Safety Notes – The Safety Improvement Cycle

To continually improve safety, we follow the Safety Improvement Cycle:

- This provides a SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound) process for identifying, assessing and controlling hazards to prevent incidents.
- Our HHD Safety Committee leads this process; therefore, it’s important that we have representation from each functional area of the department.
- We appreciate all safety input and feedback for use in this cycle; any safety feedback can always be directed to your team’s Safety Committee representative and/or Cory Worden, the HHD Safety Advisor.

1. Hazard Analysis
   What can hurt people and who’s at risk?
   For example, slips/trips/falls can hurt people, and everyone is at risk. Or, vehicle accidents can hurt people and anyone driving or riding in a vehicle is at risk. The Safety Committee consistently analyses hazards; feedback and input from all employees is invaluable to these analyses.

2. Hazard Control (Prevention)
   How can we prevent these hazards from hurting people?
   For example, to prevent slips/trips/falls, we can remove slipping hazards by fixing leaks and avoiding/cleaning spills; we can prevent tripping hazards by moving cords on the floor or taping them down. We can avoid rushing, complacency and distractions and wear the safest footwear to keep good traction. We can observe our surroundings and watch for hazards. There are many ways to prevent incidents.

3. Communication
   How can we remind ourselves and our teammates to use hazard controls?
   Safety communication can be done with safety moments during meetings, bulletins, emails, newsletters, videos, games and many other ways. The goal is to provide consistent and recurring safety reminders.

4. Leading Indicators
   How can we validate that we’re being safe?
   We can monitor safety in several efficient ways. Quick inspections can check for safe conditions (no slip/trip hazards, no fire hazards, etc.). Quick observations can check for safe work practices (no rushing, no distractions, using PPE when needed, following SOPs, etc.). If we find something unsafe, we now have chances to correct it before an incident occurs. Simple monitoring of safety protocols prevents most incidents.

5. Lagging Indicators
   What incidents have occurred? What didn’t get prevented?
   For example, right now, the top 3 incident causes in the HHD are slips/trips/falls, punctures with bloodborne pathogen exposures and strains. Knowing what incidents have occurred, we can review the hazard controls for these hazards, send reminders of the safety expectations and work to prevent these incidents in the future.

6. Investigations
   What caused the incidents that occurred? How can we prevent reoccurrences?
   For example, if a slip and fall was caused by a wet spot on the floor, we can see what caused the wet spot. If it was from a leaking water fountain, we can fix the water fountain. Sometimes a root cause is a ‘fixable’ / mechanical issue, sometimes it’s an SOP that needs to be changed, sometimes it’s needed training, sometimes it’s PPE that wasn’t used or plenty of other causes. Investigations are how we determine these so we can prevent future incidents. We then take this information and take it back to the Hazard Analysis to continue improving Hazard Controls, Communicating and validating safe work…