

Medical Services and First Aid

OSHA Standard 29 CFR 1910.151 requires that employers ensure the availability of medical personnel for advice and consultation on matters of overall safety and health condition of employees in the municipal entity. If there is not a nearby infirmary, clinic, or hospital used for the treatment of all injured employees, a person, or persons, must be adequately trained to render first aid. Adequate first-aid supplies must be readily available. Further, suitable facilities for quick drenching or flushing of the eyes and body must be provided within the work area where any person may be exposed to injurious corrosive materials for immediate emergency use.

Therefore, it is important that facilities maintain a first-aid program. In your program, be sure to include staff knowledgeable in the application of first-aid methods and first-aid kits for use on injured workers with minor medical conditions. The American National Standard Institute (ANSI) code identifies the minimum requirements for workplace first-aid kits. The contents of the kits should be appropriate for a municipal workplace setting. First-aid kits are classified by the assortment and quantity of first-aid supplies intended to deal with injuries and illnesses that may be encountered in the workplace. These may include major and minor wounds, minor burns, sprains, strains and eye injuries. An employee competent in first aid should be familiar with the kit in your facility and responsible for its maintenance.



First-Aid Kit Classification

Class A first-aid kits are likely the best fit for municipal operations as they are designed to handle the most common workplace injuries. The assortment and quantity of supplies included in a first-aid kit were chosen by ANSI based upon reviews of workplace incidents requiring first-aid treatment, similar international standards and current injury treatment practices. High-hazard job functions may require additional supplies based on hazard exposures. For example, working around hazardous chemicals may require specialty ointments for treatment. You should identify specialty items in Section 4 of each chemical's Safety Data Sheet (SDS), which discusses proper first aid response.

Maintenance and Inspections

First-aid kits should be inspected and maintained on a routine basis to confirm their completeness and usability. Some supplies may have expiration dates; any supplies that are past the marked date should be replaced with a suitable or similar supply type. Be sure to inform your competent first-aid employee when supplies are removed from the kit to keep them up to date on dwindling supplies.

The first-aid kit in your municipal facility is intended for the immediate treatment of minor workplace injuries. Train your staff on the location and use of supplies and identify a competent person to oversee your first-aid program. Workplace injuries can be mitigated when immediate, appropriate first aid is rendered. Contact the Comp Alliance Director of Loss Control, Robert Blaisdell at rblaisdell@wrightinsurance.com for more details. You can also reference the safety training videos on first aid at www.safetysourceonline.com