

“Fire Prevention”

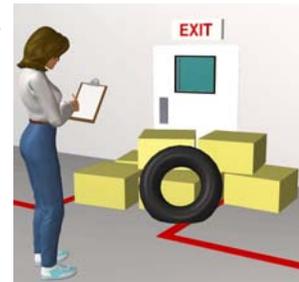
Why It Matters:

- ☞ On an average day, there are more than 200 workplace fires in America.
- ☞ Annually, those fires kill hundreds of workers and injure many thousands more.
- ☞ Workplace fires cost American businesses billions of dollars in property damage and lost productivity.
- ☞ Aware, prepared, and prevention-minded employees are your best line of defense against devastating workplace fires.

Every employees needs to know three basic things about workplace fires. It doesn't matter what their function is or where they work, all employees absolutely must know:

- Potential causes of fires
- How to prevent fires from starting
- How to respond in case of fire

Use awareness training to make employees conscious of fire hazards. The first step in preventing workplace fires is to make sure your employees are aware of all the potential fire hazards by holding fire hazard awareness meetings. Start these meetings by giving trainees a piece of paper and asking them to list all the potential fire hazards in their work area. They might come up with items such as flammable liquids, electrical problems, combustible materials (trash, improper storage or handling of compressed gases, careless smoking), and poor housekeeping, to name just a few. Discuss any hazards they haven't listed, and identify fire hazards in other parts of your facility. If you've had a fire in the past, talk about how it started and the damage it caused. By the time employees leave the session, they should be able to recognize all potential fire hazards in your workplace.



Use action training to educate workers about prevention. In action training sessions, teach employees how to prevent fires. Start by explaining how fires happen – all it takes is a combination of fuel (solid combustibles or liquid flammables), oxygen (the more air, the more intense the blaze), and an ignition source(sparks, heat, flame). Then point out that the way to prevent fires is to keep these three elements from coming together. For example:

- Keep flammable and compressed gases away from ignition sources and store them in well-ventilated areas away from heat sources.
- Maintain a clean work area free of trash and combustible scrap.
- Segregate chemicals that could react with one another.
- Be extremely careful with welding, cutting, and brazing operations.

Use response training to teach employees what to do in the event of a fire. For example, if you expect workers to use fire extinguishers to fight workplace fires, you have to train them how to use this equipment safely and effectively. Furthermore, all employees should have the opportunity to practice emergency response procedures by participating in frequent fire drills.

