained in Hazard Communication/Globally Harmonized System (GHS)			
Fire extinguishers checked and tagged (annual service by certified technician from Safety and Claims Management)			
Safety Data Sheet (SDS) Book up to date and available to employees			
Safety bulletin board used for safety purposes only; WISHA poster, safety meeting minutes, emergency numbers posted			
First aid kit location marked			
Automated External Defibrillator (AED) location marked			
Accident Prevention Program manual available to all employees			

