Violence in the Work Place Policy Question and Answer

Posted: 07/02/2007

Question:
Why must a contractor’s safety and health plan include procedures to deal with distraught, emotionally disturbed, and/or homeless persons?

Answer:
Violence in the work place (procedures dealing with distraught, emotionally disturbed, and/or homeless persons) is a safety and health concern that every work place must address.

Background Information:
Department policy requires a work environment free from behavior that intentionally threatens, attempts to, or inflicts physical or psychological harm on others, as well as non-contact actions such as, invasion of personal space, menacing or stalking. This policy does not tolerate violence or threats of violence in the workplace. Department policy does require all employees to immediately report incidents and behavior, which they believe may lead to acts of violence to their supervisor. Incidents of threatening, intimidating, or violent behavior on construction work sites may include residents objecting to construction activity such as, removing a tree or plant, confrontation of curb cut location, motorist continuously sounding the horn while waiting for a flagger, persons throwing objects at workers, domestic violence confrontation at the work site, and displaced persons objecting to construction activities at a work site. Supervisors and managers are required to take prompt action to defuse the activity, by immediate separation, and/or contact local police authorities, if it is believed the situation presents immediate or imminent danger.

While there is a policy for our Department personnel, our contracting community must also have a policy to deal with workplace violence. Therefore, Standard Specification 107-05B has been amended to ensure that our contracting community has included procedures to address distraught, emotionally disturbed, and/or homeless persons in their project safety and health plan.