



**HEALTH, SAFETY,
& ENVIRONMENTAL**



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20-20-20 Observations: More Than Hazard Recognition

In our work environments, it's easy to become focused solely on the task in front of us. As work progresses, conditions change, distractions arise, and complacency can set in. That's why the 20-20-20 observation is such a great tool for maintaining situational awareness and preventing incidents.

What Is a 20-20-20 Observation?

This is a simple safety practice that encourages everyone to periodically stop and reassess the work environment.

Every 20 minutes, take 20 seconds to observe at least 20 feet around, above, and below you.

This brief **Safety Pause** allows you to identify developing hazards, verify that controls remain effective, evaluate changing conditions, and refocus on the task at hand. It can be the difference between completing the job safely and missing a critical hazard.

More Than Hazard Recognition: A Chance to Reset Your Focus

One of the most valuable benefits of a 20-20-20 observation is the opportunity to mentally reset and reconnect with the task. As work becomes routine, our minds drift in "autopilot" mode. When this happens, complacency sets in, we overlook hazards, miss changes in conditions, or become distracted by other activities around us.

Taking 20 seconds, every 20 minutes helps us:

- Refocus on the task
- Reevaluate hazards and exposures
- Verify that controls remain in place
- Recognize changes in the work environment
- Reduce complacency and distractions
- Improve overall situational awareness

Ask Yourself:

- Am I still fully focused on the task?
- Have conditions changed since I started?
- Am I rushing or taking shortcuts?
- Are the controls identified in the JSEA still effective?
- Is there anything that requires my attention before I continue?

Look for More Than Physical Hazards

During your observation, look beyond the task and evaluate the entire work environment.

Physical Hazards:

- Slip, trip and fall hazards
- Line-of-fire exposures
- Suspended loads and dropped object risks
- Equipment or vehicle movement
- Housekeeping issues
- Damaged tools or equipment
- Changes in weather or environment
- Energy isolation issues

Human Factors:

- Fatigue
- Distractions
- Rushing
- Complacency
- Stress
- Heat stress
- Reduced situational awareness
- Changes in physical or mental condition

While conducting your 20-20-20 observation, take a moment to assess heat stress, your own condition and your coworkers. Heat stress can develop gradually and may not be recognized by the person experiencing it. A quick check-in, and reminder to hydrate could prevent a heat-related illness from becoming a medical emergency.

L.I.F.E. in Action:

When you recognize hazards, verify controls, reset your focus, assess your physical condition, check on your coworkers, speak up when something doesn't look right, and take action to prevent an incident...you're living the principles of L.I.F.E.

Key Takeaway:

A 20-second pause every 20 minutes can prevent a lifetime consequence.

Observe the Work. Refocus on the Task. Protect the People. See it. Own it. Act on it.

Proper use of the **GIS LIFE Processes** can help to create a **FAIL-SAFE** Work Environment

SAFETY ALERT

