Toolbox Talk - Resolving Schedule and Safety Conflicts

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

What and why

This skill makes a conflict between requested timing and required protection explicit so a responsible leader can resolve it. A crew can hear “follow the plan” and “finish before the shutdown ends” when both are no longer possible. Leave that conflict unnamed and workers must solve it informally.

Objective: Raise a specific schedule conflict and verify the leader’s decision preserves required protection.

When and where

As soon as the planned timing no longer allows the required checks, resources or protection. Where production requests meet actual work, including field tasks and service deadlines.

How to use it

- State the task, required protection and conflicting deadline. Workers can report a problem without solving the whole schedule.
- Have the responsible leader approve a feasible change to scope, sequence, resources or timing. Preserve required protection.
- Communicate what proceeds and what waits to every affected requester. Rebrief after the decision.

Verify It in the Field

Use a paper schedule with release before its required review. Ask the leader to make a concrete decision that resolves the conflict.

Confirm that the actual revised arrangement supplies the promised support and reaches affected teams. A new date alone may not resolve the cause.

Verify required controls through their governing criteria and safe methods before exposure. Record results, restrictions and release authority.

Failure points and stop triggers

Conflicting instructions; compressed checks; unavailable support; silent scope changes; workers blamed for delay; a revised date that leaves the same conflict. Hold affected exposure when deadline instructions conflict with required protection, responsibility is disputed or promised support is absent. Escalate through the site process.

Toolbox talk questions

1. Which requirement and deadline conflict today?
2. What concrete decision removes that conflict?
3. Who confirms the revised arrangement works?

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

Source: DOE-HDBK-1028-2009, Vol. 1, printed pp. 4-12–4-13. 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/schedule-pressure-safety-plan-conflict

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