



First Aid

Occasionally, workers may become injured or ill. Injuries may range from paper cuts in the office to amputated fingers at the jobsite. Illnesses may range from dizziness caused by solvent vapors to heart attacks caused by obesity. **Performing first aid correctly can save the life of a victim & reduce his or her recovery time** (e.g. *cardio-pulmonary resuscitation [CPR] for heart attack victim*). **Thus, it can reduce your costs of injury & downtime.**

Performing first aid incorrectly can cause further harm (e.g. *cracked ribs & punctured lungs if your hands are in the wrong position when performing CPR*). Additionally, performing the incorrect first aid techniques can harm a victim (e.g. performing CPR upon a choking victim instead of first aid for choking).

Performing incorrect first aid techniques can harm you, too. For example, approaching an electrocution victim without first turning the power off may lead to your electrocution. Using your bare hand to stop a coworker's bleeding may expose you to HIV or other bloodborne illnesses.

To properly protect yourself & help the person who is injured or ill, you & some or all of your workers should complete first aid & CPR training. Many reputable organizations offer this training, including your area Red Cross chapter, your area American Heart Association chapter, your area hospital & your area National Safety Council chapter. Your local fire department & school adult education programs may offer it, too. Red Cross first aid/CPR training typically takes about 8 hours. Cost per person is minimal. Some organizations can tailor training to your needs, depending upon the hazards your workers face.

After you & your workers have completed training, develop or revise your emergency action plan as needed. Make sure everyone knows how to respond when someone becomes injured or ill. Make sure they know whom to notify (e.g. *call 911, call supervisor or coworker who is trained in first aid*). Make sure workers know how to summon emergency personnel (e.g. *dial 9 before dialing 911*). Make sure workers trained in first aid and/or CPR keep their knowledge fresh by periodically asking them how they would respond to specific emergencies. Hold practice drills

from time to time. Renew training prior to the expiration shown on your certificates. Use the knowledge you gained from your training to determine which items you should have in your first aid kits or consult with the organization who performed the training.

Knowing how to perform first aid properly can enable you to lessen the possible extent of a worker's injuries & shorten his or her recovery time without putting yourself at grave risk. It can also enable you to treat yourself. It can enable you to treat family & others when injuries or illnesses occur away from work.