

IMPORTANCE OF SAFETY PLANNING

Due to the high level of risk associated with construction projects, it is the contractor's duty to plan accordingly and mitigate that risk. When managed correctly, jobs are completed safely, on time, and on budget.

BEST PRACTICE ON SITE

OSHA requires that a Job Hazard Analysis (JHA) is carried out on each construction project to ensure tasks are carried out safely. Although they don't need to be filed in writing, this is undoubtedly good practice and means everyone understands any potential hazards, regardless of language barriers, experience, specialisms and working processes.

Performing a JHA or a Job Safety Analysis (JSA) not only ensures the right people have the right information regarding any potential risks onsite, but they keep workers safe, reducing or eliminating down time due to avoidable accidents.

"A Job Safety Analysis needs to happen daily with every subcontractor. This puts everyone on the same page when they step on site and means they understand any risks and how we plan to mitigate against them. This means putting clear documentation in place that forces everyone to keep any risks at the forefront each day, keep everything transparent and ultimately keep everyone safe."

—Joseph Spanjer, Safety Director

REDUCING THE RISK

INVESTING TIME

Some contractors feel a JSA stalls work but that is not the case. The small investment of time up front can actually save time in the long run, as a site won't be temporarily shut down due to an avoidable accident or complacency.

JHA reporting highlights and provides guidance against potential hazards which may be encountered during construction. Starting each day performing a JHA establishes a clear checklist of the tasks for the day, the duties to be performed, and what needs to be done in order to perform them safely.

EXCELLENT COMMUNICATION

Whether through poor communication or as a result of language barriers, misunderstandings can happen in any industry. Within construction any mistakes can have a catastrophic impact – both financially and legally.

JSA checklists need to be translatable to any relevant language for those working on site. Each trade shall have a competent individual assigned to communicate to all workers under their management that day. This means there is often a requirement for bilingual speakers to be responsible for reading and then disseminating information from the checklist.

BEYOND THE FOCUS FOUR

OSHA categorizes the main types of safety risks under four headings.

1. Falls
2. Caught in or between
3. Struck by
4. Electrocution

Any JSA should address these risk areas, specifying that workers must be wearing appropriate clothing such as hard hats and high visibility vests, that toe boards must be in place, whether or not heavy machinery will be moving around the site, etc. Are subcontractors aware of power lines that may be in the way of scissor lifts and are they competent to avoid danger from electrocution?

"So much of this comes down to the level of understanding that each contracted team has of the construction environment they will be entering on a particular day. The number one reason to have the JSA in place every single day is to avoid complacency in daily performed tasks."

REDUCING RISK ON SITE

Communication on any construction job is key and keeps progress moving forward. Share information, be transparent and everyone will stay safe.



WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR SAFETY PROGRAM?

Contact our Safety Director Joseph Spanjer
jspanjer@burtonconstruction.com

