

Demolition Hazards

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Remodeling of buildings sometimes involves demolishing parts of existing structures to make room for new improvements. Demolition can expose workers to dangerous materials that are sometimes difficult to recognize. In many cases, even the building owner may not know these hazards are present. Potentially dangerous materials include lead, silica and asbestos.

Removing causes lead dust, grinding, or cutting materials covered with lead based paint, or from handling metallic lead. Lead fumes can also be created when a torch is used to cut tanks that have contained leaded gasoline or other lead containing products. Since lead is a toxic material that can cause serious illness, respirators should be worn if lead dust or fumes are present.

Silica is found in many building materials such as natural stone, brick and concrete. Breaking, cutting, crushing or grinding this material will generate dust containing crystalline silica. Exposure to excessive dust can cause silicosis, a disease resulting in lung problems. If it is not possible to control dust to an acceptable level by keeping materials wet or damp, respirators should be used.

Asbestos dust can be generated whenever materials containing asbestos are handled or removed. Typical asbestos containing materials include sprayed asbestos coatings on steel columns, insulation materials, fire resistant walls, asbestos cement sheets, and flooring materials. Breathing this dust can cause asbestosis and lung cancer. A certified asbestos removal worker should remove asbestos coating or insulation before any demolition is started.

Gases and vapors are chemical hazards that may be present in buildings previously used for chemical manufacturing or storage. These vapors may be found in pre-existing tanks and pipes, from the burning of waste materials, and even from natural processes such as rusting of metal. The degree of hazard depends upon the type, toxicity, and concentration of the gas present. Adequate ventilation must be provided and suitable respiratory protective equipment worn when there is an exposure to toxic chemicals.

Enter confined spaces with extra precautions. Confined spaces include basements, tanks, and excavations. Hazards may include oxygen deficiency, and/or the presence of toxic or flammable gases such as carbon monoxide,

methane or hydrogen sulfide. Be certain that atmospheres in confined spaces have been tested and levels determined to be safe before entering these areas.

Dermatitis or skin irritation can result from contacting substances such as mineral oil, pitch, disinfectant, solvents, oils, acids, and alkalis. Exposure to epoxy resins, formaldehyde, nickel, cobalt, and chromium, may cause allergic reactions in some people. If contact with any of these substances is likely, protective clothing and gloves with cotton lining should be worn to prevent skin contact.

High noise levels from equipment such as compressors and jackhammers frequently create noise in excess of maximum permissible levels. Long-term exposure to excessive noise may cause permanent hearing loss. To avoid this, always wear hearing protection when noise levels are high.

Potential hazards exist in all demolition work. Be aware of these hazards and protect yourself by using appropriate personal protective clothing and equipment.

GENERAL SAFETY REVIEW

This is a time to review all safety concerns, not just today's topic. Keep your notes on this page before, during and after the safety meeting.

Are you aware of any safety hazards from any other crews? Point out any hazards other crews are creating that this crew should know about. Tell the crew what you intend to do about those hazards.

Do we have any other safety business? Discuss any past issues or problems. Report any progress of investigations and action taken.

Have there been any accidents, near misses or complaints? Discuss any accidents, near misses, and complaints that have happened since the last safety meeting. Also recognize the safety contributions made by members of the crew.

Please remember, we want to hear from you about any health and safety issues that come up. If we don't know about problems, we can't take action to fix them.

ENDING THE MEETING

Circulate Sign-Off Form.

Assign one or more crew member(s) to help with next safety meeting.

Refer action items for follow-up.

Do you have any Safety Recommendations?

Do you have any Job Specific Topics you would like us to discuss?

Have you reviewed the M.S.D.S Sheet for this safety topic? Yes____ No____
N/A____

Comments:
