

SOMERVELL COUNTY SAFETY POLICIES



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**SECTION 1.00
INTRODUCTION**

Somervell County is committed to providing a safe and healthful work environment for all our employees and others that may work, visit, or enter our facilities. The objective of our Safety Program is to prevent accidents and minimize their consequences, and to reduce the frequency and severity of injuries.

It is our policy to manage and conduct operations and business in a manner that offers maximum protection to all employees and any other person that may be affected by our operations and business.

It is our absolute conviction that we have the responsibility for providing a safe and healthful work environment for our people and all others that may be affected as we conduct our business. We will make every effort to provide a working environment that is free from any recognized or potential hazard.

We recognize that the success of our safety and health program is contingent and dependent upon support from the Commissioners' Court, management, and supervisors, as well as all employees of the county.

The Safety Committee may solicit and receive comments, information, and assistance from employees about safety and health. If you have any questions or concerns about employee safety and health, please contact the Safety Officer.

The Safety Officer is responsible and will be held accountable for coordinating and administering the Somervell County Safety Program. Some of the assigned duties include: directing the development of loss control policies and procedures, performing inspections, establishing and directing the county's safety training efforts, assisting with accident investigations, establishing safety goals and objectives, and generally directing safety and accident prevention activities.

The Safety Committee members will act in an advisory capacity to department heads within the county. Some of the assigned duties may include: participating in Safety Committee meetings, assisting with development of safety policies, conducting or assisting with accident investigations, evaluating and recommending corrective actions to prevent accidents and injuries, and assisting with establishing safety goals and objectives. The department heads are responsible and will be held accountable to ensure that all employees in their department follow all safety and health policies, procedures, and rules established by the county. They are also responsible for administering training and guidance to employees in their departments.

The immediate supervisor of the employee has the authority to reprimand and/or recommend disciplinary actions against employees that violate the safety and health policies of the county.

Employees are responsible and will be held accountable for providing the county with a commitment to the safety and health program, abiding by the policies, procedures, rules set forth by the program, and becoming actively involved in the program to assist in providing a safe and healthful workplace for all involved.

**SECTION 2.00
RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Safety Officer has been delegated responsibility for developing an effective and ongoing Safety Program.

Direction and management of the plan will be accomplished by the Safety Officer.

Each employee will be responsible for implementing the provisions of the program as it pertains to operations under their jurisdiction. The responsibilities listed are MINIMUM and they shall in no way be construed to limit individual initiative to implement more comprehensive procedures to curb risks.

Employees are required, as a condition of continued employment, to exercise due care in the course of their work to prevent injuries to themselves, their fellow workers, and the public.

Employees will:

- Report all unsafe conditions and acts to their supervisors.
- Be individually responsible to keep themselves, fellow employees and equipment free from mishaps.
- Keep work and storage areas neat and orderly at all times.
- Follow prescribed procedures during an emergency.
- Be certain that instructions are completely understood before starting work.
- Learn to lift and handle materials properly.
- Avoid engaging in horseplay and/or distracting others in the work environment.
- Immediately report all injuries or property damage, no matter how minor, to their supervisor.
- All employees must comply with the "Drug And Alcohol Policy"
- Know how and where medical help may be obtained.
- Review the safety educational material posted on bulletin boards or distributed to their work area.
- Not damage or destroy any warning or safety device, or interfere in any way with another employee's use of them.
- ***Bring a doctor's release/work status report when returning to work after a work-related injury or illness; such release must be submitted to the Safety Officer prior to reporting to work.***
- Employees working at hazardous tasks will:
 - Obey all safety rules and follow published work instructions. If any doubt exists about the safety of doing a task he/she will "STOP" and get instructions from his/her supervisor before continuing work.
 - Operate only correct equipment for the task and handle it properly.

- Wear required protective equipment when working in a hazardous operations area. Dress safely and sensibly.

SECTION 3.00
REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Records of accidents are essential for efficient and successful loss prevention. Records supply the information necessary to transform haphazard, costly, ineffective loss prevention into a planned program that controls the specific conditions and acts that cause accidents.

To be effective, preventive measures must be based on complete and unbiased knowledge of the causes of an accident. The primary purpose of an Accident Investigation Report is to get information. Since the completeness and accuracy of the entire record system depends upon the information contained in individual reports, all personnel shall comply with the procedures contained in this section.

Investigations of all accidents will be conducted by the responsible department head or supervisor of the department experiencing the accident to determine cause and recommend preventive measures and remedial actions to be taken. The Safety Officer may elect to perform an investigation as a unilateral action and will assist the departmental effort.

- Employers First Report of Injury or Illness: **This form is to be completed and delivered to the County Treasurer immediately with a copy delivered to the Safety Officer.**
- Accident Investigation Report: **This form is to be completed and delivered to the Safety Officer.** This form will be used by the supervisor to report accident causes and recommend corrective action even when there is no injury.

- ***Employee, if injured will;***
 - Report injury to immediate supervisor as soon as possible, ***regardless how minor.***
 - Obtain treatment at nearest Emergency Room if injury is severe.
 - If follow-up treatment is prescribed, the County Treasurer's office will assist you in locating a treating physician.
 - ***Obtain a doctor's release/work status report and bring it to the Safety Officer's office prior to returning for work after a lost time injury.***

- ***Employee, if involved in a county furnished motor vehicle accident will;***
 - Stop immediately.
 - Obtain medical aid for injured persons.
 - Notify Law Enforcement, if needed, and contact your supervisor immediately and advise them of the accident.
 - NOTE: MINOR VEHICLE ACCIDENTS (without injuries) THAT OCCUR ON COUNTY PROPERTY DO NOT NEED A LAW ENFORCEMENT REPORT. They must be reported to your supervisor.
 - Obtain names, addresses, and vehicle tag numbers from other drivers and witnesses.
 - If the vehicle is no longer operable, the supervisor should be made aware of this fact and take appropriate action.
 - Provide your supervisor with information to fill out the Accident Investigation Report.
 - If injuries are involved, your supervisor must call the Safety Officer.

- ***Employee, if involved in a property damage accident will;***
 - Secure the scene of the damage to prevent further damage or personal injuries.
 - Notify your immediate supervisor.

**SECTION 4.00
INSPECTIONS**

All personnel will cooperate fully in inspections to ensure that all areas are covered and hazards identified. Emphasis will be placed upon conditions of facilities, equipment, vehicles, personal protective equipment, and machines as well as implementation of the overall program including:

- Good housekeeping
- Use of prescribed protective equipment
- Compliance with published safety regulations
- Qualification of drivers and condition of vehicles
- Proper maintenance of electrical equipment
- Fire prevention procedures, fire extinguishers, first aid kits and emergency lighting.
- Proper condition of power and hand tools.
- Proper guarding of powered equipment and machines.

SECTION 5.00
SAFETY TOPICS

- Gas cylinders shall not be stored in direct sunlight or in hot locations.
- Cylinders shall be stored only in an upright position and adequately secured to prevent accidental tipping or falling.
- Oxygen will not be used to purge equipment or to clean clothing.
- When not in use, the cylinder's protective cap shall be secured in place.
- When being transported, gages and regulators are to be removed and cylinder's protective caps shall be in place.
- Using cylinders as rollers, supports, or in any other way than that for which they are intended is strictly forbidden.
- Oxygen shall never be used as a substitute for compressed air.
- Leaking cylinders shall be removed from service.
- A regulator must be used on all gas cylinders.

- When caution is ignored, filing cabinets can pinch, cut, crush, or trip a user. Always be alert for a top heavy filing cabinet. It might tip over if a drawer is opened. Heavy filing cabinets shall be secured to prevent this.
- Exercise care in opening and closing file drawers. Open one file drawer at a time and close it with the handle, making sure your fingers are clear. Never close a drawer with your knee, elbow or any other part of your body other than your hand. Close each drawer immediately after use, even if you plan to reopen it in a short time.
- Never climb on open file drawers.

- Flammable solvents and cleaning solutions shall be dispensed only from approved safety containers.
- Solvent soaked or oily rags used for cleaning shall be kept in metal, self-closing waste cans and contents properly disposed of daily.
- Smoking is prohibited where there is exposure to flammable solvents.
- Solvents shall be handled carefully to avoid personal injury or possible damage to materials and equipment.
- Displays and decorations shall be fire retardant or non-combustible. Keep decorations out of aisles, stairs, passageways, and exits. Before using any decorative electric lighting device, check for loose connections, frayed wiring, broken sockets, or other defects. Any defective electrical device shall be replaced or repaired. Electrical devices shall bear the listed label, i.e. UL, FM, etc.
- Always disconnect decorative lighting when leaving the work area for the day.
- Do not use extension cords as permanent wiring.

- Keep work areas and storage facilities clean, neat and orderly.
- Keep all aisles, stairways, passageways, exits and access ways to buildings free from obstructions at all times. Remove all grease and water spills from traffic areas immediately.
- It is everyone's responsibility to pick up and clean up.
- Do not place supplies on top of lockers, hampers, boxes, or other moveable containers at a height where they are not visible from the floor.
- When piling materials for storage, make sure the base is firm and level. Cross tie each layer. Keep piles level and do not stack piles too high. Keep aisles clear and maintain adequate space to work in them.
- When storing materials suspended from racks or hooks, secure them from falling and route walkways a safe distance from the surface beneath.
- When storing materials overhead on balconies or mezzanines, provide adequate toe boards to keep objects from rolling over the edge.
- Do not let materials and supplies that are no longer needed accumulate. **IF IT IS NOT NEEDED, GET RID OF IT!**
- Tools, equipment, machinery and work areas are to be maintained in a clean and safe manner. Defects and unsafe conditions must be reported to your supervisor.
- Return tools and equipment to their proper place when not in use.
- Lay out extension cords, air hoses, water hoses, ladders, pipes, tools, etc., in such a way as to minimize tripping hazards or obstructions to traffic.
- Clean up spills immediately to avoid hazards. In the event the removal cannot be done immediately, the area must be appropriately guarded, signed or roped off.
- Nail points, ends of loop or tie wires, etc., must not be left exposed when packing and unpacking boxes, crates, barrels, etc. Nails are to be removed as soon as lumber is disassembled.
- Store sharp or pointed articles to keep co-workers from coming in contact with the sharp edges or points.

- Dispose of all packing materials properly to reduce the chance of fires.
- Maintain adequate lighting in obscure areas for the protection of both employees and the public.
- Consumption of food and beverages is prohibited in areas where hazardous substances are stored or used.
- Circuit breaker boxes and fuse boxes should be kept closed at all times. It is a requirement to maintain a minimum clearance of 36 inches in front of them.
- Flammables (kerosene, gasoline) and combustible materials (coats, rags, cleaning supplies) should not be stored in mechanical rooms or around electrical boxes.
- Extension cords should not be run across aisles or through oil or water. Inspect cords for kinks, worn insulation, and exposed strands of wire before use.
- Keep electrical equipment properly maintained and free of grease and dirt.

- Do not place objects on the floor if they must be picked up again later.
- Use a mechanical device, if possible, and inspect the device before use. If the object is too heavy, large or awkward, get help.
- Avoid lifting above your shoulder height. Use a ladder or step stool to move objects at these heights.
- Push rather than pull an object. While pushing, maintain your lumbar curve and push with your legs.
- Always wear slip-resistant shoes and check to ensure footing is firm.
- Check the path before lifting and/or moving the load so you know where to put the load and to ensure the path is clear and well-lighted.
- Spread your feet apart to keep a wide base of support.
- Bend at your knees instead of at your waist and maintain your lumbar curve at all times.
- Hold the object you are lifting as close to your body as possible. Avoid a long reach to pick up an object.
- Lift slowly, smoothly and without jerking.
- Avoid unnecessary twisting. Turn your feet, not your hips or shoulders. Leave enough room to shift your feet so as not to have to twist.
- Take your time and use the same techniques when setting down the object.
- Report work-related back pain to your supervisor.

- Safeguard any machine part, function or process which may cause injury.
- Never start a machine unless you have been trained in the use of the machine.
- Never start a machine unless required personal protective equipment (PPE) is on, in use and you are wearing appropriate clothing. (See PPE section).
- Do not wear loose clothing, neckties, rings or other jewelry. If your hair is long, tie it back.
- Never start a machine unless guards are in place and in good condition.
- Treat an unguarded machine as if it were out of order. **DO NOT USE.**
- Report all missing guards to your supervisor immediately.
- No guard barrier or enclosure should be adjusted or removed for any reason, unless you are trained to do the work, have the permission of your supervisor and adjust machines as part of your job.
- Never service or perform maintenance on a machine without disconnecting power.

- Do not indulge in any form of horseplay such as propelling paper clips, rubber bands, etc. Horseplay is strictly prohibited.
- Do not attempt to carry stacks of materials which are high enough to obstruct vision.
- Do not stand on a chair, stool or other unstable surface. Use a ladder or step stool.
- Do not tilt back in your chair.
- When walking in a passageway, keep to the right.
- Keep the floor and walkway clear of electrical, telephone and computer cables, boxes, etc. Isles and walkways should remain clear of boxes, loose materials and other small objects. They are tripping hazards waiting to happen.
- Accidents can result when persons stand in front of doors, so stand away from the path of the door swing and exercise caution when opening doors that swing outward.
- Do not overload wall sockets and extension cords.
- Watch for unsafe conditions such as defective equipment, burned out lights, loose steps, torn carpet, etc and report them to your supervisor immediately.
- Paper can cut and it hurts. Use a sponge or other wetting device for envelopes instead of your tongue. Use rubber finger guards when working with stacks of paper.

- Do not place computers - or other office equipment too close to the edge of a desk or other surface.
- Machines that tend to creep during operation shall be fastened down or secured with rubber feet or rubber mats.
- Electric office machines shall be properly grounded or double insulated to safeguard against electrical shock.
- Extension cords should not be used. Notify your supervisor if additional outlets are required.

- Head Protection - is required to protect employees head where there is a danger of head injury from impact and falling or flying objects.
- Ear Protection - shall be used in high level noise areas.
- Eye and Face Protection - shall be used when exposed to hazards such as flying particles, molten metal, dust, objects, potentially injurious glare, or other potentially harmful exposures which may cause injury to the eye or face.
- Foot Protection (safety shoes) - is required to protect employees working in areas where there is a danger of foot injuries due to falling or rolling objects, exposure to piercing the sole or where protection is needed against electrical or chemical hazards.
- Hand Protection - as required by established standards to protect employees from physical, chemical, or electrical hazards.
- Fall Protection - (safety harness, lifelines and lanyards). As required to protect employees from falling while working at heights of six (6) feet or more not protected by standard guardrails or safety nets or as required when working in confined spaces.

- Use required Personal Protective Equipment safety glasses, safety goggles and face shields, etc. when operating or working near hand or power tools.
- Hand and power tools shall be maintained in safe operating condition.
- Power operated tools and equipment guards shall be inspected before each use and shall not be removed or tampered with.
- Portable electric power tools shall be double insulated or grounded, using a three conductor cord and a three prong plug. Electric on/off switches shall operate properly.
- Any damaged, defective or unsafe plug, cord or tool shall be reported to your supervisor immediately.
- Tools and other materials shall not be left on stepladders, scaffolds, roofs or other places where they may be dislodged and fall.
- Impact type hand tools such as drift pins, wedges, and chisels shall be kept free of mushroomed heads.
- The wooden handles of tools shall not be cracked or splintered and shall be kept tight in the tool.
- Floor and bench mounted abrasive wheels shall be provided with safety guards (protection hoods).
- All bench grinders shall contain a safety guard and grinding wheel maintained for safe operation.
- Work rest must be rigidly supported and readily adjustable. Work rest shall be kept at a distance not to exceed one-eighth (1/8) inch from the surface of the wheel. Side grinding is not permitted.
- Grinding wheels shall fit freely on the spindle and not be forced on.
- All employees using abrasive wheels shall be protected by eye protection equipment and the eye shield should be maintained and permanently attached to the floor or bench grinder.

- All portable, electric circular saws shall be equipped with guards above and below the base plate or shoe. When the tool is withdrawn from the work, the lower guard shall automatically and instantly return to the covering position.

- You may only drive on county business if you have a valid driver's license.
- It is your responsibility to know and obey all traffic regulations. Drive at the legal speed limit at all times, or at a lower speed where conditions warrant.
- Report vehicle accidents or vehicle damage to your supervisor immediately.
- Wear seat belts at all times when the vehicle is in motion.
- Do not operate a vehicle when medically, physically or mentally unfit to do so.
- Do not allow unauthorized employees or other unauthorized persons to drive county vehicles.
- Observe the following precautions when fueling a vehicle:
 - Shut off the engine.
 - Keep the fuel hose nozzle in contact with the vehicle tank fill pipe to avoid static sparks.
 - Do not smoke or allow open flames near the fueling area.
 - Avoid overfilling the fuel tank.
- Keep windshields and windows clean and clear of unnecessary items that may obstruct your vision.
- Practice defensive driving: Make every effort to avoid an accident even though the other party may be in error. Do not insist on your "right-of-way".
- Except in an emergency, park the vehicle only in locations permitted by law.
- Always drive with extreme caution during poor weather, or when roadways are covered with snow, ice or rain.
- Maintain a safe distance between your vehicle and the vehicle in front of you.