Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC) Monthly Walkthrough

1.0 Objective & Intent

The objective of this SOP is to establish a standardized, thorough, and documented procedure for the Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC) to conduct a monthly walkthrough inspection of all production areas, maintenance shops, and storage facilities within the cabinet and millwork manufacturing plant. This proactive inspection is intended to identify, document, and initiate corrective actions for all physical, chemical, ergonomic, and procedural hazards before they result in injury, illness, or regulatory non-compliance.

This SOP is mandated under WorkSafeBC Regulation (OHS Regulation, Part 3 – Rights and Responsibilities, Section 3.8) which requires the JHSC to inspect the workplace at least once a month. The intent is to ensure continuous improvement of the health and safety program, verify the effectiveness of existing controls, and foster a culture of shared responsibility between management and workers. Failure to conduct these inspections properly exposes the company to significant regulatory fines, increased incident rates, and potential WorkSafeBC stop-work orders.

2.0 Operational Scope

This procedure applies to all members of the Joint Health and Safety Committee, including both worker and employer representatives, as well as any designated alternates or safety coordinators participating in the monthly inspection. The scope covers all physical areas of the facility, including but not limited to: the main production floor (CNC routing, edge banding, panel saws, sanding, assembly), the finishing and paint booth area, the maintenance and tool sharpening shop, raw material and finished goods warehouses, shipping and receiving docks, employee break rooms and washrooms, and all outdoor storage areas and walkways.

The walkthrough covers all machinery, equipment, tools, ventilation systems, fire suppression systems, emergency exits, first aid stations, chemical storage areas, and employee work practices. This SOP does not apply to specialized confined space entries or high-risk hot work permits, which require separate, dedicated procedures. The walkthrough is a general inspection, not a detailed audit of a single machine or process.

3.0 Hazard Identification & Mandatory PPE

The JHSC walkthrough involves exposure to all hazards present in a typical cabinet and millwork facility. All committee members must be aware of these hazards and wear the mandatory PPE at all times while on the production floor. The following hazards are specifically targeted during the inspection:

- Moving Machinery Hazards: Unguarded rotating shafts, belts, pulleys, chains, and sprockets on panel saws, edge banders, CNC routers, and sanders. Pinch points between conveyor belts and rollers. Kickback zones from saw blades and router bits.
- Flying Debris & Particulate: Wood dust, MDF dust, and particleboard chips from cutting and sanding operations. Fine airborne particulates from finishing and paint booth overspray.
- Chemical & Inhalation Hazards: Solvent vapors from paints, lacquers, stains, and adhesives. Isocyanates from two-part polyurethane coatings. Formaldehyde off-gassing from engineered wood products. Combustible dust accumulation in hidden areas.
- Slip, Trip, and Fall Hazards: Sawdust and debris on walking surfaces. Spilled liquids (water, coolant, solvents). Uneven flooring, extension cords across aisles, and unsecured floor mats.

- Ergonomic Hazards: Repetitive lifting of heavy panels, awkward postures during manual assembly, and prolonged standing on hard concrete floors.
- Fire and Explosion Hazards: Combustible dust accumulation in electrical panels, ductwork, and above ceiling tiles. Improper storage of flammable liquids (paints, thinners). Blocked fire extinguishers and emergency exits.

Mandatory PPE for all JHSC members during the walkthrough:

- CSA-approved safety glasses with side shields (Z94.3 standard).
- CSA-approved steel-toed boots with puncture-resistant soles (Z195 standard).
- Hearing protection (earplugs or earmuffs) with a minimum NRR of 25 dB, worn in all production areas.
- High-visibility safety vest (class 2 or higher) for visibility in forklift traffic zones.
- Nitrile or cut-resistant gloves when handling sharp objects or chemicals (as needed per area).
- Respirator (half-face N95 or P100) if entering areas with visible dust or solvent fumes; full-face supplied air respirator for paint booth entry if required by air monitoring results.

4.0 Required Safety Equipment & Tools

The following equipment and tools must be gathered and verified as functional before commencing the walkthrough. Each item serves a specific purpose in documenting hazards and ensuring the safety of the inspection team.
• JHSC Inspection Checklist (printed or digital on a ruggedized tablet) – pre-approved by the committee and covering all areas and hazard categories.
• Digital camera or smartphone with camera for photographing hazards and positive findings.
• Clipboard, pen, and paper for backup note-taking.
• Flashlight (intrinsically safe for use in combustible dust areas) for inspecting dark corners, electrical panels, and ductwork.
• Four-gas atmospheric monitor (calibrated) for detecting oxygen deficiency, combustible gas (LEL), carbon monoxide, and hydrogen sulfide – required before entering any confined or poorly ventilated space.
• Lockout/Tagout (LOTO) kit with personal padlock and hasp – for verifying lockout on any machine that appears to be in an unsafe state or requires closer inspection of moving parts.
• Spill response kit (small, portable) for containing any minor chemical spills discovered during the walkthrough.
• First aid kit (small, portable) for immediate treatment of minor injuries.
• Two-way radios or cell phones for communication between team members if they split up.
• Copy of the facility floor plan and emergency evacuation routes.

5.0 Step-by-Step Safety Procedure

1. Pre-Walkthrough Meeting: Gather all JHSC members in a designated safe area (e.g., the safety office or break room). Review the scope of the walkthrough, assign specific zones to each member (e.g., Zone A: Main Production, Zone B: Finishing, Zone C: Warehouse), and confirm that all required PPE and equipment are available and in good condition. Review the previous month's inspection report and any outstanding corrective actions. Confirm that no one on the team has a medical condition that would prevent them from safely performing the walkthrough (e.g., respiratory issues if entering dusty areas).
2. Notify Affected Personnel: Before entering any production area, notify the shift supervisor or area lead that a JHSC inspection is in progress. Ensure that all machinery operators are aware of the inspection team's presence. Do not interrupt any active machine operation unless a critical imminent danger is observed. If a machine must be stopped for a closer look, follow the machine-specific lockout procedure (see SOP for LOTO).
3. Systematic Walkthrough – Production Floor: Begin at the raw material receiving area and proceed in a logical, clockwise pattern through the production floor. At each machine station, visually inspect the following: machine guarding (fixed and interlocked), emergency stop buttons (presence and accessibility), dust collection connections (no leaks or blockages), electrical cords and plugs (no fraying or exposed wires), and housekeeping (no excessive dust or debris accumulation). Use

the flashlight to inspect behind and under machines. Photograph any deficiencies. Do not touch moving parts or reach into danger zones.
4. Systematic Walkthrough – Finishing and Paint Booth: Before entering the paint booth, verify that the ventilation system is operating and that the air make-up unit is functional. Check the booth for proper airflow (visual smoke test if available). Inspect the condition of the booth walls and filters (no tears or gaps). Verify that all flammable liquids are stored in approved safety cabinets with self-closing doors. Check that bonding and grounding wires are attached to all containers and drums. Use the four-gas monitor to check for explosive atmospheres if any solvent odor is detected. Do not enter if the monitor alarms.
5. Systematic Walkthrough – Maintenance Shop and Tool Sharpening: Inspect the maintenance shop for proper storage of tools and equipment. Check that all grinders have properly adjusted tool rests and tongue guards. Verify that all compressed air lines are secured and that blowguns are used with reduced pressure (below 30 psi) and chip guards. Inspect the condition of all hand tools (no cracked handles, dull blades). Check that all chemical containers (cleaners, lubricants) are labeled and stored in secondary containment. Look for any makeshift electrical repairs or extension cords used as permanent wiring.
6. Systematic Walkthrough – Warehouse and Shipping/Receiving: Inspect all storage racks for damage (bent uprights, missing safety pins, overloaded shelves). Verify that pallets are in good condition and that materials are stacked securely. Check that forklift charging stations are clean and free of debris. Inspect the condition of the dock levelers and dock plates. Ensure that emergency exits are clearly marked and unobstructed. Check that fire extinguishers are mounted, accessible, and have current inspection tags. Verify that the eyewash stations and safety showers are accessible and have been flushed within the last week (check log).
7. Document Findings Immediately: For each hazard or deficiency identified, record the exact location (e.g., 'Panel saw #2, rear infeed roller'), a clear description of the hazard (e.g., 'Guard missing on the chain drive'), and a risk rating (e.g., High/Medium/Low based on likelihood and severity). Take a photograph of the hazard. If the hazard presents an imminent danger (e.g., exposed live wire, active chemical leak, blocked fire exit), instruct the area supervisor to immediately isolate the area and take corrective action. For non-imminent hazards, assign a corrective action owner and a target completion date on the inspection form.
8. Post-Walkthrough Debrief and Report Generation: After completing the walkthrough, gather all JHSC members in a meeting room. Compile all findings into a single inspection report. Review the list of hazards and corrective actions. Identify any trends (e.g., repeated housekeeping issues in the same area). Finalize the report and ensure it is signed by at least one worker representative and one employer representative. Distribute the report to the plant manager, safety coordinator, and post it on the JHSC bulletin board within 48 hours. File the original report in the JHSC records binder for a minimum of two years.
9. Follow-Up on Corrective Actions: At the next JHSC meeting (or within two weeks), review the status of all corrective actions from the current and previous month's walkthrough. Verify that each action has been completed and that the hazard has been effectively controlled. If an action is overdue, escalate to the plant manager. Document the closure of each item in the inspection report. This follow-up step is critical for maintaining the integrity of the JHSC process and ensuring continuous improvement.