The PPE Hazard Assessment

Introduction:

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requires that employers protect employees in the workplace from hazards that can cause injury. OSHA recommends the use of engineering, administrative, and work practice controls to manage or eliminate hazards. Included in the control measures is the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) which provides required protection for employees from workplace hazards. Employers must provide PPE for employees, and this PPE must be provided at the cost of the employer. To ensure the most possible safe workplace environment for employees, OSHA requires employers perform an evaluation of the workplace that will determine the hazards employees are expose to and what PPE is needed for protection. This evaluation found in Regulation Standards 29 CFR 1910.132(d) is the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Hazard Assessment.

Discussion Points:

- The use of PPE to protect the worker and the risks associated with PPE use.
- What is a PPE Hazard Assessment?
- The purpose of the PPE Hazard Assessment.
- Conducting the PPE Hazard Assessment.
- Documenting the completion of the PPE Hazard Assessment.

Discussion:

A PPE Hazard Assessment should include: the tasks that employees perform, the hazards employees are exposed to, where the hazards are located, the likelihood that those hazards could injure employees, the severity of potential injury, and the types of PPE necessary to protect employees from the hazards. The purpose of the assessment is to identify sources of hazards to employees, and can be conducted for an area, a job category, or for an individual. The process will include employees from each work area that is being assessed. Before performing the PPE Hazard Assessment, discuss the reasons for the assessment and the procedures being used for the assessment. Also review the job procedures, potential hazards and the PPE currently in use. General industry employers must prepare a document that states they have completed the hazard assessment. The document must include: a heading that says the document is a “certification” of the hazard assessment, the name of the workplace evaluated, the name of the person certifying the hazard assessment was completed, and the date of the hazard assessment. The use of PPE can create significant hazards to workers, such as heat stress, physical and psychological stress, and impaired vision, mobility, and communication. The greater the level of PPE protection, the greater the

risks associated. For these reasons, it is important to conduct a PPE Hazard Assessment when hazards are present or likely to be present.

As always, stay safe out there!