MODULE EIGHT

Safety and Health Programs

Learning Objective:

Upon completion of this unit you will be able to identify the necessary components of a successful safety and health program applicable to your operation.

Learner Outcomes:

1. Identify the major elements of an effective safety and health program.
2. Determine where employee involvement can be incorporated in order to encourage commitment to safety.
3. Explain the duties of the person responsible for a safety and health program.
4. List resources available to complete a comprehensive survey when developing safety and health programs.
5. Describe important aspects of safety and health inspections in order to implement an inspection program.
6. Differentiate between the 3 types of controls used to prevent and control hazards.
7. Identify which workers must be trained and their specific training needs.

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Effective Safety and Health Programs

Safety and health programs are recommended for all dairy farm operations but, at this point, are voluntary. The best Safety and Health Programs involve every level of the organization, instilling a safety culture that reduces incidents for workers and increases profits for the operation.

Accidents are more expensive than most people realize because of the hidden costs. Some costs are obvious — for example, Workers' Compensation claims which cover medical costs for an injured or ill worker. These are the direct costs of accidents but this is just the tip of the iceberg.

What about the hidden or indirect costs of accidents?

- Training and pay for additional worker
- Repair of damaged property
- Time investigating the accident
- Pain and quality of life for the injured worker
- Decreased morale

Major elements

- Management commitments and employee involvement
- Worksite analysis
- Hazard prevention and control
- Safety and health training

Common characteristics of an effective safety and health program

- 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.

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Management Commitment and Employee Involvement

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 dairy manager can be totally committed, but if employees follow blindly or are not involved, problems will only temporarily be solved.

Management commitment: provides motivation and resources

Employee involvement: allows workers to develop and express commitment to safety and health.

Policy and goals

The worksite safety and health policy must be clearly stated.

Goals and objectives for the safety and health program must be established and communicated.

Top management must be involved in implementing the program.

Employee involvement

Employees must commit to safety and health protection for themselves and fellow workers. Encourage employees to get involved in the program and in decisions that affect their safety and health.

Examples where employee involvement is beneficial:

- inspection or hazard analysis teams
- developing or revising safe work rules
- training new hires or co-workers
- assisting in accident investigations

Responsibility

Whoever is responsible for the safety and health program must:

- have authority and resources
- have the assurance that managers, supervisors, and employees will be held accountable for safety
- review program at least annually to evaluate identify deficiencies and revise as needed

Worksite Analysis

Management must provide the resources and authority so all employees can find the hazards in the worksite and, once found, eliminate or control those hazards.

Comprehensive survey

A comprehensive baseline survey for safety and health should be conducted on the worksite.

Some tools and resources that may be helpful include:

Job Hazard Analysis (JHA)

This involves studying and recording each step of a job, identifying existing or potential job hazards and determining the best way to perform the job to reduce or eliminate hazards. Jobs that were initially designed to be safe may change over time so they have hazards or require unsafe operations. Job safety analysis should form a base for the comprehensive survey. It includes analyzing planned and new facilities, processes, materials, and equipment.

-- See Publication #3071, Job Hazard Analysis

OSHA's consultation service

For small businesses, OSHA-funded, state-run consultation services can conduct a comprehensive survey at no cost. Many workers' compensation carriers and other insurance companies offer expert services to help their clients evaluate safety and health hazards. Larger businesses may find the needed expertise at the company or corporate level.

-- See www.osha.gov/oshprogs/consult.html for more information

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Farm hygiene survey

At a minimum, all chemicals and hazardous materials on the farm should be inventoried and reviewed for hazards. For many operations, a survey of noise levels, a review of the personal protection equipment (i.e. respirators) and a review of ergonomic risk factors are needed. In some cases it may also be appropriate to perform air quality monitoring.

WisCon

The Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene WisCon Program — a part of the University of Wisconsin-Madison — in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Labor currently offers on-site consultation services to assist Wisconsin employers in meeting the obligations and responsibilities covered under the federal Occupational Safety and Health Act.

- See http://www.slh.wisc.edu/wiscon/ for more information

Internal safety and health assessments

Routine internal site safety and health assessments are designed to catch hazards missed at other stages. This type of assessment should be done at regular intervals, generally on a weekly basis. In addition, procedures should be established that provide a daily assessment of the work area.

You can use a checklist already developed or make your own, based on:

- Past problems
- Standards that apply to the dairy industry
- Input from everyone involved
- Your farm's safety practices or rules

Provide a reliable system for employees to:

- Notify management about apparent hazardous conditions
- Receive timely and appropriate responses
- Have no fear of reprisal

Important things to remember about assessments are:

- Assessments should cover every part of the worksite
- They should be done at regular intervals
- In-house assessors should be trained to recognize and control hazards
- Identified hazards should be tracked to correction

Information from assessments should be used to improve the hazard prevention and control program.

Additional worksite analysis

It is important to investigate or analyze incidents and "near miss" incidents so their causes and means for prevention are identified.

Six key questions should be answered in the accident investigation and report:

1. Who?
2. What?
3. When?
4. Where?
5. Why?
6. How?

Thorough interviews with all involved are necessary. The primary purpose of the investigation is to prevent future occurrences. Therefore, the results of the investigation should be used to initiate corrective action.

Review of the OSHA injury and illness forms is the most common form of pattern analysis, but other records of hazards can be analyzed for patterns. Examples are inspection records, workers' compensation claims, and employee hazard reporting records.

Hazard Prevention and Control

- Start by determining that a hazard or potential hazard exists
- Where feasible, prevent hazards by effective design or job or job site
- If hazard cannot be eliminated use hazard controls
- Eliminate or control hazards in a timely manner

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One online tool that may be helpful in identifying hazards for your operation is the OSHA Safety & Health Management Systems eCat. This eCAT (electronic Compliance Assistance Tool) will help you review and evaluate key aspects of your Safety and Health Program, if you have one. If you do not have one, it could help you think about elements of a good program. It is straightforward and very easy to use.

OSHA invites you to try out this tool, and welcomes your comments and suggestions.

http://www.osha-slc.gov/SLTC/safetyhealth_ecat/index.html

Controlling the hazards

There are many options that can be utilized to prevent and control hazards.

Engineering controls

Where feasible and appropriate, the first and best strategy is to control the hazard at its source. Engineering controls do this, unlike other controls that generally focus on the employee exposed to the hazard. The basic concept is that the work environment and the job itself should be designed to eliminate hazards or reduce exposure to hazards.

Administrative controls

Includes exercise breaks and rotation of workers. These types of controls are normally used in conjunction with other controls.

Personal protective equipment

PPE is a supplementary method of control via clothing or equipment when hazard exposure cannot be engineered completely out, and when other forms of control cannot provide sufficient additional protection. Remember, PPE is the last level of control!

Safe work practices

Include your company's general workplace rules and other operation-specific rules. For example, even when a hazard is enclosed, exposure can occur when maintenance is necessary.

Hazard prevention planning

To prevent hazards or potential incidents it is important to:

- Maintain the facility and the equipment
- Work on emergency planning with training and drills as needed
- Assure there is first aid and medical care available nearby

Safety and Health Training

Training is the backbone of this system. For management to lead, for employees to analyze the worksite for hazards, and for hazards to be eliminated or controlled, everyone involved must be trained. The scope of the training depends on the size and complexity of the worksite and the hazards involved.

Who needs training?

- Target new hires, contract workers, employees who wear PPE and workers in high risk areas. Managers and supervisors should also be included in the training plan.
- Manager training should emphasize their important role in visibly supporting the safety and health program and setting a good example.
- Supervisor training should cover company policies and procedures, hazard detection and control, accident investigation, handling of emergencies, and how to train and reinforce training.
- Long-term workers who have job changes as a result of new processes or materials.
- The entire workforce needs periodic refresher training in responding to emergencies.

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Safety and health orientation

Safety and health orientation is important so that employees understand the hazards they may be exposed to and how to prevent harm to themselves and others.

Supervisor responsibilities

Managers must understand their safety and health responsibilities, as described under the Management Commitment and Employee Involvement element of the guidelines.

- Analyze work to identify potential hazards in area of responsibility
- Maintain physical protections in work areas
- Reinforce employee training through performance feedback and, if needed, enforcement of safe work practices.

Specific training needs

- Hazard recognition
- Training required in standards
- Emergency response
- Accident investigation
- Emergency drills

Summary

Effective worker safety and health programs:

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

For more information:

- See OSHA's Voluntary Safety and Health Program Management Guidelines. Federal Register (1989, January 26), (54 FR 3904).

It is available at the OSHA technical link for Safety and Health Programs at www.osha.gov.

Review:

1. What are some of the hidden costs a dairy farm might incur from an incident? _____

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2. What are the four main components of an effective health and safety program? _____

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