



Safety Message of the Day for IMEA Members



Employee Burnout: A Workplace Safety Hazard Safety Message

Employee burnout is now an officially diagnosable condition. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), which recently updated its definition, employee burnout is not a medical condition. Instead, the WHO calls burnout an “occupational phenomenon.”

Burnout And Worker Safety

First and foremost, no Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards govern work-related burnout. That means there are no OSHA regulations requiring you to have a workplace “employee burnout” policy or plan for dealing with workers’ affected by burnout.

What Should An Employer Do?

To prevent burnout from having a negative impact on workplace safety (and to avoid or lessen the risk of liability), early identification and intervention is key. While it’s easy to tell whether a worker is wearing a hard hat, safety glasses, or other pieces of personal protective equipment, it is often difficult to determine whether someone is dealing with work-related burnout. With this in mind, you and your managers should be on the lookout for some common warning signs, such as trouble with concentration, fatigue, low morale, anxiety, irritability, alcohol or drug use, workplace incidents, and violence.

Conclusion

Employee burnout is not an obvious hazard, but neglecting to control work-related burnout hazards can have an adverse effect on safety in your workplace. Creating awareness campaigns and training initiatives to recognize symptoms of employee burnout and the safety hazards caused by fatigue or lack of concentration may save your workplace from injuries and illnesses down the road.