

**EBOOK**

# THE ELEMENTS OF A SAFE, EFFICIENT LOADING DOCK

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## WHAT DO SAFE LOADING DOCKS LOOK LIKE?

Maintaining a safe loading dock is essential, as both a potential risk center and a bottleneck in the supply chain. There are challenges to making these high-traffic, fast-paced spaces safer. Everything passes through the loading dock, and activity in this area is faster than ever in today's automation-heavy companies.

Risk factors on the loading dock could include the following:

- » The space may not have been set up correctly when the facility was initially built
- » Equipment could have degraded with time or use, or might have always been unsuitable for its usage pattern
- » There may be a failure of training or policies around the loading dock

Creating a safe, efficient loading dock and warehouse means overcoming these challenges.

# SETTING UP YOUR LOADING DOCK FOR SAFETY AND EFFICIENCY

Creating a safe loading dock involves selecting, installing and maintaining suitable equipment to fulfill every requirement. Essential assets categories to account for include:

- » **Safety railings** to lessen the chance of falls from elevation and to segregate pedestrian and vehicle traffic
- » **Loading dock levelers and lifts** capable of handling appropriate weight requirements
- » **Loading dock bumpers** to prevent damage from misaligned trucks
- » **Trailer restraints** for reliable safety during loading and unloading
- » **High-speed doors** to enable efficient employee movement and help preserve environmental conditions
- » **Commercial doors** with adequate security features to guard against intrusions
- » **Control panels** to automate operations and collect internet of things data that helps with predictive analytics

This equipment should be frequently assessed for its suitability for purpose as well as its present status and overall age. Dealing with potential issues proactively limits the risk of a harmful or costly breakdown or accident occurring.

## KEEPING THE AREA SAFE AND SECURE

Possessing suitable and well-maintained loading dock equipment, from trailer restraints and loading dock levelers to commercial doors and beyond, is one step in maintaining safety and security. As a facility operator, you should also take the time to ensure the space is being used correctly. This means:



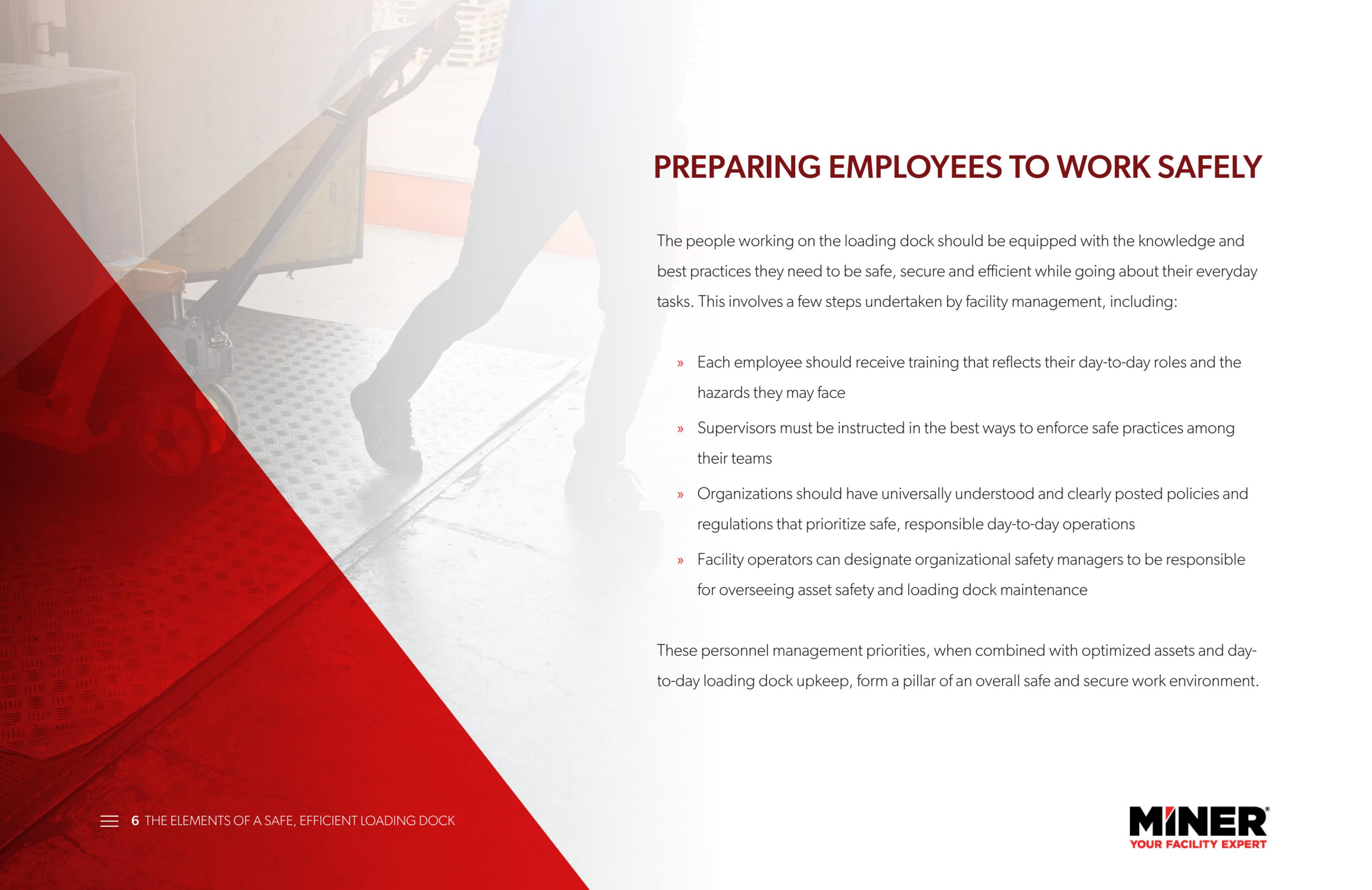
Periodic inspections will determine whether the loading dock area is operating as intended, for instance with clear lanes for movement and no clutter causing potential impediments for personnel or vehicles



These inspections must be carried out regularly, with security concerns documented and tracked over time to protect against recurrence and ensure progress



In addition to safety, inspections can encompass facility security — ensuring the premises cannot be penetrated by intruders due to open or unlocked doors



## PREPARING EMPLOYEES TO WORK SAFELY

The people working on the loading dock should be equipped with the knowledge and best practices they need to be safe, secure and efficient while going about their everyday tasks. This involves a few steps undertaken by facility management, including:

- » Each employee should receive training that reflects their day-to-day roles and the hazards they may face
- » Supervisors must be instructed in the best ways to enforce safe practices among their teams
- » Organizations should have universally understood and clearly posted policies and regulations that prioritize safe, responsible day-to-day operations
- » Facility operators can designate organizational safety managers to be responsible for overseeing asset safety and loading dock maintenance

These personnel management priorities, when combined with optimized assets and day-to-day loading dock upkeep, form a pillar of an overall safe and secure work environment.

# BEING PROACTIVE TO CREATE SAFE CONDITIONS

To bring loading dock safety into the present, automation-heavy workplace, personnel can take advantage of specialized technology. A tracking application used by safety managers, coupled with a structured approach to information collection and use, can enable a culture of safety and security.

This digital tracking method involves:

- » Keeping up-to-date data on each asset's suitability for its purpose, age and state of repair
- » Updating that information regularly for each loading dock in the facility
- » Performing independent assessments of safety factors such as traffic flow, safety barriers and storage

Safety personnel have to be able to both update and access their data on-site for maximum efficiency — this makes a cloud-based system accessible through smart devices the ideal model for loading dock safety tracking.

**With the use of electronic evidence, data collection, and raising OSHA awareness, SafeCHECK is a must have resource, please reach out to your Miner Facility experts today.**

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