

# / Safety Awareness – Using Your Safety Eyes



During this module you will answer Quick Quizzes to help you review and test your understanding; these are not scored.

This module takes 15 minutes to complete.

1. Recognize the importance and benefits of Safety Awareness
2. Understand Safety Awareness responsibilities
3. Develop Safety Awareness habits
4. Identify and eliminate Safety Awareness hazards
5. Understand the costs of poor Safety Awareness
6. Help you prevent workplace fires and accidents

There is a direct relationship between a clean, neat, orderly workplace and a safe workplace.

## Safety Awareness:

- Eliminates accident and fire hazards
- Maintains safe, healthy work conditions
- Saves time, money, materials, space, and effort
- Improves productivity and quality
- Boosts morale
- Reflects a well-run organization

On the flip side, there are the costs of poor Safety Awareness, which include:

- Slips, Trips, and Falls
- Fires
- Injuries resulting from electrical problems
- Health problems caused by unsanitary or unsafe conditions.



Developing Safety Awareness habits will protect you and your co-workers from injuries on the job.

- **Make time for Safety Awareness tasks on a daily basis.** Set aside a little time during the workday and at the end of your shift for Safety Awareness.
- **Evaluate your workspace before starting work.** Look for slip, trip, and fall hazards, fire hazards, machine hazards, cut hazards, etc.
- **Remove those hazards before starting work.** Clean up spills. Put away tools and electrical cords you don't need. Close drawers. Clean up waste materials and dispose of them properly.
- **Don't leave equipment running when you leave the work area.** Turn it off and clean it up so that it is ready for the next time it's used.
- **Clean up as you go.** Put tools and equipment away in their proper place when you are through with them. Waiting until the end of the shift exposes you and others to trip hazards all day.
- **Eliminate or report all hazards.** Take responsibility for hazards even if you didn't create the hazard or it's not in your work area.

To help you keep up with Safety Awareness duties, it's a good idea to develop your own checklist of Safety Awareness responsibilities and use it on a daily basis. Items on your checklist might include different parts of your work area, such as:

- Floors
- Aisles
- Workstation
- Equipment
- Storage
- Waste disposal



Which of the following does Safety Awareness promote?

- A. Maintains safe, healthy work conditions
- B. Saves time, money, materials, space, and effort
- C. Improves productivity and quality and boosts morale
- D. Reflects a well-run organization
- E. All of the Above



Which of the following does Safety Awareness promote?

- A. Maintains safe, healthy work conditions
- B. Saves time, money, materials, space, and effort
- C. Improves productivity and quality and boosts morale
- D. Reflects a well-run organization
- E. All of the Above

Slips, trips, and falls are among the most common hazards of poor Safety Awareness. Any number of injuries can occur as a result:

- Strains or sprains can occur from a simple slip that doesn't even result in a fall. The jerking motion that occurs when your feet slip and your body reacts to regain balance can cause a muscle strain or a sprain, like a twisted ankle.
- You could tear a ligament, which is painful and takes a long time to heal.
- You could break a bone if you slipped or tripped and fell hard. Even more serious slip, trip, and fall injuries can involve damage to the back or spine.
- And sometimes the worst happens. More than 12,000 people die every year as a result of falling either at work or at home.

Preventing slips requires discipline and a willingness to go the extra mile.

- **Clean up spills.** Paper towels can be used for water. Oil and other chemicals may require special absorbent wipes. For some hazardous chemicals, special training and equipment are required to clean up spills.
- **Repair leaks right away.** If you can't do it safely yourself, report the problem immediately and place a barrier around the affected area to prevent slips.
- **Pick up objects.** Plastic on a concrete floor, for instance, can be very hazardous. Even a small piece, which can be hard to see, can send somebody tumbling to the floor.
- **Sweep up debris.** Some granular particles can act just like liquid spills on the floor and cause a slip and fall.
- **Wear slip-resistant shoes** to help prevent a fall should you encounter a slippery surface.

Preventing trip hazards requires initiative and responsibility to remove the hazard in order to prevent somebody else from being injured. Take responsibility for trip hazards:

- **Clean up debris** such as straps and bands from boxes that can become entangled in a person's legs.
- **Put away electrical cords and air hoses when not in use.** And even when using them, be careful where you place them. Make sure it's not somewhere somebody could trip over them.
- **Don't stack boxes** or other items in walkways.
- **Keep drawers closed** so that someone doesn't come by and tumble over an open drawer.
- **Be careful when you carry objects.** Make sure you can see where you're going and watch out for obstacles that could cause a trip.
- **Put away tools and other production equipment after use.** Leaving items lying around on the floor could cause someone to trip and fall—perhaps even you.



Safety Awareness will also help prevent falls from heights. To prevent falls:

- **Be careful on stairs.** Keep one hand free to hold onto the railing. Walk, don't run, up and down. And don't leave objects on stairs—or on landings.
- **Use ladders safely.** This means selecting the right ladder for the job, inspecting it before use, setting it up properly, climbing safely, and working carefully once you're up.
- **Be sure to place fall protection chains or barriers** on upper level walkways or mezzanines after performing any tasks that require their temporary removal.
- **Always use personal fall arrest equipment** when required, and be sure to inspect it carefully before each use.

Safety Awareness also plays a major role in preventing fires:

- **Store flammable and combustible liquids in proper approved containers.** These containers prevent sparks and other ignition sources from igniting the liquids stored in them. Be sure to keep the containers closed.
- **Keep reactive chemicals separated.** Reactive materials, when mixed, often create what is called an “exothermic” reaction, which produces heat and could cause these materials to spontaneously combust. Safety Awareness rules make sure these materials are not stored near one another.
- **Prevent the accumulation of combustibles.** The accumulation of combustibles such as paper, cardboard, wooden pallets, or rags provides a great place for a fire to start and spread quickly. Put these materials in their designated locations away from ignition sources.
- **Keep combustibles, like dust and grease, away from electrical equipment and hot machinery.**



Safety Awareness to prevent fires also includes accessibility to fire exits and firefighting equipment.

- **Keep evacuation routes clear.** Don't store boxes or other items in aisles, hallways, or stairwells that lead to emergency exits.
- **Don't block emergency exits.** Always make sure that exit doors are kept clear and ensure that nothing blocks these doors on either side.
- **Make sure fire extinguishers are accessible.** Access to extinguishers must be kept clear at all times. Extinguishers must also be visible, not blocked by stacks of boxes, forklifts, or other items.
- **Ensure that electrical panels can be opened.** Access to electrical panels must be clear at all times so that they can be opened quickly in case of an emergency that requires the power to a machine or the building to be shut down.



Safety Awareness also contributes to chemical safety:

- Make sure containers are properly labeled and that the containers are kept closed when not in use
- Inspect containers for signs of damage or leaks before using and regularly while containers are in storage.
- Wear required PPE when working with or around hazardous chemicals.
- Follow safe storage and handling procedures when using chemicals to make sure they are not stored near other chemicals they might react with or handled in a way that might contribute to a spill or other hazard.
- Most spills should be cleaned up immediately to protect other workers from hazards. Some hazardous chemicals require specialized training to respond to a spill. In those cases, you should report the problem immediately.



Safety Awareness requires you to follow safe work practices with machinery

- Keep the area around machines clear of combustibles, slip and trip hazards, or any other debris;
- Inspect machines before use
- Make sure all guards are operating
- Follow lockout/tagout procedures when servicing or repairing a machine
- Clean machines and put away tools



Remember Safety Awareness when you are working with electrical equipment:

- Don't stack combustible materials near electrical heaters or furnaces
- Inspect electrical cords before each use
- Don't overload outlets or circuits
- Keep combustibles away from electrical equipment
- Keep electrical equipment free of dust, debris, and grease

Safety Awareness can also help prevent cuts, bumps, scrapes, and more serious injuries.

- Don't leave objects sticking out into walkways or workspaces
- When you can't remove a head-bumping hazard, at least pad it and put up a warning sign to prevent injuries
- Clean up broken glass immediately. Never pick up broken glass with bare hands
- Properly store blades and sharp tools
- Properly discard old blades by covering the sharp edge with tape or cardboard and discard the blade directly into a metal trash container or dumpster
- Keep utility knives sheathed or retracted when not in use.

Which of the following should **NOT** be done:

- A. Keep evacuation routes clear
- B. Block emergency exits
- C. Make sure fire extinguishers are accessible
- D. Ensure that electrical panels can be opened

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- Select the right equipment for the job, including the right PPE.
- Other equipment for Safety Awareness tasks include brooms and vacuums for picking up dust and debris, mops and sponges for cleaning floors and work surfaces as well as wiping up liquid spills.
- If you use rags for wiping down equipment and those rags become soaked with solvents or oil, be sure to dispose of them in tightly closed metal containers.
- Be careful when using cleaning compounds. Many products used in the workplace are stronger than household cleaning agents and may require special protection. Read labels and refer to the safety data sheet for more information.

Safety Awareness tasks frequently involve lifting and carrying objects so you also have to think about safe lifting and carrying techniques.

- Before lifting and carrying an object, make sure your route of travel is clear of obstructions, slip and trip hazards, and so forth.
- When you lift, get a good grip on the object and lift with your legs, not your back.
- Make sure you can see over the object you're carrying, and watch where you're going.
- Always take proper precautions when you lift and carry objects while performing Safety Awareness tasks



Finally, there's also the issue of good personal Safety Awareness. By that we mean taking good care of your own body and mind so that you're always well prepared to work safely. Good personal Safety Awareness means:

- Eating well and exercising regularly
- Getting enough sleep so that your body and mind can function at their peak
- Avoiding stress by taking some time to relax
- Never working or driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs.





- Safety Awareness helps prevent workplace fires and accidents.
- Keeping the workplace neat, clean, and safe is everyone's responsibility.
- Keep alert to Safety Awareness hazards.
- Eliminate or report hazards you identify anywhere in the facility.

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