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Sample General Safe Work Practice for Working Alone

DO:

a) Conduct a workplace assessment to determine what hazards exist if an employee was to work alone (i.e., physical, chemical, biological or psychological); consider some of the following factors:

- Tasks involved
- Whether the employee is accustomed to working alone
- Determine consequences of worst case scenario
- Likelihood of other persons in the area
- Possibility of critical incident preventing the employee from calling for help or leaving the workplace
- Estimate emergency response time
- Training and experience of employee working alone
- Disabilities or medical conditions of the employee
- Frequency of job supervision
- Time or shift when the job is to be done
- Effects of implementing appropriate safeguards
- Ability to communicate with others for either assistance or help
- Frequency of check-in or notifications

b) Consider re-prioritizing potentially hazardous work for times when supervisors or other employees will be available, should they be needed

c) Provide adequate staff for hazardous task performed off-hours or in locations outside of populated areas

d) Test communications in specified area where an employee is working alone

e) Consider eliminating work involving hazardous tasks until a “buddy” system can be implemented

DO NOT:

Working alone is prohibited and should **NEVER be considered** under the following circumstances:

a) Confined space entry and in tunnels and manholes

b) Working on energized electrical conductors or equipment

Please note: This document is for information purposes only as a guide. The safe job procedures (SJP) and safe work practices (SWP) created for your workplace should reflect your organizations processes, equipment and hazards as identified by a hazard analysis. Construction Safety Nova Scotia does not assume responsibility for the use of information in this document. If assistance is needed to complete a SWP and SJP for your organization please contact CSNS member services at constructionsafetyns.ca or 1.800.971.3888.



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- c) Using a vehicle, crane or similar equipment near a live power line
- d) Using self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) or other such respiratory equipment
- e) Where an employee might become trapped by material, or overcome by another cause, a safety belt or harness shall be to a lifeline or other device attended by another employee
- f) Operating a vehicle, crane, mobile equipment or similar material handling equipment and does not have full view of the intended path of travel
- g) During welding operations where a fire watcher is required
- h) When operating a chainsaw

General:

The above general do's and don'ts account for assessing the workplace for an employee working alone as well as some considerations to make in keeping them safe.

In addition to following and/or considering the above statements, ensure that the workplace establishes a strong communication process to call for help and/or notify others that help is required. This communication process should be shared with all in the workplace so that everyone knows what to do should an incident occur.

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