

WEEKLY SAFETY TIP – 5/31/10 – NO EMERGENCY RE-ACTION PLANS!

We received a note from one of our clients this past week. His company had a “family safety day” where we provided training to family members of the staff on CPR and fire extinguisher operations. His wife was at work, when a fire broke out in a kitchen area. Someone in the kitchen grabbed a fire extinguisher, but did not know how to use it. The wife calmly took the extinguisher, used it properly (P-A-S-S), and extinguished the fire. She most likely saved the building by her quick actions. His note ended by stating that because of the training, she was able to remain calm and respond rather than react to the situation.

There are two safety tips that we are passing along to you from this story. First, knowing what to do in the event of an emergency allows all of us to have just what our client’s wife was able to do, calmly respond to emergencies instead of reacting. If you look at OSHA’s required Emergency Action Plan in 29 CFR 1910.38 (linked here: http://www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owadisp.show_document?p_table=STANDARDS&p_id=9726), you will see that OSHA requires you to think about and plan for emergencies that can happen in the workplace, and then train your employees on what you expect them to do. This allows for your staff to respond to emergencies, and not blindly react.

Anyone who has served in the military is familiar with the term “action plan.” It is strategizing to maximize the use of people and equipment to minimize anything that could be detrimental. Wouldn’t we want to do that in our businesses? OSHA requires that we prepare action plans so that in event of a fire, earthquake, chemical release or any other hazardous event, we can provide the safest evacuation and protection for our employees.

Secondly, families need to know what to do in emergencies. Many of us will spend time with our families and friends this Memorial Day weekend. We will consume food – do your family/friends know how to administer the Heimlich Maneuver? We might fire up the barbeque – who in your home would know how to use a fire extinguisher? When it comes to Emergency Action Plans – this is part of your work that is good to take home. And if you are an employer, you might think about scheduling a Family Safety Day, and pass along important life saving information to the family members of your employees.

For those of you who might not know what P-A-S-S is, we have uploaded a short document on how to use a fire extinguisher to our website. It is with the safety tips, and you can access it through this link: How to Use A Fire Extinguisher. http://www.scm-safety.com/weekly_tips.html

We mentioned the military earlier because this is Memorial Day. If you are a Veteran or a family member of someone who has served in the military, we at SCM sincerely offer our appreciation for your service.

Happy Memorial Day