



Self-inspection notes

Routine maintenance keeps your safety and health program in good shape

Regularly checking on potential workplace hazards and monitoring accident prevention efforts are core elements of a safety officer's duties. But the myriad of hazards and accidents just waiting to happen in healthcare facilities of all sizes could make your head spin unless you have a system.

A safety maintenance schedule is a good tool to have, not only to keep you on top of safety checks with their varying frequencies for compliance, but also to help you delegate these responsibilities and encourage safety and health program ownership at departmental levels.

A safety and health maintenance document is also good to have in case of inspections and insurance audits, and it is an essential part in developing and updating your safety officer job description. At the very least, it helps management appreciate your efforts to manage the occupational safety and health program at your facility year-round.

The checklist below is adapted from the *OSHA Regulatory Manual for Healthcare*, which contains specific checklists, documents, forms, and tools for accomplishing these tasks.



Quick self-inspection checklist: Health and safety program maintenance

Weekly

- Verify the posting of the cleaning schedule.
- Check that any sharps disposal containers are not more than three-quarters full.
- Make sure that all secondary containers, such as spray bottles, have proper labels.
- Record spore testing for sterilizers. Follow up on failed tests according to CDC guidelines.
- Assess waste anesthetic scavenging systems for cracks or leaks in hoses, bags, masks, and connections.
- Record the proper functioning of the emergency eye-wash station by thoroughly flushing the lines and disinfecting caps.
- Verify that exit signs are present, visible, and illuminated where required and that exit passageways are free from clutter.

Monthly

- Inspect first aid, chemical-spill, and blood-spill kits for assigned location and date-expired contents.
- Perform visual checks to ensure that fire extinguishers are in place and charged, and record the results on the extinguisher's inspection tag.
- Check compressed gas cylinders for damage and leaks and make sure they are securely stored.
- Engage the test switch for smoke detectors.
- Inspect x-ray and laser personal protective equipment making sure it is available and in good condition.

- Review safety program documentation and training for new and current employees.

Semiannually

- Make sure the material safety data sheet file is completed and organized.
- Check that elements of your emergency action plans are current and that changes in or outside the facility, such as construction, do not affect evacuation procedures.

Annually

- OSHA requires annual staff training for bloodborne pathogens. Schedule training sessions in advance of the anniversary date of the last training and confirm that all staff members will be able to attend. Consider annual training on hazards communication, fire safety, and evacuation and emergency preparedness plans, even though OSHA does not require it.
- Review your exposure control plan, TB risk assessment, and respiratory protection plan, if applicable, to meet regulatory requirements. Document the review dates.
- Update the job safety posting. Federal and state-administered OSHA periodically change the job safety poster. Regulations require that you display the current poster. See www.osha.gov/Publications/poster.html for the current federal poster.

Source: Adapted from the OSHA Regulatory Manual for Healthcare.