

Setting Up a Tailgate/Toolbox Safety Meeting

Jobsite tailgate and toolbox safety meetings are proven methods of preventing accidents, illnesses and on-the-job injuries. The safety meetings can be as brief as 10 or 15 minutes in length, and provide the opportunity to implement your Injury and Illness Prevention Program and improve the safety culture at your jobsite. Tailgate or toolbox safety meetings help employees to recognize and eliminate jobsite hazards.

Why Have Tailgate Safety Meetings?

If you work in the tunneling and construction industries, tailgate safety meetings are required by Title 8, Sections [8406](#) and [1509](#) of the California Code of Regulations.

While tunneling and construction are the only industries that specifically require tailgate safety meetings, all California employers must have a safety program that includes employee training in safe work practices ([3203](#)).

Tailgate/toolbox safety meetings can be used to address actual problems on the job or in the work area. The supervisors or foremen leading the meeting can draw on workers' own real life experiences, and use those experiences to remind all employees – especially newer ones – of the dangers of working with particular kinds of machinery, tools, equipment and materials.

Title 8, California Code of Regulations, Section [1509\(e\)](#) states:

Supervisory employees shall conduct "toolbox" or "tailgate" safety meetings, or equivalent, with their crews at least every 10 working days to emphasize safety.

What to Talk About?

Talk about work practices, machinery, tools, equipment, materials, attitudes and anything else that may cause or contribute to a work-related accident or illness. Keep the topic relevant to the job or tasks that workers perform.

To identify safety meeting topics that will help your employees perform their jobs in a safer and more effective manner, you should review:

- OSHA Log 300 records (work-related deaths, injuries, and illnesses that require more than first aid treatment).
- Findings from safety inspections including corrective actions taken.
- Findings from accident investigations and near misses.
- Cal/OSHA Safety Orders (Title 8) at:
<http://www.dir.ca.gov/samples/search/query.htm>

In addition to reviewing your records, look for potential safety hazards by carefully observing your workplace

and employees' work activities. For example, if you notice that spills are not being cleaned up promptly, hold a tailgate safety meeting to discuss housekeeping policies. If an accident or a near-accident occurred at your jobsite, share the details and corrective actions during a tailgate safety meeting. Try to answer the following questions at the meeting: what happened? Where did it happen? How can it be prevented from happening again? Encourage employees to suggest topics to be discussed. Employees often know where the hazards are and can suggest corrective actions.

An excellent source for construction related topics is the publication [Cal/OSHA Pocket Guide for the Construction Industry](#). Supervisors can choose individual sections or topics from this guide and tailor the information to the specific needs of their jobsites. Supervisors can also use the [Tailgate Safety Meeting Topics](#) worksheet for selecting, tracking and recording the tailgate meeting topics.

How to Run an Effective Meeting

1. Hold the meeting at the jobsite, preferably where everyone can sit and relax.
2. Hold meetings at the start of a shift or after a break.
3. Choose the topic carefully. Topics should be about health and safety problems on the job. Research the problem before the meeting. For issues with machinery, consult the manufacturer's operations manual. For handling toxic substances, get a copy of the Safety Data Sheet (SDS). Your insurance carrier is another valuable source of information. For Cal/OSHA's educational materials on worksite safety and health, please visit: <http://www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/puborder.asp>
4. Supervisors should choose topics that directly relate to their projects and job tasks, and remember to be prepared:
 - Explain why the topic is timely and important.
 - Familiarize yourself with the topic before discussing it.
 - Know your company procedures/Code of Safe Practices.
 - Make a short list of key points you want to cover.
 - Include relevant Cal/OSHA regulations and best practices.
 - Pick from the topics listed on the [Tailgate Safety Meeting Topics](#), whenever possible.
 - Determine if the safety meeting material will be presented or distributed
5. Keep the topic specific. Do not choose an overly broad topic.
6. Make it practical. Demonstrate:
 - Safe work practices
 - Proper use of tools and equipment

7. Support employee participation by asking questions on work practices and encouraging discussion on the topics.
8. Talk about personal experiences or have one of the crew tell a story about a near miss, an injury, or a workplace fatality. Personal stories and experiences can dramatically enhance safety messages.
9. Keep the meeting short - usually 10 to 15 minutes.
10. After the meeting, take the time to consider the following:
 - Did the topic fit the jobsite?
 - Did the crew participate?
 - Did someone demonstrate safety equipment or safety practices?
 - Did the meeting lead to changes in work practices?
11. Evaluate the tailgate meeting's impact. Are employees clear on recognizing and correcting hazards? Ask questions, walk the jobsite and observe.
12. Document/record the meeting topic, date, who was in attendance and any actions taken such as recording safe work practices that employees can perform. Also note any other employer actions to be taken to ensure a safe workplace.

Additional Tailgate Meetings Resources

Further assistance on general safety and health training in the workplace, resources for conducting effective tailgate meetings and training/meeting materials may be obtained from the organizations listed below:

[California Department of Industrial Relations Division of Occupational Safety and Health \(DOSH\)](#)

Effective Workplace Training eTool

<http://www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/etools/09-002/index.htm>

Providing effective on-the-job training contributes greatly to a safer and more healthful work environment. This etool assists employers improve their ability to provide effective trainings. It provides practical information on regulatory requirements and step-by-step guidance for employers to conduct effective safety and health training in the workplace.

Construction Ergonomics

<http://www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/PubOrder.asp>

A series of ergonomic survival guides (English/ Spanish) are available to assist employers and employees on safety and health in construction. Contractors, foremen, and workers from various trades such as carpenters, electricians, cement masons, and others can benefit from the trade-specific safety tips and safer work practices included.

[California Department of Public Health \(CDPH\) Occupational Health Branch](#)

BuildSafe California Educational Materials and Publications

www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/ohb/Pages/BuildSafe.aspx#conducting

Information is presented as a tailgate meeting kit. The kit consists of a set of Safety Break cards (English/ Spanish) covering 23 construction safety topics. These cards promote a hands-on training approach that involves workers more directly in workplace safety, increased communication, problem solving and injury prevention. Also included are instructions on how to use the cards and a template for designing safety trainings using other topics contained in: [Cal/OSHA Pocket Guide for the Construction Industry \(Spanish\)](#)

[California Department of Public Health](#)

California FACE Program - Fall Prevention Tailgate Training Materials

<http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/ohb-face/Pages/Tailgate.aspx>

To prevent falls in the construction and solar industries, the California Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (FACE) program developed training cards to be used in conjunction with fatality story videos in tailgate meetings. These cards in English/ Spanish are simple to use, and cover four main fall prevention areas: skylights, roofs, and floor openings; step and extension ladder safety; scaffold safety; and fall restraint/fall arrest systems.

Training materials also include instructions and a template card on how to create your own tailgate meeting using topics contained in: [Cal/OSHA Pocket Guide for the Construction Industry \(Spanish\)](#)

[Electronic Library of Construction Occupational Safety and Health \(eLCOSH\)](#)

<http://www.elcosh.org/index.php>

This web page contains a wide range of safety and health educational materials employers in construction can use to train their workers. Included are a series of toolbox talks on numerous topics with easy to use trainer's talking points and training cards. Other materials are presented as handouts, factsheets, videos, wallet cards, and posters. Topics range from roofing safety and selection of power tools to ergonomics in construction and how to strengthen the jobsite safety climate. Educational materials are in English, Spanish and other languages.

Contacting Cal/OSHA Consultation Services

Consultation Programs:

<http://www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/consultation.html>

Toll-free Number: **1-800-963-9424**

Publications: <http://www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/puborder.asp>

Onsite Assistance Program Area Offices:

Central Valley: 559-454-1295	San Diego/Imperial: 619-767-2060
No. California: 916 263-0704	San Bernardino: 909-383-4567
SF/Bay Area: 510-622-2891	San Fernando Valley: 818-901-5754
La Palma/LA/Orange: 714-562-5525	

Note: The information provided is not meant to be either a substitute for or legal interpretation of the occupational safety and health regulations. Readers are cautioned to refer directly to Title 8 of the California Code of Regulations for detailed information regarding the regulation's scope, specifications, and exceptions and for other requirements that may be applicable to their operations.