Greetings!

Measures to protect health and safety in your facility

According to the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 2007 (OSHA), every occupier is required to ensure the safety, health and welfare at work of all persons working in his workplace. An occupier in this case refers to a person in actual occupation of a workplace, whether as the owner or employer. The term health refers to a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being. On the other hand, safety refers to the condition of being protected from danger. It is also important to mention that, this Act is also meant to protect the health and safety of persons other than workers such as guests. Globally, health and safety has been given importance because of the legal, social and economic reasons. It is a legal requirement for employers to protect the health and safety of their employees at the workplace while on the social side, it is morally wrong to allow employees to work in a dangerous environment without protecting them. Economically speaking, industries and facilities can incur huge financial losses, if found guilty by a court for not having put in place health and safety measures at the time of occurrence of accidents and other such incidents.
It is therefore important that employers are made aware of some of the measures they can implement to maintain health and safety in their facilities. The best practices include:

1. Labeling

It is necessary that you label key areas of operation in your facilities such as generator room, fuel storage area, waste oil storage area and chemical store among others. This will enable workers and visitors to know exactly the dangers that they may be exposed to in each area of your operation.

It is also important that you label all the chemicals being used in the facility’s operation areas such as laundry. Chemical labels are important because they contain information on chemical usage, direction, application and storage. While most manufacturers provide this information on the chemicals they sell, users of chemicals sometimes don’t label the containers they put portions of chemicals in. This poses safety and health risks to the workers. The picture below illustrates poor laundry chemical storage that is also not labeled.
2. Signage

The importance of signage in protecting the health and safety of your employees cannot be underestimated! Signages should be placed at key areas of your operation such as where hazardous substances are used or stored. They should be clearly visible and create awareness on hazardous substances present and the potential hazard. For example by placing a signage with the words ‘No smoking’ in the fuel handling area’, it will communicate to a worker who would have otherwise smoked in such an area of the dangers he might be exposing himself to. The picture below illustrates a signage that can be attached in a fuel handling area.

![Signage](https://www.safetysign.com/categories/s566/flammable-signs)

(Source: https://www.safetysign.com/categories/s566/flammable-signs)

3. Personal protective equipment (PPE)

PPE is a clothing or equipment that protects workers against health or safety risks at workplace. Some of the items include gloves, helmet and safety footwear. It is important to note that PPE should only be worn depending on the nature of work and dangers (hazard) present. This is because different types of work present different types of hazards. Employers are encouraged to implement other measures such as guarding the machinery in use, to protect the health and safety of workers.

4. Material safety data sheets

Material safety data sheets are important in making your workplace safe and protecting the environment. Always ensure the supplier of the chemicals you use in your facility provides you
with accurate MSDS and you should not receive the product without them. MSDS provide information on: storage, handling, disposal and response procedures in case of an accident.

Maintaining higher standards in health and safety in your workplace comes along with several benefits which include: increased productivity, increased workforce morale and higher quality of work just to mention a few. It is our hope that by reading the measures highlighted above you will implement some of them, if they are not in existence yet, to promote health and safety at your workplace. It is also important to note that these are just a few of the measures employers are expected to implement at the workplace. The Occupational Safety and Health Act of 2007 (http://www.kenyalaw.org/lex/actview.xql?actid=No.%2015%20of%202007) has detailed provisions that both employers and employees are expected to comply with.