Toolbox Talk

Permit to Work

HUNTER
safety group

When proposed work is identified as high risk, strict controls are required. The work may have to be carried out against existing safety procedures such as the risk assessment/method statements, therefore a permit to work system would be required.

Key Facts

A Permit to Work is a written procedure designed to protect people working in high risk areas or activities.

It sets out specifics, such as essential precautions, authorised personnel, time frames, place etc which will all contribute to the job being carried out safely. A Permit to Work system forms part of the safe system of work - they do not work independently.

Failing to implement a permit to work system could be potentially fatal, extremely costly in damages and affect your reputation.

Hints and Tips

The following aspects should be considered with respect to Permit to Work Systems:

- Human factors
- Management of the work permit systems
- Poorly skilled work force
- Unconscious and conscious incompetence
- Objectives of the work permit system
- Types of work permits required
- Contents of the work permit

If a permit is suspended, then work must not reconvene until permission is received from the authorised person.

Good communication between shifts is extremely important.

There are suggested colours for types of permit to work, these should be followed wherever possible.

Permits should be issued to you before work commencement.

The permit should always be displayed clearly and kept with you whilst work is being carried out.

Permits must be reviewed regularly to ensure they remain relevant.

Do...

- Understand the permit to work.
- Get involved in permit design.
- Know who the authorised persons are.
- Bring any unnoticed hazards or errors in the system to the attention of the authorised person.

Don't...

- Carry out work unless supervised.
- Assume it is safe just because a Permit to Work is in place.
- Ignore the Permit to Work.
- Ignore the time frames (start and end dates have been agreed for a reason).