

Procedures VS. Practice

Toolbox Talks

Weekly Tailgate Topic_

11-47

Discuss with crews on [INSERT DATE]

Your company recognizes that written safe work practices and procedures are essential to ensure a safe work environment and are an important part of an overall occupational health and safety program.

So what is the difference between a practice and a procedure?

Safe Work Practice:

A safe work practice is more of a guideline helpful in performing non-standard activities in as safe a way as possible, such as using a portable grinder or ladder. They are commonly found in owner's manuals, industry guides, sample manuals, etc.

Safe Work Procedure:

These are detailed step-by-step descriptions of how specific work-related activities (usually ones with associated high risk hazards) are safely performed from start to finish, (operating a fork lift, manhole entry, battery boosting, working alone). The procedure may be simply a series of steps, or a checklist where each step is checked off when completed. Standardized written work procedures can ensure that work is done safely

So what does that look like in the real world?

In the case of use of a ladder, safe work practices might include:

- ladder never to be placed on uneven terrain,
- ladder to be secured when used against a building,
- ladder to extend 3 feet above the roof edge...

Safe Work Procedure

Title of Procedure: Safe Use of Step ladder

Applies to: all staff using step ladders

Steps in procedure:

1. Acquire ladder from supply room
2. Carry upright, checking clearances, do NOT use stairs
3. Set ladder on firm, level footing
4. Check for obstructions, overhead hazards, and debris
5. Open ladder, and ensure ladder braces are locked in position
6. Inspect condition of ladder, do not use if evidence of damage
7. Maintain 3 points of contact at all times.....



Why have Safe Work Practices and Procedures?

1. A safe work practice or procedure is **REQUIRED BY LAW**. Activities such as confined space entry and the selection, maintenance and use of respiratory protective equipment require the adoption of an appropriate practice.
2. They address the issue of FORGETFULNESS. Many times a work procedure (example: scheduled inspection of tools and equipment) is only performed on an infrequent basis.
3. Used for EMPLOYEE TRAINING. Reference to a safe work practice or procedure will ensure all workers are properly trained in work method.