



Berkley
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Non-Routine Work Tasks: Why They Matter and How to Keep Employees Safe



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Non-routine work tasks are those that employees do not regularly perform or are completing for the first time. Because these tasks fall outside normal routines, the risk of workplace injuries and illnesses increases significantly. To protect employees, organizations must implement clear safety measures and training before assigning non-routine tasks.

This guide explains what non-routine tasks are, why they pose hazards, and the steps you can take to ensure safety.

What Are Non-Routine Work Tasks?

Non-routine tasks increase risk because

- Employees may lack proper training for the task or the tools/equipment required
- Employees who have done the task before may not remember correct safety procedures
- Special PPE may be required, and it could be outdated or improperly fitted
- Employees may encounter hazards not present in routine work, such as:
 - Working at heights
 - Confined spaces
 - Engulfment risks
 - Release of hazardous energy
 - Hot work

Safety Steps Before Performing Non-Routine Tasks

- 1. Conduct a Risk/Hazard Assessment**
 - Use Job Safety Analyses (JSAs), Job Hazard Analyses (JHAs), or Activity Hazard Analyses (AHAs) to identify potential hazards.
- 2. Develop or Update Written Procedures**
 - Include hazard control measures and step-by-step instructions.
- 3. Train Employees Thoroughly**
 - Ensure employees understand how to perform the task safely before starting.
- 4. Review Safety Data Sheets (SDS)**
 - Identify chemical or material hazards associated with the task.
- 5. Hold a Pre-Job Safety Meeting**
 - Discuss tasks, procedures, and safety measures with all involved employees.

Injuries happen when risks are overlooked. A well-thought-out plan and proper training before performing non-routine tasks are essential for employee safety. Prioritize hazard assessments, clear procedures, and communication to protect your workforce.