



HIERARCHY OF CONTROLS

Talking Points:

The hierarchy of controls is the foundation of safety for reducing or eliminating exposure to hazards in the workplace. What hazards do you encounter each day? (pick one of the hazards identified in the group to use in the rest of this talk).

Let's talk about the hierarchy of controls.

The hierarchy is:

Elimination – The most effective – You physically remove the hazard. No hazard, no exposure to risk or injury.

Substitution – Next best solution – Replacing the hazardous object, material, or process with something safer. Example: a cleaning product that causes burns if it gets on skin is replaced with a cleaning product that may only cause a slight rash if it gets on the skin.

Engineering – A good solution – A control that isolates workers from the hazard. But the hazard still exists and has not been reduced, employees are just protected from it. An example is a machine guard.

Administrative – Not a very effective solution – Changing the way people work through training, policies, and procedures. Example: an SOP (Standard Operating Procedure) for how a task should be completed.

PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) – Least effective solution – Physical gear employees use to protect themselves from hazards. Example: gloves. Not very effective because if PPE is not worn, is defective, or is not worn correctly, employees are left completely exposed to the hazard.

Questions to review knowledge:

Remember the hazards we identified – Let's pick one and work through possible solutions using the hierarchy.

How this works

Hazard: fall from height.

Elimination: the task is moved from a height to the ground.

Substitution: Instead of using a ladder to access the area, we use a lift.

Engineering: guard rails are installed.

Administrative: A fall protection program and training are implemented.

PPE: Fall harness and lanyard are used.

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