Compliance Made Simple Presents:

**Take 10... Effective Safety Committee Meetings in about 10 Slides**

Topic of the month: **Seasonal Safety (Spring)**
First things First:

Document Your Meeting Per Your States Requirements

**Washington**

**Oregon**

**Montana**

**Alaska & Idaho**: There are currently no federal and/or state-specific requirements for safety committees in these states.
Why it’s Important to Discuss Seasonal Safety...

While we would like to think we check our forklifts oil everyday, pick up the bands every time we open a new unit of 2x4’s, and discuss ways to make our processes better every chance we get, the reality is our industry has seasonality; and unfortunately so can our commitment to safety and the upkeep our businesses.

Each season brings new obstacles and opportunities to address things we may have put off longer than we want. At the same time, the previous season (e.g. Winter) may have created challenges that you aren't realistically able to overcome till the Spring.

Remember: Under OSHA’s “General Duty Clause” employers are required to provide their employees with a place of employment that "is free from recognizable hazards that are causing or likely to cause death or serious harm to employees."

The following slides are a few common things that may be worth reviewing at the start of each Spring.
Machinery & Equipment

The Hazard: It’s probably been a few months since you have used some of machinery in your yard. The Spring time is an important time to make sure all of your machinery is working properly. Broken equipment poses a hazard to anyone who uses it, so take the time to determine if any equipment needs to be repaired.

Discussion: Identify equipment in need of service, schedule a repair appointment or send a work order to your on-site maintenance department. If you determine that the equipment is no longer needed, arrange to have someone remove it from your work area. If it will take several days or weeks for someone to repair a piece of broken equipment, make sure it has a sign that warns people against using it.
Potholes

The Hazard: If you don't already have these in your yard, a harsh winter could very well have created them. Potholes, especially ones located in the middle of production and loading areas create multiple safety hazards.

Discussion: Are there areas where potholes have become a safety concern? Who is responsible to fix these, and by when?
Chemical Hazards

The Hazard: If you have employees do other tasks come Spring like spraying weed killer, cutting materials, etc., it's important to follow instructions and warning labels on chemical and lawn and garden equipment.

Note: If workers will be using consumer chemical products in amounts and/or frequencies that exceed typical consumer use, employers must obtain a safety data sheet (SDS) for the product, ensure that it is properly labeled, and train workers in its hazards and safe work practices.

Discussion: Do we have our employees take on non-routine tasks that may include the use of chemicals? Do we need any retraining in this area? Do we have a method to store these chemicals safely?
Standing Water

The Hazard: Excess water increases slip and fall hazards. Standing water can also cover up/create safety hazards like potholes. It may also cause pedestrians to reroute their walking path to be closer to machinery in operation.

General Rule(s): Employers must provide a workplace free from recognized hazards. Additionally, an employer must provide all areas where employees work, such as yards, basements, or garages, with adequate drainage.

Discussion: Where do we and/or where have we had an issue with standing water? What can we do to fix the problem?
Housekeeping

The Hazard: Sometimes a cold, dark, and wet winter conceals hidden hazards that don’t stand out until it starts getting lighter and things start to get busier.

General Rule(s): Employers must provide a workplace free from recognized hazards.

Discussion: What housekeeping matters need to be addressed? Who is assigned to address these matters, and by when?
First Aid Kits

The Hazard: Accidents can happen any time of year, but while you are doing some needed spring cleaning, it may be a good idea to make sure your first aid kits are properly stocked.

General Rule(s): Adequate first aid supplies shall be readily available. The number of first-aid kits and the content of each kit shall reflect the degree of isolation, the number of employees, and the hazards reasonably anticipated at the work site.

Note: OSHA provides a list of the mandatory minimum to be stock in workplace first aid kits.

Discussion: Who is assigned to inspect all first aid kits in your business? Do we have enough, both in # of kits and contents? Who is responsible for ensuring they are restocked, and by when?
Employers with more than 10 employees are required to keep a record of serious work-related injuries and illnesses.

The records must be maintained at the worksite for at least five years. From **February 1st – April 30th**, employers must post a summary of the injuries and illnesses recorded the previous year.

Also, if requested, copies of the records must be provided to current and former employees, or their representatives.

Note: Even if you don’t have any recordable injuries from the year before, you still need to post your completed OSHA Form 300A.
Resources:

**WA LNI: Spring Safety**

**OSHA: Injury Recordkeeping & Reporting Requirements**

**NOAA: Spring Weather Safety Tips**