

SAFETY TALKS--TAILGATE BRIEFINGS

1752

(November 1991)

To build positive accident-injury prevention attitudes on the part of supervisors and employees, field supervisors--State Forest Rangers I, Fire Captains, and Fire Apparatus Engineers--should conduct weekly safety topic briefings.

Supervisory personnel shall conduct "tool box" or "tailgate" safety meetings or the equivalent with their crews at least every ten working days on the job or as needed to emphasize safety.

Both large and small operations may use tailgate safety meetings. In large operations, employees may be divided into groups according to occupation or supervisory sections.

POINTERS FOR EFFECTIVE SAFETY MEETINGS

1752.1

(November 1991)

Hold a meeting at least once a week. Regular meetings will convey the attitude that they are a regular and valuable part of the job.

Hold the meeting at the beginning of a shift, right after lunch, or after a break. The best time is probably at the beginning of a shift--when everyone is alert.

Hold the meeting on the job-site.

Limit each meeting to between five and ten minutes. If the discussion gets hot and heavy--which may be a positive development--continue it at the next meeting. Discuss only a single point or subject and do not choose a subject that is too broad. "Hand Tool Safety," for instance, is much too comprehensive a topic to cover at a short meeting, but "Defective Hand Tools," or "Chain Saw Use" might be good subjects.

There are any number of topics that can be covered at tailgate meetings, but the group's activities should furnish the source of almost all topics.

One can review an unsafe act or procedure observed among employees to introduce the safe practices or procedures. (However, do not mention names or blame anyone at a tailgate meeting. That is not the time or place for it, and it might only stifle discussion.)

Discuss a recent injury or accident either at one's own operations or an accident learned about from an outside source such as a newspaper, trade journal, or related facility.

Discuss how a piece of new equipment can be safely operated.

Review a good safe job recently completed by one's own group or organization.

Review an unsafe condition that was not promptly corrected--a guard removed, an obstructed walkway, a defective tool not reported, repaired, or replaced--with emphasis on the injury that could have resulted from the situation.

One should be prepared for the meeting and ready to stimulate discussion if necessary.

Use positive approaches and conclusions whenever possible, such as, "We can bring our housekeeping up to a high standard. You people can develop habits of neatness and cleanliness." Instead of, "The housekeeping around here is terrible. You people are too sloppy."

While one may open the meeting by stating the subject and presenting the hazard or problem, try to get the group to develop the discussion. A good way to stimulate a discussion is to ask open-ended questions that cannot be answered with "Yes" or "No." Let the group talk. It is better in most cases for crew members to speak and offer recommendations or solutions. Most people show more interest in carrying out solutions that they have had a hand in developing.

[\(see next section\)](#)

[\(see HB Table of Contents\)](#)

[\(see Forms or Forms Samples\)](#)