# Toolbox Talk - Hazard Error and Control

Todd Jerome Jenkins | v2.0 | October 13, 2026 | 5–10 minutes plus field checks

## What and why

Shared safety language connects what can cause harm, a possible unintended action, and the protection the task needs. When someone says the job is safe, what have they checked? Shared language helps a crew explain the exposure, the action that could go wrong, and the protection needed.

Objective: Describe one hazard, one possible error and one protective control, then identify evidence that the control meets its requirements.

## When and where

Before a JHA/JSA discussion or whenever people use the same safety word differently. At any briefing point, from an office to a workshop or field location.

## How to use it

- Name the source of harm, exposed people and task step. Describe a possible unintended action without labeling the worker.
- Identify conditions that could invite that action. Explain what the control does and what it cannot do.
- Agree the governing requirement, responsible verifier and evidence needed before exposure. A reminder cannot replace required protection.

## Verify It in the Field

On paper, sort three statements: moving cart, wrong route selection, and approved separation arrangement. Explain their different roles.

For real work, find the control criterion and safe checking method in the applicable source. Assign the authorized checker.

Review the actual result and time. A planned or installed control still needs its required verification; record unresolved evidence as HOLD.

## Failure points and stop triggers

Vague labels such as unsafe or careless; treating a reminder as physical protection; confusing a planned check with a completed check; assuming another person verified the control. Hold the affected step when the hazard or required protection is unclear, evidence is missing, or a control fails its criterion. Keep people out of exposure.

## Toolbox talk questions

1. What can cause harm in our example, and to whom?

2. What could make the intended action difficult or confusing?

3. What evidence supports the control we are relying on?

Use the separate supervisor field check and attendance sheet. Practice is not qualification or work authorization.

Source: DOE-HDBK-1028-2009, Vol. 2, printed pp. 128–130. References and task-specific limits on the webpage.

Next step: Apply this skill to one step on the free JHA/JSA field-verification worksheet.

Expanded guidance and separate forms: toddjeromejenkins.com/toolbox-talks/hazard-error-control-shared-safety-language

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