

## MARION COUNTY SAFETY MANUAL ANNEX E – ACCIDENT PREVENTION

### Overview

Accident prevention methods are important in all County departments, but these methods are extremely important in Housekeeping and Maintenance. The Housekeeping Standard (29 CFR 1910.22) states that *"All places of employment, passageways, storerooms, and service rooms shall be kept clean, orderly and in a sanitary condition."* Fall prevention is also directly related to accident prevention. Slips, trips and falls account for a majority of industrial accidents. They also cause 15% of all accidental deaths, second only to motor vehicle accidents. We must pay attention to the safety of all work areas in an effort to prevent hazardous conditions. The remainder of this annex will address guidelines that will help eliminate hazards in the workplace.

### Office Safety

Office work is more dangerous than commonly thought in that most accidents occur during our regular office routine. The following guidelines shall be considered in all departments in regards to office safety:

1. Every employee shall be responsible for insuring that their desk and work area are clean and orderly. Good housekeeping is the key to a safe work environment.
2. Be cautious of loose or rough floor coverings. Report dangerous situations to your supervisor for corrective action. If the hazard is not resolved, follow the employee complaint procedure in Annex A of this manual.
3. All file, desk and table drawers shall be kept closed when not in use. Never open more than one file drawer at one time and always close desk drawers when you leave.
4. Office furniture should be maintained in good condition and free of sharp corners, wobbly legs, etc.
5. All chairs should be used sensibly. Keep all four legs on the floor at all times. Discard defective chairs and remove them from use.
6. Never use chairs, desks or other office furniture as a makeshift step ladder.
7. Don't attempt any electrical repairs. Notify the Buildings and Maintenance Department of all electrical problems immediately.
8. Arrange the work area to avoid trip hazards created by cords. If trip hazards still exist, use cord shields as an alternative.
9. When using stairwells, utilize the provided handrail.
10. Ground prongs should not be removed from three (3) prong plugs. Electrical equipment that has a three prong plug requires a three hole receptacle.

11. Exercise care near doorways, so that you do not get hit by the door when it opens.
12. When smoking, do so only in designated areas and remember the potential for fire hazards.
13. Sharp objects should be covered or in holders when not in use. This will help prevent puncture wounds.
14. All space heaters should have at least 3 feet of clearance in all direction. They should also be equipped with an automatic shutoff feature in the event that they are tipped over.
15. Report all defective equipment to your supervisor immediately.

### Ladder Safety

Ladders may be used by many different departments throughout the county. All county employees who use ladders will insure that the appropriate ladder is selected for the designated job. Ladders should be routinely inspected to insure that they are in a good state of repair at all times. Employees should conduct a brief inspection each time they use it. There are several different types of ladders that can be found throughout the County. When using ladders, keep the following safety tips in mind:

#### A. Single and Two Section Ladders

1. Never use a makeshift ladder.
2. Use the proper length ladder to complete the job so that you do not have to reach or work from an unsafe position.
3. Check for cracked or damaged side rails. Also check for damaged or missing rungs and cleats.
4. Inspect all surfaces and hardware.
5. When setting the ladder, make sure that the distance between the foot of the ladder and the base of the structure is approximately one-fourth of the distance from the base to the point of contact with the structure.
6. Make sure that the feet of the ladder are firmly and evenly supported.
7. Always face the ladder and use both hands when climbing or descending.

#### B. Stepladders

1. Inspect the ladder for defects before use.
2. Open the ladder wide enough so that the spreader locks itself in the fully open position. Avoid stepladders having rope or chain spreaders.
3. Place the ladder on a firm, level base.
4. Set up the ladder so that you can reach objects easily. Never lean out from the ladder in any direction.
5. Avoid standing on the top of a stepladder. Use a ladder tall enough so that you can stand at least three steps from the top.

6. Never use boxes or other items to make a ladder taller.
7. Never set a ladder on loose gravel or soil.
8. Tools should never be left on ladders unless tool holders are provided.

#### C. Setting a Ladder

1. If raising a long ladder, have someone hold the base or tie the base against something solid.
2. Raise extension ladders vertically against the wall prior to setting the ladder in position.
3. Set the ladder so that the side rails extend 3 ½ feet above the top of the landing.
4. Have someone hold the ladder, or tie it off if the ladder is being used in an area where it might shift.

#### D. Climbing Ladders

1. Inspect the ladder before use.
2. Use a ladder with adequate safety feet for the surface it stands on.
3. If your shoes are muddy or slippery, clean them before climbing.
4. Be sure the ladder is placed at a safe angle against the wall. A 75 degree angle is recommended.
5. Always face the ladder and use both hands while climbing up or down.
6. Carry all tools in appropriate pouches or pockets. Have any other tools hoisted up to you once you reach your destination.
7. Step towards the ends of the steps/rungs, do not center your weight on the center of the steps/rungs.

#### E. Working From Ladders

1. Work facing the ladder.
2. Use a safety belt if the task requires it.
3. Do not reach from a ladder. Move the ladder as your work requires.
4. Avoid using two ladders spliced together. Use one ladder that is long enough to do the job.
5. It is unsafe to use a ladder as a horizontal piece of scaffold.
6. Always secure ladders by using a spotter or tying them off. Do not work from a ladder in high winds.
7. Use extreme caution when using tools with great force. If a tool falls, let it fall to the ground so that you do not get thrown from the ladder.

### Toilet Facilities

Good housekeeping is an important part of any safety plan. The OSHA Housekeeping Standard mentioned earlier in this annex not only deals with workplace cleanliness, but

it also addresses toilet facilities. Below are a few guidelines that are addressed by this standard concerning toilets, lavatories and shower facilities that must be provided:

1. Lavatories must have both hot and cold water, or as a minimum tepid water.
2. Hand soap or a similar cleaning agent must be provided for employees.
3. Individual soap dispensers should be provided. Bar soap should be avoided in that it can transmit communicable diseases among employees.
4. Hot air dryers or paper towel dispensers must be provided.
5. All toilet facilities must be kept clean and in a good state of repair.

In the event that a problem is found in a toilet facility, notify your buildings custodian. If the issue is still unresolved, follow the employee complaint procedure found in Annex A of this manual.

### Accident Prevention Signs and Tags

There are five (5) types of accident prevention signs and tags that can be utilized. These signs and tags will be used to warn or alert employees to situations that require PPE or may pose a danger to the employee. Descriptions of these signs and tags can be found below:

1. **Danger Signs:** Danger signs are used to warn or alert employees of specific hazards/dangers or radiation. These signs will be red, black or white, and have glossy colors. Lettering will be in a contrasting color to the red background.
2. **Caution Signs:** Caution signs will be used to warn employees of a potential hazard or caution employees against unsafe practices. Caution signs will have a yellow background with black writing.
3. **Safety Instruction Signs:** These signs will be used where there is a need to convey general instructions or suggest relative safety measures. These signs will have a white background with white lettering in a green panel.
4. **Warning Signs:** Warning signs will be used to address a danger level between Caution and Danger. Warning signs will display the appropriate message for the situation and will have an orange background with lettering in a contrasting color.
5. **Biological Hazard Signs/Tags:** Biological hazard signs and tags will be used to alert employees to the presence of a biological hazard or to identify equipment, containers, rooms or any condition there to that may be contaminated with hazardous biological agents. Biological hazard signs or tags will be fluorescent orange, orange-red or red with lettering in a contrasting color.

When employees identify a hazard that may cause injury or harm to someone, the appropriate sign will be placed to alert everyone to the hazard.