

# ARS FORM 404, SAFETY, HEALTH, AND ENVIRONMENTAL INSPECTION CHECKLIST

**ARS Policy** It is the policy of Agriculture Research Service (ARS) that management officials and supervisory personnel:

- Assure prompt attention to reports of unsafe or unhealthful working conditions by employees or others.
- Assure that all workplaces are inspected at least annually by personnel with sufficient technical competence and equipment necessary to conduct thorough inspections.
- Assure prompt abatement of unsafe or unhealthful working conditions in compliance with 29 CFR 1960, Subpart D, Inspection and Abatement, and as appropriate, with the provisions outlined in ARS Manual 230.0 and other codes and regulations.

**Purpose of Inspections** The primary purpose of inspections is to discover conditions which, upon correction, will result in a safer place to work. They assist personnel in determining what safeguards are necessary to eliminate or otherwise remove hazards before accidents, personal injuries/illnesses, and/or environmental exposure/releases occur.

**Who Conducts Inspections** A representative(s) of the official in charge of the workplace shall conduct inspections annually. It may be helpful to include Safety Committee members, the Location Radiation Safety Officer, and/or the Biological Safety Officer in the inspection. Personnel shall have sufficient technical competence and equipment necessary to conduct thorough inspections. During the inspection, inspector(s) shall enlist employees help to identify and eliminate potentially hazardous conditions.

**Inspection Checklist** This checklist is comprised of 4 major sections as follows:

- Section I . . . Safety Management
- Section II . . . Occupational Health
- Section III . . . Industrial Hygiene
- Section IV . . . Environmental Management

Reference standards are provided for most questions listed in the checklist. If the inspector(s) encounter questions or terms they do not understand, they can look up the reference standard. If they cannot locate the standard, they should seek guidance from their Collateral Duty Safety Officer, Location Safety Officer, Safety Committee, Location Radiation Safety Officer, Biological Safety Officer, Environmental Protection Specialist, or Area Safety and Health Manager.

This checklist serves as a guideline that encompasses a broad range of safety, health and environmental issues. Consequently, not all questions are applicable to each facility. Ideally, each facility would have a "tailor made" checklist applicable to that particular facility. Also, because the safety, health and environmental program covers such a broad scope, the questions listed herein are not all-inclusive nor are they intended as such.

**Instructions** Utilizing the checklist as a guideline, the inspector(s) should conduct inspections of all workplaces at least annually to identify deficiencies that require corrective action (i.e., abatement). When deficiencies are identified, it should be recorded on either Form 001a or Form 0000, "ARS Safety Deficiency/Abatement Notice," or the equivalent. The inspector(s) can choose which form best serves them or, use their own equivalent form. The inspector(s) should complete all information on the form except the abatement section(s). The form must then be posted at or near the deficiency until it is corrected. Once corrected, the supervisor responsible for the corrective action should complete the abatement section and provide a copy back to the inspector.

Deficiencies should be abated within 30 calendar days. If the deficiency cannot be abated within 30 calendar days, an abatement plan should be written explaining the circumstances of the delay, a proposed timetable for abatement, and a summary of interim steps being taken to protect employees from injury as a result of the unsafe or unhealthful working condition.

Records of Safety, Health, and Environmental Inspections should be maintained for five years.