



Toolbox Talk

Name of Company Superior Waterproofing & Restoration Co., Inc.

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Competent Person

You've probably heard the term "competent person" used around the jobsite, in OSHA standards, and in some Weekly Safety Meetings. But what exactly is a competent person and what does he or she do?

OSHA gives a broad definition of the term in 1926.32(f). According to OSHA's definition, a competent person is an individual who, as a result of training and/or experience, is:

- Knowledgeable of applicable standards;
- Capable of identifying existing and predictable hazards in the surroundings or working conditions which are unsanitary, hazardous, or dangerous to employees;
- Designated by the employer; and
- Authorized to take prompt corrective measures to eliminate the hazards.

Who can be designated a competent person? Competent persons can come from all walks of life. The competent person can be:

- A long-time employee who has developed the necessary knowledge through experience,
- A co-worker who has participated in training courses on a specific activity such as scaffold erection or excavation,
- A recent college graduate who has completed college-level courses in a related subject, or

- A licensed professional engineer who took a test to obtain credentials.

No matter who the individual is, he or she must be given authority by the employer to take immediate corrective action.

It's important that you don't confuse a competent person with a qualified person. In 1926.32(m), OSHA defines a qualified person as an individual who, by possessing a recognized degree, certificate, or professional standing, or who by extensive knowledge, training, and experience, has successfully demonstrated his or her ability to solve or resolve problems relating to a specific subject matter, type of work, or kind of project.

Become familiar with OSHA standards so you know what activities require a competent person and which only require a qualified person. You don't want to begin trenching and excavation work, for instance, without a competent person on site. It's their job to help you work safely.

SAFETY REMINDER

If you are a competent person, you have a lot of responsibility on your shoulders. Accept the responsibility and do your job to the best of your ability. People's lives are in your hands.

Names of attendees:

Please print and sign your name. Thank you!
