



Safety Meeting Outline



SMO 03-0701

HANDLING HAZARDOUS MATERIALS SAFELY

By SeaBright Insurance Loss Control

The handling of hazardous materials and chemical waste is frequently an emotional issue and the source of much confusion. Regulations exist for dealing with every aspect of hazardous material, including shipment, storage, personnel exposure and clean up. If "Hazmat" regulations are followed and you use your head, both your health and the environment will be protected. Nearly all occupational groups become involved with chemicals or hazardous waste at some point, including those in transportation, chemical manufacturing, natural resource firms, hospitals, construction contractors, shipyards, remediation, oil & gas and others.

Naturally, the entire spectrum of hazardous materials cannot be covered in this short review. However, some of the high points will be covered, so you'll remember when to start asking "serious" questions. Here are good places to start:

- First, is the material packaged and labeled correctly?
- Is there an MSDS available for the material to answer your questions?
- Does the material require special labeling or handling?
- If being shipped, is the "paperwork" adequate? Check the [DOT Emergency Response Guidebook](#) for requirements.

In most cases, protective clothing, including boots, gloves, eye protection, aprons, and possibly respirators should be worn when there is a chance for physical contact with the chemical, if it is volatile, or if it is easily vaporized. Know what is required before you make a mistake. Avoid handling unknown chemical materials if at all possible. Avoid mixing unknown or reactive materials.

If a spill occurs, keep your "cool." Berm around the spill area with an absorbent compound to contain the spill, but do not walk on top of the spill area without wearing disposable protective boots, or having respiratory protection (in the case of volatile liquids). Then call the Environmental Protection Agency or the local disaster response team. Keep fire protection available if appropriate. If you are exposed to a hazardous material, visit your doctor or specialist for an evaluation. Don't listen to rumors regarding the material. Rumors are frequently incorrect. Get the facts.

When in doubt about how to handle chemical spills, call the professionals who are prepared for emergency situations. By the way, now is the time to look up those vital emergency phone numbers, not *after* a spill has occurred. Have your emergency numbers handy in all appropriate areas of your work environment.

Chemicals are a valuable, powerful part of today's culture.
Give them the healthy respect you deserve!



SAFETY MEETING AGENDA

DEPARTMENT/JOB SITE: _____ MEETING DATE: _____

1. **Open Meeting & Present safety topic:** _____
2. Read minutes from previous meeting.
3. **Persons present:**

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

4. **Old Business** – Status of previous recommendations. Discuss pending old business if any.

5. **Accidents** – Discuss accidents and near misses that have occurred since the last meeting. Brief summary of accidents to date by number and type. Note any trends. Discuss corrective action taken, or needed. Concentrate on accident causes to make everyone more aware.

6. **Inspection Reports** – Report on findings and recommendations of any inspection reports made since last meeting.

7. **New Business** – Solicit employee suggestions. Discuss new procedures, changes to company safety policy, etc.

TIME MEETING STARTED: _____ TIME FINISHED: _____

MEETING CHAIRED BY: _____ TITLE: _____