



TOOLBOX

**SAFETY
TRAINING**

Company _____ Location _____ Date _____

Vol 28 - No 49 WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

According to statistics published by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, incidents of violence in the workplace continue to increase in number. In 1997, a one-week period yielded an average of 20 murders and 18,000 injuries resulting from on-the-job assaults. The truth is that violence can occur in any work environment, whether it is the assembly line, warehouse, construction site or even office.



At the present time, there are no federal regulations for this problem.

Recently, the Occupational Safety & Health Administration released a publication that focuses on preventing violence in the late-night retail industry, but a specific standard for workplace violence has not been drafted. Therefore, both the employer and employee must take on the responsibility for maintaining a safe work environment.

Workplace violence preparation can exist outside of an organization. For instance, a business should develop a good relationship with local law enforcement. They can provide valuable input by detailing how law enforcement handles acts of violence. In addition, if the police can become familiar with an organization and its facilities, they will be better prepared if an emergency should arise. An invitation to law enforcement personnel or security specialists can also provide the opportunity to inform employees about how to prevent or prepare for a violent incident at work. They might also be able to conduct a professional evaluation of a site's security.

An organization must be aware that there is violence in the workplace and the number of incidents is increasing. However, the well-being of both the employees and the company can be guarded through a dual policy of prevention and preparation. While this combination can greatly reduce the chance of a violent incident, there is no guarantee that such a sudden act can be totally repelled. Likewise, those employees should be aware of workplace violence policies and report potential problems to management. Through cooperation, solid planning and swift action, this traumatic event may be avoided.



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