

## Your Obligations as a Supervisor for Safety & Health

As a person in charge of other employees, you are the Employer's agent. You are the primary person responsible for the safety of those who work in your care. The employer has authorized you to be their representative for the safety and health program:

- \* showing the purpose of the safety and health program
- \* identifying the safety and health personnel implementing the program
- \* providing ongoing evaluation of employee's safety performance
- \* implementing a disciplinary to address unsafe work practices
- \* acting as the competent person in your area with authority to supervise all personnel and enforce the safety and health program.

You have specific responsibilities to:

- (1) Supervise and enforce the company's safety and health program.
- (2) Verify that all employees:
  - (a) Can safely perform assigned tasks
  - (b) Have received adequate job safety instruction and training
- (3) Periodically review the safety performance of each employee.
- (4) Provide job safety and health instruction, training or disciplinary action to an employee when the employee is working in an unsafe manner.
- 5) Closely supervise each employee who is receiving job safety and health instruction and training.
- (6) Require all employees to demonstrate the ability to safely perform their work task before permitting them to work independently." (adapted from Rule 437-007-0110).

You will be the person employees come to in case of an accident and so your First Aid and CPR (cardio-pulmonary resuscitation) skills need to be current and you should be prepared to use them. You will be involved in hazard identification and elimination, preserving an accident scene, accident investigation, employee involvement, training, evaluating employees and keeping records.

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Some supervisors "seem" to know everything about all the jobs they supervise, but that probably is not true. Logging jobs are complex and supervisors cannot be expected to be experts at all logging jobs. Some skills need constant practice to be good at performing them. Supervisors need to demonstrate how to do the task safely and effectively. They need to identify the hazards around each job and how to eliminate them, or take actions to protect the workers.

When it comes to the safety of forest workers, it is all about US! There can be no barriers to working safely and workers, supervisors, and managers all have the same goal: To come home safely at the end of the day! Supervisors are the key communicators so workers and managers can trust in each other and the supervisor to do what is best for safety and health.

Supervisors may be concerned that they will be grooming someone to do their job if they train another worker. They may get the message that production is above everything. Employees need to trust supervisors; supervisors need to trust managers; and managers need to trust the owners for the safety chain of supervision to be strong.

Supervisors need to know how to **motivate** people by rewarding them for the proper actions and by correcting their improper actions immediately and using disciplinary procedures to assure compliance. However, supervisors need to know what **de-motivates** people as well. Rewarding someone for improper actions (like ignoring safety violations for selected workers) or punishing a worker for doing the right action (not responding to workers who bring up safety issues) is de-motivating. De-motivating actions spread distrust throughout the organization like a wildfire.

The supervisor's overall safety responsibility is to identify hazards and unsafe worker behaviors and correct them before an accident occurs. There is no more important job.

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