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Rockford Area Schools AWAIR Plan

Workplace Accident and Injury Reduction Plan



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This document contains internal workplace safety procedures, hazard analysis methods, accident investigation protocols, and operational response guidance intended for authorized district staff and safety personnel. Distribution is limited in accordance with Minnesota Statutes §13.37 and applicable workplace safety regulations.

Disclaimer: This plan is an internal operational safety document and does not replace Board Policy, emergency response procedures, workers' compensation requirements, OSHA reporting obligations, collective bargaining agreements, or applicable state and federal law. In the event of conflict, governing law, Board policy, regulatory requirements, and district operational procedures shall control.

A Workplace Accident and Injury Reduction Plan (AWAIR)



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Introduction

This Plan is designed to help the school district to comply with the requirements of the Minnesota Occupational Safety and Health (OSHA) A Workplace Accident and Injury Reduction (AWAIR) standard. Compliance is required.

This Plan is intended to be non-site-specific and will need to be modified to adapt to specific conditions and policies at each site or school district. In addition, each school district is responsible for the implementation, enforcement and updating of their AWAIR Plan. It is required that the Plan be reviewed and updated annually. Actual use of this Plan is limited to *Resource* Training & Solutions and the Rockford School District which it represents.

A Workplace Accident and Injury Reduction (AWAIR) Overview

As of March 17th, 2025, Minnesota OSHA has extended the AWAIR (A Workplace Accident and Injury Reduction) program requirement to include all K–12 public and private schools. That means every district needs to develop, implement, and maintain a written safety and health program. Employers, under the General Duty Clause, must provide employees with a workplace free from recognized hazards and control or minimize accidents. Minnesota OSHA will make revised AWAIR program guidelines as they become effective.

The AWAIR Act requires a written program to promote safe and healthful working conditions. The basic requirements of the program include:

1. Responsibilities of all managers, supervisors, and employees in implementing and maintaining the program.
2. Specific methods to be used to identify, evaluate and control hazards.
3. How the program will be communicated to all affected employees.
4. Procedures for investigating and correcting workplace accidents.
5. Enforcement of safe work practices.

The overall program must be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure accuracy and effectiveness. In addition, all activities, and procedures to meet the program requirements should be documented.

Goals

The intent of the AWAIR standard is to make safety an important part of each workplace by making employers and employees more safety conscious. The goals of the AWAIR Plan include the following:

- Providing a safe working environment for all employees.
- Address employee safety concerns on any relevant job hazards.
- Better educate employees to become more safety conscious.
- Establish an avenue of communication between employer and employee.

Personnel Responsibilities

Organization shall establish a general health and safety compliance policy statement. The policy should identify the District's position relative to the importance of health and safety, various responsibilities of staff, program objectives, and resources made available. The written AWAIR program will define responsibilities of administration, supervisors, and employees to support implementation of the program. Safety is everyone's responsibility. The following are typical responsibilities of various staff.

Administration

- Establish a safety committee.
- Designate a safety facilitator to oversee day-to-day responsibilities.
- Provide necessary resources to support overall program (that is, training, hazard corrections, personal protective equipment, equipment modifications).
- Identify staff responsibilities.
- Promote and enforce program participation.
- Participate in periodic facility audits.
- Review plan annually.

Supervisors

- Interface between management and employees.
- Serve as a resource for employees.
- Ensure employees are receiving required training.
- Conduct periodic facility audits.
- Enforce safe work practices and procedures.
- Investigation and correction of accidents and near-misses.

Employees

- Provide input to job hazard analysis and participate in facility audits.
- Report accidents and near-misses immediately upon occurrence.
- Follow regulations and maintain their areas in a safe manner.
- Wear Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) as required for their protection and maintain the equipment in a sanitary manner.

Safety Committee (182.676 SAFETY COMMITTEES)

Every employer of more than twenty-five employees shall establish and administer a joint labor-management safety committee. Every public or private employer of twenty-five or fewer employees shall establish and administer a safety committee if it is subject to the requirements of section 182.653, subdivision eight. Employee safety committee members must be selected by employees. An employer that fails to establish or administer a safety committee as required by this section may be cited by the commissioner. A citation is punishable as a serious violation under section 182.666.

- The committee aids and advises on health and safety issues.
- Members should represent their particular work area and bring employee safety and health concerns and complaints to administration for correction.
- Monitor and promote program compliance.
- Assist in the identification of new hazards or unsafe practices.
- Address employee safety concerns.
- Conduct regularly scheduled meetings and review facility audits and accident injury reports.

Note: Safety committee meetings shall be scheduled during normal working hours. In addition, all committee members attending these meetings shall receive their normal wages.

Hazard Identification, Analysis and Control

The School District shall identify new or existing hazards, conditions, or operations within each facility. Means for identifying hazards include the following:

- visual walk-through inspections.
- employee input.
- employee absenteeism rates.
- re-occurring injuries or accidents.
- review of work practices/procedures.
- OSHA 300 - Log and Summary of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses and OSHA No. 101 - Supplementary Record of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses.
- insurance data.
- workers' compensation records.

Hazards should be evaluated relative to their potential consequences and probability. Once evaluated, hazards are then prioritized according to various jobs or functions with the greatest potential for injury.

Actual control or corrective measures for hazards identified and analyzed typically involve one of (or combination of) the following: engineering controls, administrative controls, personal protective equipment.

Engineering Controls

The preferred control measures by OSHA, where feasible, are engineering controls. The intent is to eliminate or reduce the hazard by controlling the hazard itself. The following are examples of engineering controls.

- redesign of an operation or piece of equipment (for example, adding a machine guard)
- isolating the hazard from the worker (for example, construction of a guardrail or barrier, power, or electrical source lock-out)

Administrative Controls

The following are examples of administrative controls.

- employee training.
- establishing work practices or standard operating procedures.
- buddy system (no one works alone concept).
- labeling or warning placards.
- security to restrict access.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Controls

PPE is used in situations where engineering or administrative controls are not feasible or fully effective. The following are examples of PPE controls.

- protective clothing (that is, hard hats, safety glasses, safety boots, gloves)
- respirators
- high-traction soles

Communication

The School District's written program shall specify how the overall program will be communicated to affected employees to assure their knowledge of the hazards present and control measures involved. Employees with known hazards associated with their respective job functions shall receive training on the AWAIR program. Components of the training program include the following topics:

- health and safety policy
- staff responsibilities
- applicable OSHA standards
- review of standard operating procedures or safe work practices
- review of control measures (that is, engineering, administrative, PPE)
- reporting procedures
- investigation procedures

Training shall be provided to all new employees prior to commencement of any work with identified hazards. Training will be provided annually thereafter to review safe work practices and any new hazards identified. Retain all training records for three years (minimum). A training log is provided in Appendix B.

In addition to the training program, the following forms of communication should be considered to maximize the effectiveness of their AWAIR program.

- Provide updates or articles to staff resource sections.
- furnish employees with a copy of the School District's AWAIR Plan.
- post the health and safety plan next to the OSHA Job Safety and Health Protection poster (No. 2203).
- encourage employee input without the fear of retaliation.
- provide contact information of safety committee members.

Investigating, Reporting and Correcting Accidents

The School District's safety coordinator or facilitator shall investigate all accidents, including near mishaps, as soon as possible after the event or first report of injury. The goal is to determine the cause to prevent its reoccurrence through corrective actions. In all cases, administering first aid or medical care to the injured is the first priority. Furthermore, the investigator should secure the area and survey the scene to prevent any additional accidents or injuries.

In order to investigate, it is imperative that every employee promptly report any accident or near mishap. This requires the School District to eliminate any employee fear, embarrassment or concern for repercussions associated with reporting accidents. All employers must report:

1. All work-related fatalities within 8 hours.
2. All work-related inpatient hospitalizations, all amputations, and all losses of an eye within 24 hours.

You can report to OSHA by:

1. Calling Minnesota Occupational Safety and Health Division at (651) 284-5050 or 1-877-470-6742.
2. In the event of needing to report outside of normal business hours you can contact federal OSHA at 1-800-321-OSHA (6742).

The ultimate goal of the investigation is to determine the basic and root causes, and to determine appropriate corrective action so the incident does not happen again. To simply attribute an accident to "employee error," without further consideration of the basic causes, deprives the organization the opportunity to take real preventative action. Possible use of engineering controls, improved work practices and administrative controls should be considered to help employees do their jobs safely. Management practices should also be considered as a possible basic factor. If there is administration or supervisory pressure to increase production or cut costs, employees may take unsafe shortcuts in work procedures or necessary preventative maintenance may be delayed or skipped.

Enforcement

The School District shall implement the following monitoring and enforcement activities to promote active participation and compliance with their AWAIR program.

1. Supervisors must monitor to ensure safety rules and procedures are correctly followed.
2. Hold staff accountable by incorporating their safety responsibilities into their performance evaluations.
3. Employees should be coached to correct unsafe behavior and disciplined if violations continue.
4. Enforcement of safe work practices should be fair, consistent throughout the organization and based on established disciplinary policies. Management and supervision should be conscious of the examples they set for the workplace and should obey the same rules as the rest of the workplace.

Appendix A

AWAIR Plan Compliance Checklist

The following checklist serves as a quick reference for an individual School District to evaluate their level of compliance with the Minnesota OSHA A Workplace Accident and Injury Reduction Standard (Chapter 5205.1500)

- Written AWAIR Program
- Personnel Responsibilities Assigned
- Safety Committee Established and Regularly Scheduled
- Hazard Identification, Analysis and Control Conducted
- Controls or Corrective Measures are In Place
- Training of Employees
- Accident Investigation Policy and Procedures In Place
- Establish Measurement Criteria to Evaluate Program Effectiveness

**Appendix B
AWAIR Training Log**

School District: _____

Training Date: _____

Training Location: _____

Purpose: _____ (initial) _____ (annual)

I, the undersigned School District employee, have received training and understand my responsibilities under the District's AWAIR Plan.

Attendance Log		
Employee Name (Printed)	Employee Signature	Job Title

Trainer (Printed)

Trainer (Signature)

Appendix C

An Employer's Guide to Developing A Workplace Accident and Injury Reduction (AWAIR) Program

Please visit the website below:

<http://www.dli.mn.gov/osha/PDF/awair.pdf>

Appendix D

Safety Committee Member Roster

Appendix E

Safety Committee Agenda and Minutes