

# Garage/Shop Safety Checklist for Vehicle Maintenance Facilities

By David Crowley, CSP, CET, CHMM, and Leon Tuttle, CIHM

If you are an SH&E professional with responsibilities for a motor vehicle safety program that includes fleet maintenance, then take heed! In addition to the usual issues that range from defensive driver training to the numerous Department of Transportation (DOT) requirements that impact companies which have trucks and CDL drivers, locations that have fleet maintenance garages should get their usual dose of safety on a regular basis. Certainly, much like in a manufacturing plant, sites that have maintenance shops or a repair garage should undergo some sort of safety inspection on a weekly or a monthly basis.

The question needs to be asked, "What sort of things should one look for on a safety inspection at a vehicle maintenance facility?" Getting the mechanics involved in creating the checklist is an effective way to be sure you're adding the right safety items. What better way is there to get the employees to use this type of form religiously? Get them to take ownership of it by getting them involved. Our mechanics gave us tremendous insights about what types of safety issues could arise in a garage and what should be done to prevent hazards and to correct them.

We wanted to put together a user-friendly safety inspection checklist (see pp. 10-11) for use at our locations that have fleet maintenance responsibilities. It is our belief that a company is set up for success when all employees are conditioned to keep a watchful eye on safety. Knowing that the safety inspections would be performed by both the maintenance supervisor and the hourly mechanics, we wanted to create a checklist with an easy-to-understand format. Recognizing this, we laid out the checklist in a grouped fashion—matching like items together.

We ended up with sections dedicated to general shop safety; personal protection; emergency equipment; hazard communication; electrical safety; hot work/welding; fall protection; and tool safety. Also, by laying it out in this manner, we can address most of the subjects covered in OSHA's outreach course for general industry as well as some customized items according

to our company safety program. The checklist follows a simple scoring method where "A" represents "acceptable" and a "U" means "unacceptable."

Training on this checklist and its meaning is vital. Individuals who use this checklist have been trained in each area to recognize when circumstances are viewed as acceptable or unacceptable. The checklist has been presented to the maintenance shops within our company. Some are company-operated garages and others are viewed as a "captive shop" where mechanics from our lease agent maintain and repair our trucks. Either way, the checklist can be used to monitor

safety compliance at locations where our trucks are maintained. The checklist is offered here as a sharing tool to other members interested in using it to help strengthen safety matters in the maintenance shop at your location. ■

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