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Safety Related Paperwork

Safety is often associated with paperwork in many workplaces. While many employees dislike the fact that there is so much paperwork involved in workplace safety, it is often necessary to have it. Paperwork communicates safety requirements, describes work processes, communicates hazards, tracks near misses, investigates losses, and serves many more purposes. It is an important part of the overall safety program at a company.

Paperwork as a Proactive Tool:

Whether you agree or disagree with the paperwork that the company requires you to review or complete relating to safety on the job, each piece is there for a reason. There are many proactive tools, such as training materials, job safety analyses, PPE assessments, standard operating procedures, permits, etc. These tools are meant to communicate the hazards and necessary measures needed to work safely for a specific work task or at a worksite as a whole.

These tools also get employees to take a step back and focus on safety first rather than just jumping into a work task. The paperwork serves as a tool to double-check that the necessary safeguards are in place prior to work beginning. Work tasks can be complicated, and these tools are just a way to ensure hazards are communicated and addressed.

Paperwork is Required to Track Safety Performance:

Paperwork, whether physical or digital, is an important part of tracking and measuring safety performance in the workplace. A quote often used in business is, "what gets measured gets managed." This is especially true when it comes to workplace safety.

When events occur, such as near misses, property damage events, spills, injuries, and other incidents, it is important that they are reported and tracked. By reporting these incidents, a company can begin to collect data and see what the trends are that cause the different incidents. Steps can be taken to improve safety at a company using this data to make informed decisions in implementing effective safeguards.

The paperwork completed for incidents, such as investigation reports, helps find the root cause of the incident so steps can be taken to prevent it from happening again at the worksite. The findings from the investigation process are often shared companywide to also prevent it from happening at the other worksites or locations the company has.

Summary:

There are many other reasons why paperwork is necessary regarding workplace safety. Other particularly important reasons include complying with client requirements as well as federal regulations such as the EPA or OSHA. Do not just go through the motions and pencil-whip paperwork. Take time to understand the purpose of these tools at your workplace. It not only keeps you safe, but it also protects the company as a whole.