#### **Daily Toolbox Talk: Own Your Part**

#### **Wednesday, May 7, 2025**

Communication, education, leadership, presence, preparation, and empowerment are foundational elements of a safety-focused workplace. Together, they create a comprehensive approach to mitigating risks and fostering a culture of safety.

**Know the Hazards:**

* Awareness of potential hazards is the first step toward mitigation.
* **Commentary:** A well-informed team is a safe team. Regular training and hazard identification exercises can significantly reduce incidents.
* **Application:** Prior to presenting your toolbox talk take the time to review the scope of work and identify the specific hazards associated with each task within the scope. Focus on identifying the high-risk hazards that could present serious injury or fatal impacts. Prepare to communicate PPE and other mitigation measures for these hazards to front line workers.

### **Communicate Ownership to Your Team**

* **Key Message:** Encourage every team member to take responsibility for safety. This involves empowering individuals to identify risks and take corrective actions.
* **Commentary:** Ownership creates accountability, which is fundamental for a proactive safety culture. When team members feel personally invested, safety practices become second nature.
* **Application:** When presenting your toolbox talk make specific mention of the importance of workers taking ownership of their decisions and actions. These decisions and actions not only affect their personal safety but the safety of their coworkers. Make mention during the talk that the ownership of personal and crew/coworker safety is one of the biggest examples of leading by example that enhances safety culture.

### **Lead by Example**

* **Key Message:** Leadership sets the tone for safety behavior.
* **Commentary:** When leaders consistently prioritize and demonstrate safe practices, it fosters a culture where safety is respected and emulated by the team.
* **Application:** As a leader; make mention during the talk of your personal commitment to safety and the importance of each and every team member understanding that you as a leader are committed to supporting good decision making and abiding by OSHA and company rules. Also, as a leader, it’s important to take ownership of personal engagement in safe work planning while verbally supporting safe work procedures/rules relaying to crew/coworkers that their safety is important is one of the biggest examples of leading by example. This enhances safety culture.

### **Be Present in the Field**

* **Key Message:** Supervisors and leaders should actively engage with their teams in work areas.
* **Commentary:** Field presence allows leaders to monitor conditions, address concerns, and demonstrate commitment to safety. It bridges gaps between planning and real-world implementation.
* **Application:** During your safety talk, make sure to make a personal connection with the workers. Let the team know that you will be in their work area and that you are there for support. Make sure to engage with the team on site and ask if they understand the hazards associated with their work and what their responsibilities are. If there are questions or things that are not fully understood, support the work team and STOP work to develop corrective measures.

### **Plan Your Work and Work Your Plan:**

* **Key Message:** Proper planning and disciplined execution reduce risks.
* **Commentary:** Thorough planning ensures that all safety measures are integrated into tasks, while disciplined adherence ensures those plans are effectively executed.
* **Application:** Each work task should have a safe work plan, pre-task plan, or job safety analysis. Prior to and during your safety talk address the work team and make the safety talk a conversation, not a presentation. Make it interactive if possible. Discuss the safe work plan for the activity at hand. Identify the hazards and the controls to eliminate those hazards. Ask the team specifically what concerns they have; also ask if they understand the safety controls needed and what their responsibility is to make safe work decisions. Validate that everyone on the team for the task knows their role and the safe work plan.

### **Stop:**

* **Key Message:** Empower everyone to stop work if safety is compromised.
* **Commentary:** A “stop work” authority promotes a safety-first mindset. It ensures that individuals prioritize preventing harm over meeting deadlines or completing tasks.
* **Application:** During the safety talk emphasize the importance of everyone on the work team has the authority to STOP work. Also, ensure the team knows that there will be no repercussions for stopping work and that stopping work is part of their responsibilities as a team member. Have a conversation with the work team and discuss why it is appropriate to STOP work. Communicate some of the reasons for STOP work authority. For example:

STOP if the task has changed and needs to be planned again.

STOP if there is a safety concern or unsafe activity being performed

STOP if you personally do not understand your responsibility or a rule

STOP if you do not understand or you are not comfortable performing a task

Empowering a work team to work together and feel comfortable asking to STOP work for whatever reason builds a strong safety culture.