

Safety Guidelines for DEP Visitors to DEP Field Sites

Revision 0, Effective: 8/15/07

1 Introduction

This guideline is intended for DEP employees who intermittently or occasionally visit DEP facilities or DEP construction sites as part of their job duties (e.g., for inspection or information-gathering), and should be aware of the potential health and safety hazards as well as the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and other precautions required for site visits outside office areas. These guidelines may be superseded by other Bureau guidelines (e.g., those developed for DEP enforcement inspectors) or site-specific orientation material covering requirements for staff who regularly work on sites without escort.

2 Responsibilities

Supervisors shall communicate these guidelines and make them available to employees prior to their conducting such field visits (e.g., include them in RTK training). Employees shall follow these guidelines and consult with their Supervisors if they have any questions. Site contacts shall provide information and arrange any necessary site orientation.

3 Pre-Visit Preparation

Plan your visit to ensure that you understand the potential safety and health hazards and the appropriate protections required. Communicate with the site contact in advance by telephone or email and find out whether there are site-specific safety, security, PPE or other protocols in place.

Employees who expect to regularly visit a variety of construction sites or DEP facilities which have commonly required PPE (e.g., hard hat, safety glasses and safety shoes) should acquire such PPE in advance to save time and get the best fit (e.g., Office of Engineering Audits).

Other general preparations include:

- Attend all required EHS training.
- Comply with the EHS procedures that relate to the work assignments and work environment.
- DO NOT wear loose neckties, loose jewelry, high-heel or open-toed shoes, or loose/baggy clothing as these could get caught in equipment or pulled into machinery.

4 Upon Arrival at the Field Site

After passing through security, check in with your site contact for a visitor orientation, as required by the site (e.g., review of evacuation alarms/procedures, any special safety precautions for hazardous materials or remediation projects, and the PPE required by the site or construction Safe Work Practice Plan or Health and Safety Plan (HASp) for the areas you will visit). If you have not been trained to use any of the required PPE, request a hands-on briefing covering when the PPE is necessary; what PPE is necessary; how to properly don, doff, adjust, and wear PPE; the limitations of the PPE; and the proper care of the PPE. Such a briefing may include:

- How to adjust the hard hat to fit.
- How to apply ear plugs or ear muffs for noise over 85 dBA.
- Use of safety glasses or, for potentially dusty environments, goggles.
- Use of a traffic safety vest, where required, for construction equipment traffic areas.

Identify a site person to escort you at all times. Never inspect active construction or operating areas of a facility alone – unless you receive a more extensive safety orientation (e.g., one that is typically provided to contractors). Always allow facility personnel to “lead the way.” Remember the general rule - **Facility Personnel Go First**.

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4 General Safety Precautions

DO NOT remain in any environment that you believe may be unsafe. Immediately notify your site contact or the site safety representative of any hazards or spills.

- Respect all safety signs at the facility; failure to obey signs can cause injury.
- Obey barricades, warning tapes and other warning signs indicating potential hazards.
- Pay attention to directions provided by site personnel.
- Make sure all ladders are not damaged and are secure on solid footing before use.
- Keep both hands free for climbing a ladder. Only one person should be on a ladder at a time.
- Practice good hygiene by washing hands before eating or touching your nose, mouth, eyes, or ears and at the conclusion of the site visit.
- Use added caution in inclement weather (e.g., high wind, ice, snow, etc.) and on sloped or slippery surfaces.

5 Prohibited Activities

- DO NOT approach unguarded rotating equipment shafts;
- DO NOT stay in areas where dust is visible and is a “nuisance” to your breathing.
- DO NOT climb ladders 20 feet or greater in length that are not equipped with a fall cage or without fall protection/training.
- DO NOT climb on handrails on elevated platforms.
- DO NOT enter an elevated platform > 6 feet above a lower level unless it is equipped with a standard guardrail (Top rail \geq 39 inches high and midrail).
- DO NOT use ladders mounted horizontally or planks to cross between elevated platforms.
- DO NOT walk on steel work (beams) between elevated platforms.
- DO NOT walk on roofs that appear structurally weak, slippery, sloped, or have other hazards. Never get closer than 6 feet from unguarded edges without fall protection/training.
- DO NOT throw any equipment or material from a roof or elevated surface.
- DO NOT approach noticeable infestations (e.g. rats, mice, fleas) or animal feces.
- DO NOT approach trip or slip hazards (e.g., debris, oily surfaces).
- DO NOT remain in areas where exit aisles or doors are obstructed.
- DO NOT approach stored materials that are unstable or stacked too high;
- DO NOT approach any unguarded floor or wall openings.
- DO NOT work directly under others working above you with material or equipment that can fall on you.

6 Activities Prohibited Unless Trained and Authorized to Perform

- DO NOT open, enter or touch electrical panels or approach exposed wiring.
- DO NOT work next to or enter excavations.
- DO NOT climb on scaffolding.
- DO NOT enter confined spaces (e.g., tanks, pits, aqueducts, manholes, etc.).
- DO NOT enter “Hearing Protection Required” areas without hearing protection.
- DO NOT work in an active highway or street traffic work zone.
- DO NOT use a respirator unless it is a loose-fitting filtering face piece (dust mask) and you have read the voluntary use attachment of the DEP Respiratory Protection procedure.
- DO NOT approach damaged, delaminated, or deteriorated boiler/piping insulation or other material that may be asbestos-containing without consulting a site safety representative.
- DO NOT disturb peeling paint.
- DO NOT handle process equipment/controls, known or suspected hazardous materials, or mercury manometers or ampules.