

Safety & Health Program Best Practices

The best Safety and Health Programs involve every level of the organization, instilling a safety culture that reduces accidents for workers and improves the bottom line for managers.

Common characteristics of a safety and health culture:

- Management believes that safety and health on the job is as important a company goal as other organizational objectives, such as cost control, quality, and productivity
- Individuals within the organization believe they have a right to a safe and healthy workplace
- Each person accepts personal responsibility for ensuring his or her own safety and health
- Everyone believes he or she has a duty to protect the safety and health of others

Management must be committed to safety and health protection as much as other organizational purposes.

Management leadership and employee involvement are tied together because one is not effective without the other. A plant manager can be totally committed, but if employees follow blindly or are not involved, problems will only temporarily be solved.

Effective worker safety and health programs:

- Reduce work related injuries and illnesses
- Improve morale and productivity
- Reduce workers' compensation costs
- Include these four elements:
 - Management commitment and employee involvement
 - Worksite analysis
 - Hazard prevention and control
 - Safety and health training

Policy and Goals:

- Clearly state a worksite safety and health policy
- Establish and communicate a clear goal and objective for the safety and health program
- Involve top management in implementing the program

Safety & Health Written Program Checklist

- Incident Reporting & Investigation Procedures
- Written Program for Hazard Communication
- List of Hazardous Chemicals
- Material Safety Data Sheets, Organized and Readily Accessible to Employees
- Written PPE Hazard Assessment Certification
- Written Program and Supporting Documentation for Specialized PPE needs, including Bloodborne Pathogens, Hearing Conservation, Respiratory Protection
- Written Electrical Safety Program, with NFPA 70(E) Arc Flash Requirements
- Written Lockout/Tagout Program
- Equipment Specific Lockout/Tagout Procedures
- Documentation of Annual Audit of Lockout/Tagout Program
- Documentation of Preventive Maintenance Activities, Emphasis on Mechanical Presses
- Written Confined Space Program
- Facility Specific Confined Space Procedures & Permits
- Documentation of Lifting Equipment Inspections
- Cleaning/Sanitation Procedures
- Standard Work Instructions

Safety and health programs, procedures, manuals are intended to be dynamic documents.

Establish controls to review all aspects at least annually.

Define procedures to communicate and properly train as new hazards, equipment, changes are introduced into the work area.

Encourage reporting of near-miss incidents.

Implement systems to ensure corrective actions are researched and followed through to resolution.