

Weekly Safety Walkthrough and Hazard Identification

1.0 Objective & Intent

The objective of this SOP is to establish a standardized, repeatable process for conducting weekly safety walkthroughs and hazard identification across all areas of the cabinet and millwork manufacturing facility. This proactive inspection is designed to identify, document, and initiate corrective actions for physical hazards, unsafe conditions, and unsafe work practices before they result in injury or regulatory non-compliance.

This procedure supports compliance with WorkSafeBC Regulation Part 3 (Rights and Responsibilities) and Part 4 (General Conditions), which mandate the employer to conduct regular inspections to identify and control workplace hazards. The intent is to move from reactive incident response to proactive hazard prevention, fostering a culture of continuous safety improvement.

The specific risk mitigated by this SOP is the accumulation of unrecognized hazards in a dynamic manufacturing environment. Without systematic weekly walkthroughs, hazards such as damaged machine guards, chemical spills, blocked emergency exits, or improper storage of combustible materials can go unnoticed, increasing the likelihood of serious injury, fire, or regulatory penalties.

2.0 Operational Scope

This procedure applies to all production areas, warehouses, maintenance shops, loading docks, and common walkways within the cabinet and millwork manufacturing facility. It covers all machinery, equipment, tools, chemical storage areas, electrical panels, fire suppression systems, and emergency equipment.

Personnel required to participate include the Plant Safety Officer (or designated safety lead), one member of the Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC), and the shift supervisor or area lead for each zone being inspected. All inspectors must have completed WorkSafeBC-recognized hazard identification training and be familiar with the facility layout and processes.

This SOP does not replace daily pre-shift inspections or formal incident investigations. It is a complementary weekly audit focused on systemic and environmental hazards. The walkthrough must be conducted at a time when production is active to observe real-time conditions and work practices.

3.0 Hazard Identification & Mandatory PPE

- Slip, Trip, and Fall Hazards: Cluttered walkways, wet floors from coolant or spills, uneven flooring, loose cords, and unsecured mats.
- Machine Guarding Hazards: Missing, damaged, or bypassed guards on saws, routers, planers, sanders, and presses. Exposed moving parts, belts, and chains.
- Electrical Hazards: Exposed wiring, overloaded outlets, damaged cords, missing panel covers, and improper use of extension cords.
- Chemical and Combustible Dust Hazards: Improperly stored solvents, adhesives, and finishes. Accumulated wood dust on surfaces, inside ducts, and near ignition sources.
- Fire and Emergency Equipment Hazards: Blocked fire extinguishers, expired extinguisher tags, obstructed emergency exits, and non-functional emergency lighting or alarms.
- Ergonomic and Manual Handling Hazards: Improper lifting techniques, awkward postures, and lack of mechanical aids for heavy materials.

- Mandatory PPE for Inspectors: CSA-approved steel-toed boots, safety glasses with side shields, hearing protection (earplugs or earmuffs), high-visibility vest, and cut-resistant gloves when inspecting areas with sharp materials or tools.
- Additional PPE as needed: Respirator (N95 or half-face) if inspecting areas with high airborne dust or chemical vapors; hard hat if inspecting overhead areas or mezzanines.

4.0 Required Safety Equipment & Tools

- Inspection Checklist (printed or on a ruggedized tablet) covering all zones and hazard categories
- Digital camera or smartphone for photo documentation of hazards
- Lockout/Tagout (LOTO) kit with personal lock and hasp for securing any equipment found in unsafe condition
- Flashlight for inspecting dark corners, under machinery, and inside electrical panels
- Non-contact voltage tester to verify de-energized state of electrical equipment
- Spill kit (absorbent pads, gloves, disposal bags) for immediate containment of small chemical spills
- Barricade tape and safety cones to cordon off identified hazards until corrected
- Clipboard, pen, and hazard report forms for manual backup documentation
- Personal protective equipment as listed in Section 3.0

5.0 Step-by-Step Safety Procedure

1. Assemble the inspection team at the designated meeting point (e.g., safety office or main break room). Review the previous week's inspection report and any outstanding corrective actions. Confirm all team members are wearing the required PPE and have the necessary tools and checklists.
2. Begin the walkthrough at the raw material receiving area. Inspect for proper stacking and storage of lumber and sheet goods, ensuring no leaning stacks or overloading of racks. Check that forklift charging stations are clean and free of debris. Document any trip hazards or blocked aisles.
3. Proceed to the cutting and machining department. Visually inspect all saws, routers, and planers for intact machine guards, functioning emergency stops, and proper chip extraction. Verify that no machines are operating with bypassed safety interlocks. Use the voltage tester to confirm LOTO compliance on any equipment tagged for maintenance.
4. Move to the assembly and finishing areas. Check for proper ventilation and that spray booths are free of combustible overspray accumulation. Inspect chemical storage cabinets for correct labeling, secondary containment, and compatibility of stored materials. Ensure that flammable waste containers are covered and not overfilled.
5. Inspect all emergency equipment along the route: fire extinguishers (check gauge and inspection tag), eyewash stations (activate to confirm flow and temperature), and emergency exits (ensure doors open freely and are not obstructed). Document any deficiencies immediately.
6. Examine electrical panels and distribution boxes. Ensure all panel covers are in place and secured, no signs of overheating (discoloration, melting), and that circuits are properly labeled. Report any exposed wiring or missing knockouts as high-priority hazards.
7. Review housekeeping conditions throughout the facility. Look for accumulations of wood dust on horizontal surfaces, near electrical equipment, and inside ductwork. Check that waste bins are emptied regularly and that combustible dust is not allowed to build up beyond 1/8 inch depth. Use the flashlight to inspect hard-to-see areas.
8. Conduct a brief observation of work practices for at least 10 minutes in a high-activity area. Note any unsafe behaviors such as improper lifting, removal of PPE, or use of damaged tools. Do not interrupt production; record observations for follow-up coaching.
9. Upon completion of the walkthrough, convene the team to compile findings. Prioritize hazards using a risk matrix (likelihood x severity). Assign corrective actions with responsible persons and target completion dates. Enter all findings into the SafeDesk digital log or paper log if digital is unavailable.
10. Post a summary of critical findings on the safety bulletin board and notify shift supervisors of any immediate hazards that require barricading or shutdown. File the completed inspection report in the safety records binder and schedule a follow-up verification for the next week's walkthrough.

Regulatory Disclaimer: This document is a generic safety template provided for educational and informational purposes only. It does not constitute professional engineering, legal, or regulatory compliance advice. The end-user assumes all liability for validating all safety protocols against specific machinery manufacturer manuals and local occupational health and safety regulations (e.g., WorkSafeBC, CSA standards) before deployment.