



# MAKE THE WORKPLACE SAFER Gardener & Groundskeeper Staff



## Three Steps to a Safer Workplace

Active observation and follow-up will go a long way toward making your workplace safer. Follow these three steps

- 1. Identify hazards or “what can hurt you at work.”** Walk through areas to look for things that can hurt employees, and monitor whether known hazards have been fixed. If your answer is “no” to any of the questions below, follow-up is needed.
- 2. Propose solutions.** Assess what changes you can make on your own, and what you need to partner on.
- 3. Take action to make sure the problem is resolved.** Use the *Make the Workplace Safer* Tracking Chart at the end of this document.

## Step 1: Identify Hazards

NAME		LOCATION		DATE
Hazard	Yes	No	Comments/Solution Needed	
<b>ERGONOMICS</b>				
1	Are workers able to work without stooping to the ground, twisting, reaching overhead or bending to the side?			
2	Are workers able to work at a comfortable speed without too many repetitive movements?			
3	Do workers avoid lifting bulky or heavy objects?			
4	Are workers able to get help (people and equipment) to handle heavy loads?			
5	Are workers using proper lifting equipment and methods (for example, test lifting, team lifting) on a regular basis?			

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Hazard	Yes	No	Comments/Solution Needed
<b>EQUIPMENT AND TOOLS</b>			
6	Are hand-held tools available to workers in an appropriate size and design for them to use comfortably?		
7	Are tools and equipment regularly inspected and maintained for safety (for example, sharpened, lubricated, and in good working order)?		
8	Are electric tool cords managed to prevent them becoming a trip hazard or electrical hazard?		
<b>CHEMICALS</b>			
9	Do workers know the names and health effects of chemicals that they use or are used in their area?		
10	Are Safety Data Sheets (SDS) for each chemical available?		
11	Do workers have what they need to work safely with the chemicals they use?		
12	If workers apply pesticides, do they have proper certification or licensing?		
13	Are workers free of health effects from chemicals (for example, skin rashes or breathing problems)?		
<b>BIOLOGICAL</b>			
14	Are hand-washing facilities conveniently accessible?		
15	Are precautions taken to avoid exposure to animals or insects that bite or sting? Or toxic plants (for example, poison oak/ivy)?		
16	Do workers wear latex-safe gloves when they anticipate contact with human or animal body fluids or waste?		
17	Do workers dispose of used needle waste in a sharps container?		

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Hazard	Yes	No	Comments/Solution Needed
<b>CHEMICALS</b>			
18	Is there a workable procedure to receive prompt medical care when a workers is bitten, stung, cut or exposed to potentially infectious material?		
19	If someone is stuck by a used needle, does she or he have access to counseling, vaccination and testing?		
<b>SLIP, TRIP, FALL</b>			
20	Do workers have access to proper equipment to safely access items or work overhead (for example, a ladder, scissor lift, etc.)?		
21	When working near an unprotected edge (for example, atop a retaining wall) are workers able to work in pairs to monitor how near they are to the edge?		
<b>VIOLENCE PREVENTION</b>			
22	Do workers know how to respond to potentially violent people or situations?		
23	Is there an established way to send a signal when there is a problem?		
24	Is there an effective communication system with security staff?		
<b>OTHER</b>			
25	Do workers have and use appropriate, well-fitting safety clothing (long sleeves, long pants), safety glasses, face shield, hearing protection, gloves, shoes/boots, etc.?		
26	Do workers have adequate clothing and shelter for protection from weather (for example, sun, heat, cold, rain)?		
27	Do workers in extreme weather (hot, cold, wet) take breaks out of the weather (inside, under shade) to warm up, cool off or dry out?		
28	Are workers who drive trained in the safe operation of the vehicle?		

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Hazard	Yes	No	Comments/Solution Needed
<b>OTHER</b>			
29	Do workers avoid using phones or other devices while driving?		
30	Are the procedures for carrying out the work safely available, workable, intelligible and correct (that is, work-arounds are not needed to get the job done)?		
31	Are there any new hazards or other hazards that have not been addressed?		If so, please describe below:

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## WORKER KNOWLEDGE

Employees should receive health and safety training when they start work, whenever a new hazard is identified, and periodically as a refresher on some topics. Examples of knowledge people should have are listed below. **Do workers in the department know:**

Hazard	Yes	No	Comments/Solution Needed
1			The hazards common to your work, what protective measures are in place and what safety practices to follow?
2			The hazards of the equipment and tools you use and how to use them safely?
3			The hazards of chemicals you work with and how to work with them safely?
4			How to obtain and use a Safety Data Sheet (SDS) for chemicals you work with?
5			How to read and follow instruction on a pesticide label?
6			How to choose, wear, remove and dispose of protective clothing and equipment?
7			How to safely store, lift and move materials?
8			How to safely use tools and equipment, and how to move and position your body to avoid ergonomic injuries?
9			How to recognize and address potentially violent people or situations?
10			What to do in case of a chemical or biological exposure?
11			What to do in case of an emergency at work?
12			How to identify safety concerns and whom to report them to?
13			Any other information or training needed?
			If yes, please describe.



# MAKE THE WORKPLACE SAFER

## FOLLOW-UP & TRACKING CHART



### Propose Solutions

**For any “no” answers, think about solutions or ways to address the problem.**

- First, think about ways to remove the hazard. This makes your workplace safer and ensures all workers are protected.
- If that’s not possible, think about any policies, procedures or personal protective equipment that is necessary.
- Think about what changes you can make on your own and what changes you need to partner with others (such as other workers, supervisors, facility management) to do.

Write your suggestions for solutions on the “Step 1: Identify Hazards” checklist and on the tracking chart on the next page.

### Take Action

**Report any safety hazards you identify. Use the following chart to track and make sure the problems are resolved.**

1. Give a copy of your hazard checklist findings to your supervisor or department manager, your UBT labor co-lead, and your Safety Team representative.
2. Decide who else should receive a copy of your findings, such as members of the UBT or Safety Committee or your shop steward. Make a note of who you gave it to and the date.
3. Follow up after a few weeks. If the problem was not addressed or resolved, think about your next steps.
  - + Who should be informed?
  - + Who can help you advocate for the needed solution?

# MAKE THE WORKPLACE SAFER **FOLLOW-UP AND TRACKING CHART**

NAME		LOCATION		DATE
Safety/Health Problem	What solution is needed?	Date reported and to whom	1 month follow-up	Next Steps
			Corrected Is being addressed Not being addressed Don't know/Other:	
			Corrected Is being addressed Not being addressed Don't know/Other:	
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			Corrected Is being addressed Not being addressed Don't know/Other:	
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