CSI Country Wide Case Study Safety Strategy Discussion

Construction Safety Investigator

Instructions

The objective of this tool is to provide field supervisors with information to proactively engage workers and discuss safety related concerns that they may encounter. Safety discussions should not be limited to the subject above and should pertain to the activities that workers will be involved in that may have the potential for safety related exposures.

Case Day:

February 2009

Accident Type:

Occupational Health Accident - Lead Exposure

Relevant laws, rules and codes may include:

29CFR 1926.20(a)(1), 1926.21(b)(2), (3), 1926.62, 1910.134

Case:

Two workers were hospitalized after being exposed to high concentrations of lead based paint.

Accident Detail:

Two workers employed by a bridge demolition contractor, were involved in removing sections of bridge paint at pre-determined locations in preparation for demolition.

The workers were using needle scalers to remove the bridge paint down to bare metal at locations where either sections of the bridge are cut using torches or hydraulic shears. Needle scalers are pneumatic tools with fine chisels called needles that move against the work surface removing paint or other coatings.

During the scaling process, paint is chipped into fine particles that can be inhaled or ingested. After three days of scaling, both workers became ill and were taken to local area hospitals where they were found to have lead poisoning.

Reconstructive Safety Evaluation:

- What are some of the possible causes of the accident being discussed?
- What actions could have been taken that might have prevented this accident from occurring?

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Accident Scene Conclusion:

The investigation revealed that the contractor did have a written lead protection program, however, failed to implement it for this project.

The workers wore only dust masks to protect from inhalation, there were no hygiene facilities to clean up before eating, drinking or leaving for the day, workers reused contaminated coveralls as protective clothing and the workers were not part of a blood lead level monitoring program.

In addition, it was revealed that the workers had worked for this contractor for several months and performed these operations on several occasions, which likely contributed to their over exposures to lead.

Preventive Safety Measures Include:

- All operations are preplanned using a Job Safety Task Analysis (JSTA) to ensure potential safety hazards associated with an operation are identified and appropriate steps are taken to eliminate or control them.
- Where the potential of lead exposure exists, all operations in question are fully evaluated to determine the extent of the exposure. If lead exposures exist, a written lead protection program is created and fully implemented before work begins.
- All workers involved in operations with lead exposures are trained in the hazards of the work they are to perform, the
 personal protective equipment, hygiene facilities, respiratory protection and safe work procedures necessary to perform
 their assigned tasks.

Attendance Roster			

Reference: This case is fictitious, and any resemblance to any persons, living or dead, is entirely coincidental. However, the type of accident described in this case summary happens all too often on construction sites.

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