

Occupational health essay essay sample



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Concerns/Problems- Policy changes: When observing the policy standards put in place, ABC Plastics Limited is not up to standards with the regulations set out by the Ministry. Lacking of material quality indicates that there is an. The company has breached some regulations and this may cause safety concerns to the employees and closure of the company.

* There is no present Joint Health and Safety committee. There should always be a health and safety rep on duty at all times to ensure worker's safety. There are only 17 employees on duty that does not entitle them to not have a safety rep onsite. There should be an onsite health rep on duty under any circumstance. The Joint Health and Safety committee is put in place to implement and develop programs to protect the employees' safety and health and deal with employee complaints and suggestions concerning employee safety and health.

* Record keeping of important safety tests and inspections done in the company are limited. Records should be kept in organized fashion and easy to access. Records should be updated and several inspections should be done more often to ensure that there are less injuries and accidents to workers. Account records should be conserved for five years.

* The Material safety data sheets are challenging to find and are out of date because they are not in an organized manner. If there were to be an emergency these sheets are critical to help determine the injuries related to the accident. All records should be renewed or updated just in case regulations alter or differ. Employee knowledge of chemicals is critical and this ensures that no accidents take place. If employees don't have

knowledge of the chemicals this can cause preventable accidents to occur and also improper handling of unsafe substances while working. use of portable foam extinguishers as well.

* Fire extinguishers or sprinklers are not present at the company. Sprinklers should be placed in a storage compartment area where chemical products are being used. Water is not the best resolution to get rid of fumes or flames. Fume hoods are mandatory in a manufacturing or processing enclosure.

* The prevailing personal protective equipment does not fit the regulations. Personal equipment must be in accordance to the regulations and proper training of the equipment should be intact for the workers. When hazards cannot be controlled through engineering practices or controls then PPE should be put in place to protect the eyes, face, head, lungs, arms and ears. The quality of the personal protective equipment is limited and not good enough for duties. Having a material that is lacking quality does not provide information on which chemicals can be used or what it is able to withstand. The purpose of PPE is to prevent harmful chemical substances from contacting the skin and damaging it. It is crucial to have it place as it plays an important role as a barrier from harmful practices.

* An emergency evacuation plan and proper training should be put in place and contain proper details as to how to escape from an unsafe building. Employees should be aware of where to exit in case of an emergency and how to deal with the situation. All workers should have a copy of the emergency plan so that they are aware of how to escape in a difficult situation without the aid of others.

* Hazardous chemicals and substances should be marked or clearly labelled with the names of the product to easily identify it. It could be fatal if two chemicals are incorrectly mixed and an unexpected reaction occurs. Not labelling hazardous substances can cause major errors to arise during critical steps.

* Emergency chemical showers and eye washing stations are absent. The first few seconds after coming in contact with a dangerous substance is crucial. Allowing time to pass by without delivering proper treatment can cause a major injury. The use of emergency sprinklers/showers can be used to get rid of flames or fumes from clothing. It is very important that workers wear eye protective wear and proper attire at all times.

* Safety signs indicating workers of a sludge pit are not acceptable due to heavy corrosion are missing. The signs are very important in making sure the employees are aware of situations which they should approach with caution. The signs should be visible and clear and should stand out without any corrosion or rust on them. Signs for the usage of wearing proper personal protective equipment is not seen very often and this can cause a major accident from occurring. The Health and Safety regulations require that a sign be put up where a risk is present. Workers should obey the signs and follow rules set out by the workplace.

Physical:

* Heating pipes which appear to be wrapped in cardboard are flaking grey dust and debris in the office and hall which appears to be asbestos. Heating pipes should not be wrapped around cardboard as this can be a fire hazard

and cause serious injury. The asbestos must be tested and removed for the health and safety of the employees. Asbestos is a well known carcinogen and can cause cancer if exposed. The health and safety rep should be advised of the situation and should take action immediately to ensure the building is safe for everyone.

* Industrial cleaners that ABC manufacturers and “ Swish Industrial Toilet cleaner” are stacked to an incredible height. This is considered an overhead hazard, can cause a fatal accident. There is also is a confined space problem. The bottom row cardboard boxes are sagging from the weight of the boxes stacked on top and this can cause the boxes to collapse on someone working below.

* There is a thick coating of dust in the office and this can cause numerous health concerns. It can cause allergies and asthma to employees. The janitor or cleaning service provided at the company should wipe the dust clean to provide clean fresh air for the workers. They shouldn’t allow the dust to accumulate to a thick coating and allow the environment to not have any ventilation or good air. Accumulation of dust particles can cause inhalation problems to those who are immunocompromised and those with respiratory illness.

* The radiator is stuck in the “ full on” position. This can cause a fire hazard due to the high heat caused by the radiator. Those products which are explosive or flammable may be sensitive to the heat and may explode and cause injury to a worker. High heat can cause heat stroke or make someone feel light headed due to the high heat and may faint or collapse.

- * All of the plant windows are closed shut. There is a lack of ventilation and no air coming into the plant due to the windows being shut. Dust particles need to escape through the window instead of the workers inhaling the particles. The flames can spread quickly in the building in a few seconds.
- * There is a sludge pond which is located immediately adjacent the rear of the employee's parking lot. The sludge pond can only be present if chemicals in the pond are acceptable by the regulations and Ministry. The sludge pond is not fenced which can cause trespassers to enter the premise which can lead to an unexpected accident or injury. A dead carcass of any sort should not be present on the premise and can contain bacteria or viruses and lead to a communicable disease. Debris should be removed around the pond area every so often to remove unwanted odours.
- * There are two large shipping doors that are kept open for circulation purposes. This is not an appropriate way of receiving ventilation and fresh air. This can cause unnecessary trespassers to enter the premise through the unattended door. It also causes unwanted particles from outside to enter the premise.
- * Two older forklifts for being used for transport and they are both propane powered. These should not be used if they are old because they can cause unexpected exhaust from escaping and causing illness in a worker. Maintenance records for these forklifts should be kept to date and should appear in good condition.

Health issues and concerns:

* Workers are complaining of adverse health concerns/impacts from working in the company. This could be long term effects due to the exposure they are exposed to such as toxic chemicals and substances. Many of the products that the workers deal with everyday are highly toxic and PPE is a crucial step in protecting themselves. The PPE guidelines and usage are not being properly used to prevent these types of occurrences. The following are the health concerns that the workers are complaining about: suffering from frequent headaches, some laugh loudly in an inappropriate way when nothing is funny, several staff in past have died prematurely from heart related conditions, persistent skin rashes, skin rashes under overalls and lack of personal hygiene i. e. spitting on the ground.

Ergonomics: Ergonomics is the science of designing and establishing equipment, the workplace and even the job to accommodate the worker. Ergonomic specialists make equipment that is comfortable and equipment that puts less stress on the body and control external factors such as light and temperature to make sure the worker is working at their most productive level possible.

* Proper chairs and desks should be ergonomically established and produced for the workers so that they are working in a comfortable environment without straining themselves repetively.

* The company has old style Amber VDT's and ancient PC's. This caused three attractive women to complain about blurred vision due to the video display terminals that are old.

* Workers should work in an appropriate temperature that is suitable for everyone. There should be no need for wearing extra clothing because one area of the building is colder than the other. Workers should wear comfortable clothing in a comfortable temperature setting.

Action plan for the problems:

* A joint health and safety committee is very important in a workplace. It helps ensure that accidents are not seen within a workplace and provides knowledge to workers of how to be safe in an emergency or when an accident occurs. There should always be a health and safety representative on duty at all times to make sure preventative measures can be taken. According to Canadian jurisdictions it is mandatory to have a joint health and safety committee put in place.

* Records should be kept for five years to ensure that future accidents don't occur to workers and lost time at work may result if this is not processed.

* The MSDS should be placed in an organized manner and placed in a secure place for easy access. Updated MSDS is an important component for industries that deal with chemical products. Training employees to locate and identify the MSDS are crucial in a workplace. MSDS can be purchased by chemical suppliers.

* Pertaining to the fire code it is very important that a fire extinguishers and sprinklers be placed in a workplace for emergency usage. All workers should know how to operate a fire extinguisher when in an emergency situation to prevent the building from being fully engulfed by flames. Fume hoods allow

the flames to taper off and allow fewer fumes to escape into the air. These are important devices that should be purchased and kept in a safe and designated area.

* Personal protective equipment must be purchased to make sure the face and body are protected from harmful chemicals and substances. Training on how to use the equipment is a major key in insuring harmful accidents and fatal incidents don't occur.

* Emergency plans should be put in a clean area where it is clearly illustrated and easy to understand. Training should be held for workers to ensure full understanding of where all emergency exits are and where to meet everyone. Test alarms should be done to ensure performance and accuracy when evacuating the premise.

* Hazardous chemicals should be labelled with clear block letters so that workers are able to identify the chemical and its toxicity level. Labels help identify the product with an alert before using the product under WHMIS legislation. MSDS should be made available to observe the details associated with each chemical product.

* Chemical showers and eye washing stations should be made available at the company. This is to ensure that if an accident occurs with a chemical and it comes into contact with the eye area it is dealt with in a safe manner at a proper station. It should be located where processing rooms and areas are. A combination unit is very useful as it can be used to wash all parts of the body as well. These fixtures are not expensive and can be purchased through many industries.

* Signs should be visible to indicate a restricted area where it is not safe to enter. Without signs workers may become in a situation where they are in trouble without knowing that the area they are entering is restricted and dangerous. This can lead to an accident or fatality and can cause employers to have to deal with legal concerns. These signs can be bought at many places and the lettering should be big and clear to read and understand. Signs should be clear of corrosion and should be cleaned once in a while to prevent rust from forming.

Physical:

* Asbestos is a carcinogen which can cause cancer in humans. The heating pipes should be replaced with new pipes to ensure that the asbestos is clear and no more exists in the area. Removal of asbestos is an expensive process which requires the elimination of the vast deteriorated area.

* The ABC cleaning products should be placed in a cupboard where they can be retrieved within hand's reach. This ensures that the products don't cause an overhead hazard. If space is not adequate, more cupboards for storage fixtures should be placed to ensure that all products are placed in an organized and efficient manner.

* The janitor or custodian should clean the dust and not allow it to accumulate into a large mass. The cleaner should wear a mask and follow through with the task. Electrostatic precipitators or cyclone dust collectors can be used to get rid of the heavy dust content. This allows clean air and won't allow health problems to arise especially for those with respiratory illness.

- * The temperature of the furnace should not be set on high because this is a fire hazard. The temperature of the furnace should be set to temperature directed by the inspector. Setting the temperature high can cause chemicals to explode due to the extreme heat.
- * The windows should not be screwed shut all the way. To provide ventilation in the workplace the windows should be open to provide air circulation throughout the rooms. Having ventilation reduces exposure to hazardous pollutants and this prevents injury which will avoid workers being absent from work.
- * The sludge pond area should be fenced to prevent trespassers from entering the dangerous zone. The pond should be made out of concrete material to prevent contamination and corrosion.
- * The shipping doors should not be open unless the door needs to be used for any work purpose or duty. If shipments need to be received using the doors that is acceptable but allowing the doors to be open when it is unattended is not appropriate. Trespassers may enter the premise easily and this can lead to an accident.
- * The maintenance records for the two forklifts should be kept up to date and in good condition for future reference. The machinery itself should not be old which can cause exhaust and fumes to arise, and this can be inhaled by a worker.

Health issues and concerns:

* Having a medical officer on duty would be helpful in the aid of workers who have chronic or acute exposures. Different workers have different symptoms and MSDS can identify how different workers should be treated. MSDS reports can prevent exposures from occurring in the future and prevent their illness from becoming worse. Temporary medical treatment should be provided to give relief to the worker.