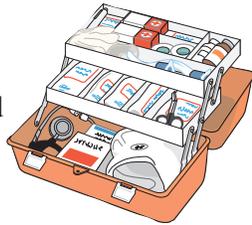




Worksite emergencies can happen quickly. There may not be time to think, therefore, reaction time is critical. By planning ahead through an Emergency Action Plan, reaction time can be improved and the outcome changed. (See Emergency Response Plan STP.) A vital part of that plan is the first aid kit. A properly stocked and easily accessible first aid kit can mean the difference between life and death. First aid kits can be custom-made or purchased commercially.

Development

Before purchasing a standard first aid kit or attempting to put one together, an assessment of each work area must be completed to determine the types of first aid likely to be needed. To provide a picture of the basic types of injuries, check the company accident logs. Also, look around the work area for hazards; sharp pointed objects that can cut or puncture, hot surfaces or chemicals that can cause burns, heavy moving objects that can cause crushing injuries, and sources of electricity that can cause electrical shock. Environmental hazards such as insects, poisonous plants, sun and heat exposure should also be considered. Material safety data sheets will give first aid recommendations for treatment of exposures to chemicals used in the workplace. A good first aid kit will contain items to treat specific hazards in the environment. The following list sets forth the minimally acceptable number and type of first-aid supplies for first-aid kits based on recommendations from the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) Z308.1 – 2003)



- 1 ea. Absorbent Compress, 32 sq. inch (No side smaller than 4 inch)
- 16 ea. Adhesive Bandages, 1" x 3"
- 1 roll Adhesive tape, 3/8" x 5 yd.
- 10 ea. Antiseptic Applications, 0.5g application.
- 6 ea. Burn Treatment Applications, 0.5g application.
- 4 ea. Sterile Pads, 3" x 3" min.
- 2 pr. Medical Exam Gloves
- 1 ea. Triangular Bandage, 40" x 40" x 56" min.

First Aid Kits

HS95-086F (1-07)

A 5-Minute Safety Training Aid

In addition to the above minimum contents, a kit should have optional items added, based upon specific workplace hazards. The selection of additional supplies should be made by consulting with a health care professional or a person competent in first aid who is knowledgeable of the hazards found in that specific workplace. The optional items shall meet specifications stated in Section 5.2 of ANSI Z308.1-2003. Items not addressed by the standard should be in compliance with U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) or any other governing body or regulation. Recommended contents include oral analgesics, antibiotic treatments, compress bandages, CPR barriers, burn dressings, cold packs, eye covers, eyewash, and a roller bandage. The result of the work area assessment will help determine the quantity as well as the type of items in the first aid kit. The frequency and severity of previous injuries and the hazards in the work area provide information about the quantity of items to stock. If cuts or severe lacerations were common previous injuries or are likely to be experienced, be sure to stock plenty of band-aids, roller gauze, and gloves. Most items can be purchased at local drug stores or through various manufacturers. All items need to be individually wrapped to remain sterile – resealable plastic baggies work well. Arrange the contents so that the needed items can be found quickly without unpacking the entire kit.

Location

The location of the first aid kit is as important as selecting the proper contents. Supply enough first aid kits to provide a quick response by locating them with first aid trained and designated employee responders. Another option is to locate the kits at various places in the worksite so that all employees have access to a kit. Don't forget to keep first aid kits in company vehicles. First aid kits can be packaged small and transportable, as in fanny packs or back packs. Small kits need only to have a small quantity of each basic item, and will need to be restocked often. First aid kits of any size can be wall mounted in break areas or supervisors' offices. As with all safety equipment, the location of the first aid kit should be identified with notices or signs.

Approval

According to the Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) Code of Federal Regulations CFR 1910.151, “Adequate first aid supplies shall be readily available” on company premises. If it is reasonably anticipated that employees will be exposed to blood or other potentially infectious materials while using first aid supplies, employers are required to provide appropriate personal protective equipment in compliance with the provisions of OSHA’s Bloodborne Pathogens standard (CFR 1910.1030). No matter how big or small the first aid kit is, it is important to remember to check the kit regularly for product expiration dates (especially with ointments and medicines) and restock after every use. Remember to practice safety. Don’t learn it by accident.

The Texas Department of Insurance, Division of Workers’ Compensation (TDI-DWC) also offers several other free safety publications online at <http://www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/videoresources/index.html>, including: Back Injury Prevention, and Manual Material Handling.

TDI-DWC features a free occupational safety and health audiovisual loan library. Call 512-804-4620 for more information or visit the agency website at <http://www.tdi.texas.gov/safety/videoresources/avcatalog.html>.