

## Five Ways to Connect with Contractors

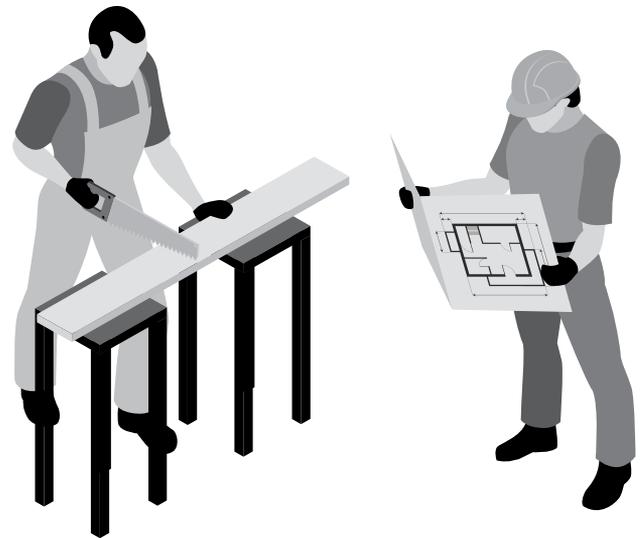
The Campbell Institute—the National Safety Council's center for excellence for environmental, health and safety (EHS) management—recently released a report detailing five best practices for keeping contractors safe.

**1. Prequalification:** Contractors must submit their safety stats—including total recordable incidents and fatalities—over a given time, usually three years. Set the bar high during prequalification and study the stats.

**2. Pre-job task and risk assessment:** Before a contractor begins work, the hiring company must have a way to evaluate the risk of the work and to place contractors in a predetermined risk category. This helps companies and contractors understand the scope of work and have a chance to put additional written safety programs in place.

**3. Training and orientation:** Contract workers require both safety orientation and skills training to be approved for work. They also require special permits or training for specific kinds of work, including confined space entry, electrical work, hot work, energy control, use of forklifts and working at heights. Check training records.

**4. Job monitoring:** Contract workers must be assessed periodically through daily checklists, safety talks, weekly walkthroughs, and monthly and yearly assessments, for longer work. Some companies or organizations require contract employees to submit safety observations or report non-compliance or unsafe conditions.



**5. Post-job evaluation:** Create and use post-work evaluations of contractors to ensure the work was done correctly and safely. Analyses of contractor claims, observations, and injury rates are some ways to measure the effectiveness of contractor safety training.

As a supervisor, you must watch out for the safety of all workers on site, including contract employees.

### SPOT THE SAFETY VIOLATION

## Firestarter

Any guesses on what caused this raging dumpster fire? Turns out, a contractor working on a home remodel for a family in Colorado, had his crew throw oily rags into the dumpster. As the rags dried they began to heat up until they spontaneously combusted.

Spontaneous combustion of oily rags occurs when a rag or cloth is slowly heated to its ignition point through oxidation. A substance will begin to release heat as it oxidizes. If this heat has no way to escape, like in this dumpster, the temperature will raise to a level high enough to ignite the flammable vapors and ignite the rag or cloth.

Oil-soaked rags should never be disposed of in trash compactors, trash dumpsters, or ordinary trash cans. Instead, all oily rags must be disposed of in covered metal containers. A metal safety can with a self-closing lid manufactured specifically to hold oily waste is recommended. These safety cans should be placed at key locations (away from ignition sources) and should be emptied and properly disposed of regularly.

