Abstract

This work has identified diverse situations that could cause injury and illness, and even death, among workers, giving rise to the reiterative presence of occupational hazards that have been and continue to be the object of varied interpretations and intervention approaches, depending upon the evolution of concepts of health and work. In this sense, “the history of humanity is intimately related to that of attempts to remedy illness and avoid death” (Ballesteros s/f, 1). This article summarizes, from an analytical perspective, the chronological development that occupational hazards prevention has undergone, considering its intervention scenarios in the organizational world. In general, ancient and modern societies have been indifferent to the health and safety of workers. The first significant approach began during the Second World War, when the importance of focusing on the health of the working population became evident in order to satisfy the needs for production at defense industry companies as well as due to actions by workers’ organizations. As a result, and until the present, there has been a rapid development in this field of knowledge, in both the technical and administrative realms, and in recent years the integration of occupational hazards prevention with the structure and operation of the organizations. This is particularly due to the fact that it has been the entrepreneurs who have generally determined working conditions.

Keywords

Occupational health, occupational hazards, management, safety and health in the workplace, safety and health management in the workplace.