

CSI Country Wide Case Study Safety Strategy Discussion

Construction Safety Investigator



Instructions

The objective of this tool is to provide field supervisors with information to proactively engage workers and discuss safety related concerns that they may encounter. Safety discussions should not be limited to the subject above and should pertain to the activities that workers will be involved in that may have the potential for safety related exposures.

Case Day:

November 2008

Accident Type:

Fire Protection Accident - Temporary Heating

Relevant laws, rules and codes may include:

29CFR 1926.20(a)(1), 1926.21(b)(2), 1926.154, Heater Mfr. Users Manual and Safety Precautions, 1926.150

Case:

A construction worker was burned and a building was damaged when a fire began as a result of a portable heater.

Accident Detail:

The incident occurred in a building being renovated as part of a commercial retail store upgrade. The building remained open for business except for areas under construction, which were separated by wooden construction partitions.

Exterior walls in the construction area were partially demolished and being reconfigured as part of the new store layout. As a result and due to the cold weather, portable liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), torpedo style heaters, were installed to keep the construction space at an appropriate temperature.

From the heat of the heaters, several cardboard boxes ignited, causing a fire behind a partition. A construction worker noticed the smoke and quickly extinguished it by using a portable fire extinguisher mounted on the construction partition. While the worker was extinguishing the fire, he was burned on his right hand and forearm. Local fire authorities were called by the store and construction personnel.

Reconstructive Safety Evaluation:

- What are some of the possible causes of the accident being discussed?
- What actions could have been taken that might have prevented this accident from occurring?

