Safety Inspections and Sample Safety Inspection Checklists

Even if safety inspections were not strongly recommended, they are an excellent way for the department to reference the commitment to safe work practices, provide practical training in safety awareness and minimize hazards at the workplace. These inspections provide a systematic method for involving supervisors, employees, safety coordinators, and/or safety committees in the process of eliminating workplace hazards.

Types of Safety Inspections

There are several ways to perform safety inspections of a workplace, task or job. The most popular ways include using checklists, general knowledge, and risk mapping. To be effective, safety inspections must be individualized or tailored to meet the needs of a specific workplace, task or job.

Safety Checklist Inspections

A checklist is very good for the regular inspection of specific items. However, they may not be as useful in identifying previously unrecognized hazards.

Many different checklists are available from a variety of sources. Unfortunately, since these ready-made checklists are generic, they rarely meet the needs of a specific workplace, task or job. However, you may find them useful to inspect a part of your area. For instance, the owner's manual for a table saw may have a checklist that works perfectly for inspecting the saw in a department shop. Taking parts of several ready-made checklists and putting them together may be an easy method of beginning the development of your customized checklist.

Included in this attachment are three sample checklists one for offices on page 49, one for general work areas on page 53, and one for laboratories on page 57. These are only **examples**. They will need to be modified to fit *your* specific work areas, tasks or jobs.

General Knowledge Safety Inspections

Another way of conducting inspections is to use the information you have in your head and just walk around looking at what is going on. You do not use a pre-made checklist for this type of inspection. This method keeps you from getting stuck looking at the same things every time. However the effectiveness of this inspection method is dependent on the individual's level of knowledge about workplace related safety practices. It is important to document the results of the inspection and any action taken in resolving or addressing safety hazards.

Risk Mapping Safety Inspections

The third inspection method is called risk mapping. It is a good method to use at a safety meeting where everyone there is familiar with the workplace or process. This technique uses a map/drawing of the workplace or a list of steps in a process. People in the group then tell the leader the hazards they recognize and where they are located in the workplace or process. The leader uses different colors or symbols to identify different types of hazards on the map or list of steps. This type of inspection is valuable for involving all employees in identifying and resolving safety hazards. See page 46 for a sample of a risk mapping.

What should you include in your inspections?

When you do your inspections make sure you are looking at your entire operation's safety program. Remember to evaluate:

processes

equipment

workplace environment

employee training

emergency plans

How often should you do inspections?

Safety inspections should be conducted at least every six months.

Who should do the inspections?

It has to be someone who is familiar with the workplace, task or job. The best way is to have a supervisor and an employee from the area inspect together.

What should you do with your inspection findings?

You have to follow up on your findings. It does little good to do inspections if nothing gets corrected. Someone should be assigned to develop a correction for each problem that was found. Attaching a deadline for the correction of each problem is helpful. Don't let corrections get drawn out.

Review your inspection reports for trends. Is the problem showing up again and again? There may be something that encourages this problem to exist. That also needs to be addressed.

Resources

The following are some resources that are commonly used in developing effective safety inspection procedures:

- Suggestions from supervisors and employees
- Reviewing the types of accident/incidents that have occurred in the past and in departments at UW peer institutions
- Reviewing applicable State and Federal Safety Standards and UW Operations Policies and Procedures (see summary table Attachment A)
- Suggestions from EH&S

EH&S can provide paper/electronic copies of the generic checklists included in this attachment. The electronic copies will be in WordPerfect 6.1 format. EH&S also can conduct a departmental review, a walk-through, and customize the generic checklists upon request (call 543-0467). This friendly service is designed and meant to help departments in recognizing risks and evaluating the workplace. A team of EH&S professionals will visit some or all sites as agreed upon.

Sample Risk Mapping

First develop a symbol/color key for the hazards. Collecting hazards into groups like the ones below simplify the mapping process. Next review the worksite map or the process steps and mark the hazards. *(A sample floor plan with the hazard symbols added is on the facing page.)*

Risk Mapping Groups

Physical Hazards

Examples:

- noise
- heat
- ventilation
- light
- machines
- vibration

Chemicals

Examples:

- dusts
- liquids
- gases
- mists
- vapors

Other

Examples:

- germs
- radiation

Ergonomics

Examples:

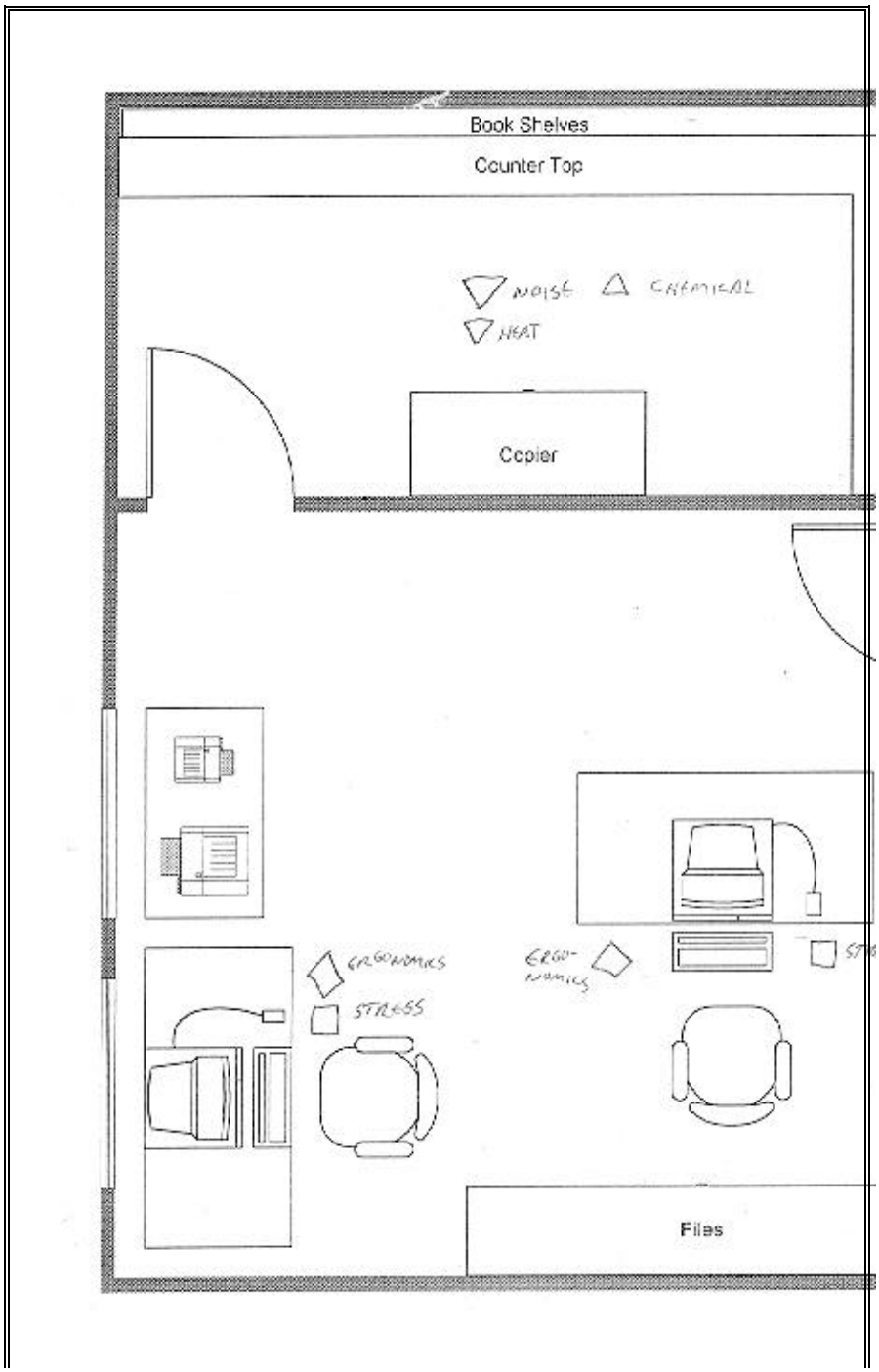
- positions
- loads
- effort
- fatigue
- repetition

Stress

Examples:

- shift work
- over-supervision
- responsibility
- lack of control

Risk Mapping Sample



OFFICE SAFETY INSPECTION CHECKLIST

Building:	Inspector:
Room Number:	Date Inspected:
Department/Unit	Supervisor:

(Check if completed)

	Comments	**Correction Date**
Administrative		
1. Is the departmental Health and Safety Plan in a location known and accessible to all employees?		
2. Is there a Safety Corner/Bulletin Board established with the following displayed (in terminology and language understood by the employees)?		
- WISHA Posters (available from EH&S, 543-7262)		
- The Emergency Phone Number poster		
- Other health and safety material/information		
3. Are training records maintained and available for review by employees, EH&S, and outside agencies?		
4. Are departmental safety inspection reports and corrections maintained and available for review by employees, EH&S, and outside agencies?		
5. Are Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDSs) and an inventory sheet of all office products used in the workplace on file and accessible to employees?		

	Comments	Correction Date
6. Does the departmental Emergency Operations Plan include a floor plan/map of the department, including emergency evacuation site, procedures, and routes? Are employees/students instructed in emergency procedures (i.e., location of exits, location and use of fire extinguishers)?		
General Safety Concerns		
1. Are the exits (doorways), exit aisles, or corridors free of obstacles and combustible storage?		
2. Are the fire doors closed securely at all times?		
3. Are light fixtures working and are diffuses installed?		
4. Have all loose rugs or mats been secured or removed?		
5. Have missing or loose ceiling tiles been repaired?		
Electrical Cords and Outlets		
1. Are extension cords, multiple outlet strips, or cube taps plugged directly into a wall outlet?		
2. Are extension cords at a minimum 14 gauge (heavy-duty) and servicing only one appliance or fixture?		
3. Are cords in good condition without splices, deterioration, taping, damage, or being sharply bent or pinched?		
4. Are employees instructed not to use extension cords in place of permanent wiring?		
- Are extension cords prevented from running through walls, ceilings, or doors?		

	Comments	Correction Date
5. Are extension cords grounded when servicing a grounded appliance or fixture?		
6. Are cord guards provided across an aisle or other passageway?		
7. Does the multiple outlet strip have a circuit breaker?		
8. Are multiple outlet strip cords 6' or under?		
9. Is clear access (36" clearance) provided to electrical panels?		
10. Are electrical cover plates provided on all electrical switches or outlets?		
Heaters and Fans		
1. Do all heaters have a working tipover switch?		
2. Are combustibles kept 24" from all sides and tops of heaters?		
3. Are fine finger guards provided on fans?		
4. Are all electric space heaters plugged directly into the wall?		
5. Are all fans below head level or secured?		
Seismic Bracing and Earthquake Preparedness		
1. Are furnishings more than four feet high braced? (This includes file cabinets, bookcases, desk hutches, etc.)		
2. Is all shelving secured?		
3. Are projection screens, maps, blackboards, etc., fastened with a closed hook system or bolted to walls?		

	Comments	Correction Date
4. Is overhead storage of heavy items or plants prevented?		
5. Are hanging planters or other objects prohibited?		

Workplace Inspection Form	Inspection Date:
Building:	Inspector:
Room Number:	Supervisor:
Department/Unit:	Phone:

Y=Satisfactory N=Needs Improvement NA=Not Applicable

			General		
			1. Workplace clean and orderly		
			2. Exits cleared of obstructions and accessible		
			3. Stored materials secured and limited in height to prevent collapse		
			4. Suitable Warning signs and tags utilized		
			5. A hazard assessment has been completed and the appropriate personal protective equipment has been identified for each specific job		
			Training		
			1. Safety training and inspections held for new employees on a regular basis		
			2. First Aid (and CPR) trained individuals available for medical emergencies		
			3. Personnel familiar with the hazards of chemicals and trade products and have read the applicable Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDSs)		
			4. All personnel familiar with documented emergency evacuation plan		
			5. Fire extinguisher familiarization provided		

			Training, continued		
			6. Personnel are trained in the proper selection, use and maintenance of personal protective equipment.		
			Safe Lifting		
			1. Workers trained on and using safe lifting techniques a. Size up / test load b. Avoid heavy loads - split into small loads or ask for help c. Bend knees to take pressure off of back when lifting d. Consciously firm up abdominals when lifting e. Never twist while lifting or holding a load		
			Fire		
			1. Emergency exit signs identifiable and readily visible		
			2. Fire alarm pull stations and portable fire extinguishers visible and unobstructed		
			3. Stairway doors are not kept open (unless equipped with a self-closing device		
			4. 18 inch vertical clearance maintained from all sprinkler heads		
			Earthquake		
			1. Bookcases, filing cabinets, shelves, racks, cages, storage cabinets, and similar items over four feet tall are all secure		
			2. Shelves have lips or other seismic restraints		
			3. Portable machines or equipment secured against movement (unless actually being moved) by chains, lockable castors, straps, or other means where appropriate		

			Earthquake, continued		
			4. Top-heavy equipment of apparatus bolted down or secured to withstand accelerations typically expected in an earthquake		
			5. Large and heavy objects stored on lower shelves or storage areas		
			6. Valuable equipment sensitive to shock damage, such as instruments, computers, and glassware are stored in latched cabinets or otherwise secured to prevent falling.		
			7. Storage areas uncluttered - providing clear evacuation routes in the event of an emergency		
			8. Cabinets and lockers containing hazardous materials equipped with positive latching or sliding doors.		
			Equipment		
			1. Electrical Equipment a. Clean and working properly b. Properly grounded c. Proper clearances kept from combustibles (paper, cardboard, or combustible liquids) d. Adequately ventilated		
			e. Approved extension cords, extension cords with breakers, and multiple connectors used properly (e.g., not as fixed wiring) f. Frayed or damaged electric cords replaced		
			2. Machinery a. Clean and working properly b. Proper clearances kept from combustibles c. Adequately ventilated d. Emergency stop mechanisms identified and in working order		

			Machinery, continued e. Mechanical safeguards in place and in working order		
			Personal Protective Equipment		
			1. Employees provided with and trained in the proper use and selection of respiratory protection		
			2. Employees provided with and using hearing protection for noise hazardous equipment (noise level above 85 dBA)		
			3. Employees provided with and using safety goggles/face shields when needed		
			4. Employees provided with and using protective clothing (e.g., gloves, coats, aprons, coveralls)		
			5. Steel-toed safety shoes worn when required		
			Hazardous Materials		
			1. Do you have any hazardous materials in your work area?		
			2. If you have hazardous materials, are the MSDSs available?		
			3. If you have hazardous materials, have they been inventoried within the last year?		
			4. When transferring chemical materials from the original container to a secondary container are the secondary containers labeled with the proper name and hazard warnings, including target organs affected by an exposure?		
			5. Please list any hazardous materials (by name and quantity) missing from any chemical inventories for this work area.		