

EHS NEWSLETTER



OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH IN CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

Recently, most industrialized countries; the construction industry is one of the most significant industries in terms of contribution to gross domestic product (GDP). It also has a significant impact on the health and safety of workers. The construction industry is both economically and socially important.

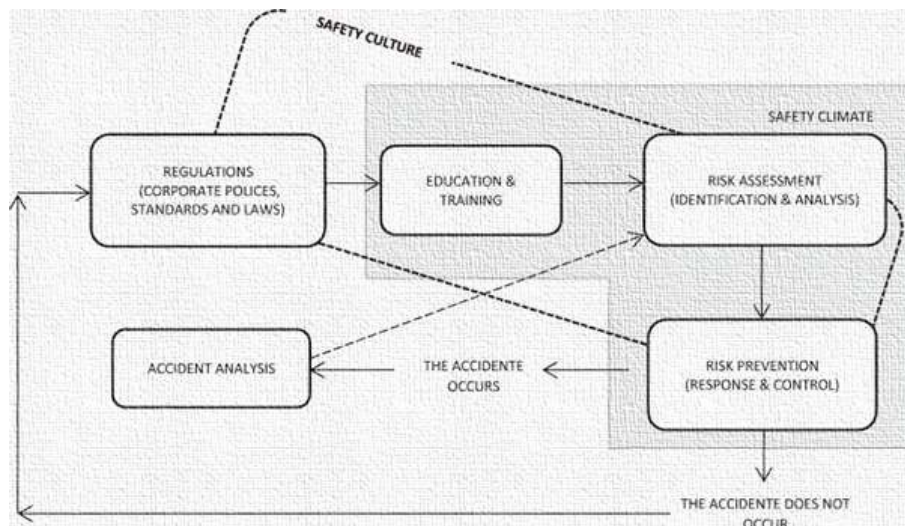
In construction sector, workers perform a great diversity of activities, each one with a specific associated risk. The worker who carries out a task is directly exposed to its associated risks and passively exposed to risks produced by nearby co-workers. Building materials, design, dimensions and site conditions are generally unique, which requires adaptation and a learning curve from site to site. Injuries may occur in a number of ways and at every juncture of the process. As a result of this situation there is a high frequency of accidents in construction, which makes it an unsafe industry. Degree of safety cannot be indicated by a single accident in this sector but can be monitored by a set of accidents that have occurred within a specified time interval. Knowledge about the noticeable trends in accidents is required in order to assess the level of safety and also directions for changes.

KEY POINTS OF THE ISSUE

- OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH IN CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY
- PLASTIC MENACE TO BE UNDERTAKE IN EVERY ARENA



Occupational safety and health is an area concerned with the development, promotion, and maintenance of the workplace environment, policies and programs that ensure the mental, physical, and emotional well-being of employees, as well as keeping the workplace environment relatively free from actual or potential hazards that could injure employees.



Source Figure: Occupational Safety and Health Cycle. Adapted from Carvajal, G. I. (2008)

The first problem needing to be addressed was how to suitably classify all the information. Occupational safety and health is not a homogeneous issue; quite the opposite, there are many stakeholders involved. Besides, it can be considered a multi-stage process. This process approach has already been suggested by many authors in risk management, as traditionally applied to project management, which proposes a similar process based on four stages: identification, analysis, response, and control. Moreover, the ISO 45001: 2018 Standard proposes a cycle based on continuous improvement which comprises of: establish corporate policies, plan, implement and operate, check and correct, review, and improve. Finally, Carvajal proposed a five-step cycle: regulation, education and training, risk assessment, risk prevention, and accident analysis. A new Occupational Safety and Health Cycle that includes safety climate was developed, adapting the cycle suggested by Carvajal, which is created in phases of education and training, risk assessment and risk prevention.

However, a shortcut in this Occupational Safety and Health Cycle could appear if regulations (either from the company or from public agencies) are not analysed, improved on, or at least implemented; and later, if education and training is not provided.

A company that does not seriously apply an occupational safety and health management system may enter into a spiral of unsafeness, trying

to take the easiest way out of the cycle, and making it shorter and shorter each time until a serious accident takes place. In any event, a “culture of construction safety” should be implemented; this is define as the whole group of knowledge, habits, and behaviours that drive companies to the willing application of safety and health approaches and procedures in the construction industry. This is a good way to achieve a “climate of safety”, which implies a subjective perception and evaluation of safety issues related to the organization, its members, structures and processes, based on experience of the organizational environment and social relationships.



OSH in construction industry rewards in safety incentivization programs; increasing the usage of information technology tools; production process automation; implementing proactive measures rather than reactive measures; integrating quality, environmental and OSH management system standards and using technological tools to train workers.

Reference: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5462637/>

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PLASTIC MENACE TO BE UNDERTAKE IN EVERY ARENA



Today the packaging sector is on boom with enormous amount of demand caused by surging of online markets like Amazon, Flipkart and new entries of JV of Reliance with future group etc. in India. No doubt that this sector is creating employment among the youngsters making them self reliant. To cater the surge demand there manifold increase in import of waste paper containing plastic by number of pulp and paper units. As per an application filed before NGT, there is approx 900,000 tonnes of cheap waste paper was imported which was hazardous.

The MOEF &CC ministries are struggling with proper mechanism on implementation for plastic waste management including cheap waste paper and import of hazardous road sweep waste.

The NGT directed the central & state pollution boards to take strict measures including Polluter Pays principle for implementing "Extended Producer Responsibility" under Plastic waste management rules.



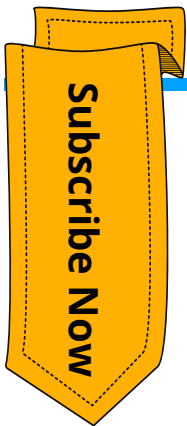
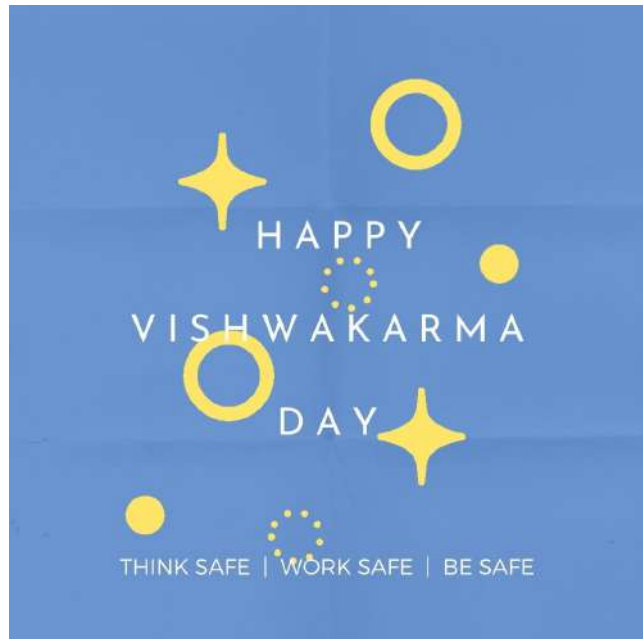
Few petitions are filed in NGT to sought enforcement of liability against Amazon & Flipkart using excessive plastic packaging material without meeting statutory liability.

The NGT also sought report from FSSAI, MoEF & CC CPCB and BIS on the use of plastic bottles and multilayered plastic packages for packaging of carbonated soft drinks and liquor as well as other items, for adverse impact on the environmental and health.



Similarly in case of Cigarette and bidi butt disposal the MOEF & CC has not listed these items(Cigarette and biddi butts) as hazardous, but the cellulose acetate that is being used in preparation of these items is biodegradable however its degradation studies shows that it will persist for a longer duration. The IITR(Indian Institute of toxicology research) has filed a report on July,2020, on "whether cigarette and bidi butts fall within category of toxic waste or not".

The MOEF & CC has published draft on EPR(Extended Producer Responsibility) web based portal that would bring new business opportunities for various ranges of stakeholders that are dealing with plastic waste. Each plastic carry bag and multilayered packaging would contain the name, registration number of the manufacturer and thickness printed in English.



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