

# Safety Corner

Monthly tips & reminders on staying safe, on the job, at home and in the community

## January 2026 REDUCING RISK THROUGH SITUATIONAL AWARENESS

Whether at work or at home. Reducing risk through situational awareness involves actively recognizing potential hazards and making informed decisions to mitigate them. Below is an outline to understand and implement situational awareness effectively:

### What is Situational Awareness?

- **Definition:** Situational awareness is the ability to perceive and understand the environment around you, anticipate potential risks, and make proactive decisions to ensure safety.
- **Components:**
  - **Perception:** Observing and identifying relevant details in your surroundings.
  - **Comprehension:** Interpreting what those details mean in the context of potential risks.
  - **Projection:** Anticipating how the situation may evolve and prepare for potential outcomes.

### Key Steps to Enhance Situational Awareness

- **Stay Alert:**
  - Avoid distractions such as excessive use of phones or other devices.
  - Use all your senses to scan the environment regularly.
- **Understand the Environment:**
  - Know the layout of the area, including exits, escape routes, and potential hazards.
  - Recognize normal patterns and behaviors to identify anomalies.
- **Plan Ahead:**
  - Consider possible scenarios and outcomes for your activities.
  - Prepare responses for emergencies, such as fire drills or evacuation plans.
- **Monitor Continuously:**
  - Reassess your environment as situations evolve.
  - Adjust actions as new risks emerge.

### Practical Applications

- **Workplace Safety:**
  - Conduct regular safety briefings and drills.
  - Use tools like hazard reports and checklists.
- **Personal Safety:**
  - Be aware of exits and emergency equipment in public spaces.
  - Trust instincts if a situation feels unsafe.
- **Travel and Commuting:**
  - Research destinations for potential risks.
  - Stay aware of local customs, laws, and emergency contacts.

### Pre & Post-Shift Planning

- **Job Briefings:** Comprehensive pre-shift discussions about tasks, hazards, weather, equipment, public safety, etc.
- **Mental Preparation:** Tools like checklists for focus and mindfulness exercises.
- **Fatigue Assessment:** Quick self-checks or team discussions to gauge physical and mental readiness.
- **Post Job Briefings:** This is a great time to discuss and reflect on what went well and what we could improve.

### On-the-Job Tools for Situational Awareness

- **360° Awareness Protocol:** A system that requires workers to scan and assess their environment periodically.
- **Hazard Identification:** Be aware of live wires, uneven terrain, wildlife, poisonous plants, public safety, etc.
- **Proximity Alarms and Smart PPE:** Devices that alert workers when too close to live equipment or dangerous zones. Excellent PPE for Mutual Aid.

### Benefits of Situational Awareness

- Reduces the likelihood of accidents or harm.
- Enhances decision-making under pressure.
- Builds confidence in managing emergencies.
- Mitigates unwanted injuries.

Don't place yourself or others in a compromising situation; always be aware of your surroundings.

