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- EHS Risk Assessments
- Occupational Hygiene Surveys
- Ergonomics Surveys
- EHS Management
- System development and implementation
- Environmental Monitoring
- Identification of EHS Legal Requirements and Compliance Audits
- Construction EHS Services
- Construction H&S Files
- Internal Auditor Training
- General EHS Training



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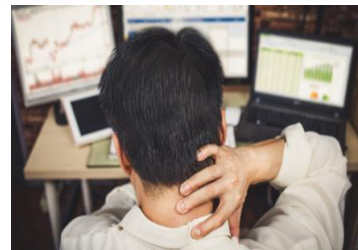


DoL Approved Inspection Authority (OH0049-CI-09)

Newsletter compiled by  
Lee Rands

### STRESS IN THE WORKPLACE

A certain amount of workplace stress is normal. However, excessive stress can interfere with productivity and performance, impact physical and emotional health and could even affect relationships and home life. But stress isn't always negative - a little bit of stress can help people stay focused, energetic and able to meet new challenges in the workplace. It also keeps them on their toes during an alert, to prevent accidents or costly mistakes.



Although, in today's chaotic world, too often the workplace seems like an emotional roller coaster; and long hours, tight deadlines and ever-increasing demands can leave people feeling worried, drained and overwhelmed. When stress exceeds a person's ability to cope, it stops being helpful and starts causing damage to their mind and body - as well as to their job satisfaction.

#### COMMON CAUSES OF WORKPLACE STRESS INCLUDE:

- Fear of being retrenched or fired
- Increased overtime due to staff cutbacks
- Pressure to meet rising expectations, with no increase in job satisfaction
- Constant pressure to work at optimum levels
- Lack of control over how work is carried out

#### WARNING SIGNS:

- Fatigue
- Problems sleeping
- Feeling anxious, irritable or depressed
- Apathy or loss of interest in work
- Trouble concentrating
- Muscle tension or headaches
- Stomach problems
- Social withdrawal
- Using alcohol or drugs to cope

#### HOW MANAGERS OR EMPLOYERS CAN REDUCE STRESS AT WORK

**Consult employees:** Talk about the specific factors that make jobs stressful. Some things such as failing equipment, understaffing or a lack of Supervisor feedback may be relatively straightforward to address.

**Communicate with employees one-on-one:** Listening attentively, face-to-face, will make an employee feel heard and understood.

**Deal with workplace conflicts in a positive way:** Respect the dignity of each employee; establish a zero-tolerance policy for harassment.

**Give workers opportunities to participate in decisions that affect their jobs:** Get employee input on topics such as work rules. If they are involved in the process, they will be more committed.

**Avoid unrealistic deadlines:** Make sure the workload is suitable to employees' abilities and resources.

**Clarify expectations:** Clearly define employees' roles, responsibilities and goals. Make sure Management actions are fair and consistent with organisational values.

**Offer rewards and incentives:** Praise work accomplishments verbally. Schedule potentially stressful periods followed by periods of fewer tight deadlines. Provide opportunities for social interaction among employees.

<https://www.helpguide.org/articles/stress/stress-in-the-workplace.htm>



### Workshop 27th – 29th August 2019 Detailed Overview of ISO 45001:2018 & ISO 14001:2015 for HSE Professionals



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# SAFETECH

**ENVIRONMENT  
HEALTH  
SAFETY**





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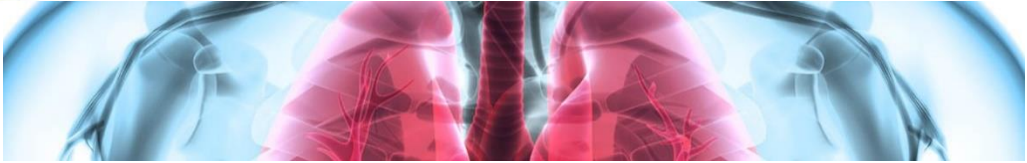
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### OCCUPATIONAL ASTHMA



**OCCUPATIONAL ASTHMA** is asthma that's caused by breathing in chemical fumes, gases, dust or other substances in the workplace. Occupational asthma can result from exposure to a substance you're sensitive to (which causes an allergic or immunological response) or to an irritating toxic substance. Like other types of asthma, occupational asthma can cause chest tightness, wheezing and shortness of breath. People with allergies or with a family history of allergies are more likely to develop occupational asthma.

Avoidance of occupational triggers is an important part of management. Otherwise, treatment for occupational asthma is similar to treatment for other types of asthma and generally includes taking medications to reduce symptoms. If employees are experiencing breathing problems such as coughing, wheezing or shortness of breath, they should consult a Doctor. Severe asthma attacks can be life-threatening.

#### Signs and symptoms may include:

- Wheezing, sometimes just at night
- Coughing
- Shortness of breath
- Chest tightness

#### Other possible accompanying signs and symptoms may include:

- Runny nose
- Nasal congestion
- Eye irritation and tearing



<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/occupational-asthma/symptoms-causes/syc-20375772>

### BLOCKING



Have you seen a crucial block lately? Not the sport type, but the type that relates to safety and the work area - blocking important elements of the workplace from access. One of the most common things observed during a safety inspection are blocking violations.

What types of things should not be blocked? Below is a partial list of common items in most workplaces, however, there can certainly be others:

- Emergency exits
- Eyewash stations and showers
- Electrical panels
- Electrical disconnects
- Fire extinguishers
- Pedestrians aisles

Blocking is easy to identify and fix. Consider painting zones around these areas and installing signs to inform people they may not be blocked. Regular inspections and emphasis on blocking is the most important element to preventing such issues. Specifically look for items that "have always been there", as these permanently blocked items need to be addressed. They are important and access to these things can be critical in a time of emergency.

Take a look around the work area today. See if there is clear access to the electrical panels and fire extinguishers. Look to see if any items have been "permanently" blocked by design.

<http://safetytoolboxtopics.com/General/blocking-2.html>