



Westlake Lake Charles South Facility Graduates from OSHA Challenge Program

Westlake is proud of who we are - a responsible manufacturer and global supplier of chemicals, polymers and building products. Our mission is to serve our customers by safely and reliably providing quality and sustainable products and services that enhance people's lives every day. Westlake works to align the interests of our global customers and suppliers with those of our shareholders, employees and the communities in which we operate. Safety and a vigilant stewardship of the environment is at the forefront of everything we do.

The Westlake Lake Charles South facility, located near Lake Charles, Louisiana, entered into the OSHA Challenge Program in February of 2013 with the goal of improving the facility's health and management system using VPP requirements as a standard. The facility commissioned several teams consisting of hourly and salary workers to evaluate and improve the site's safety and health management systems throughout the 3 stages of OSHA Challenge. Throughout this process, the site pressed through two separate ownership changes, and multiple leadership and team member transitions to create sustainable health and safety management system practices that meet the OSHA Challenge requirements.

Much of the site's success is attributable to the OSHA Challenge program, which allows the site to work with a third-party Challenge Coordinator that helps to evaluate management system practices and give guidance to facility personnel on safety and health management system best practices. The experience and mentorship from Cindy Lewis, the OSHA Challenge Coordinator that shepherded the facility through the OSHA Challenge process from day one, was a key contributor to the facility's success.

"Cindy helped to keep us honest. The program is aptly named, with Cindy truly challenging us to improve through each stage," said Mike Guidry, one of Lake Charles South's safety professionals and VPP Coordinators. Ricky Sullivan, the Union OSHA Coordinator at Lake Charles South, added "we started out as a sixty-five-year-old chemical plant with a safety culture in need of improvement. Through three company changes, four plant managers, two safety managers and nine years in the challenge program, our Challenge Coordinator, Cindy, was as dedicated to our success as we were. She helped us to get the management and hourly personnel buy-in necessary to make the changes needed to be a Star-quality facility. OSHA Challenge was the best option for us, and helped us improve and sustain our systems from start to finish."

One of the keystones of a successful health and safety management system is employee involvement and participation. The site utilizes Area Safety Teams (ASTs) made up of hourly and salary personnel to help address health and safety issues in their respective areas and to perform routine self-inspections. The Lake Charles South facility utilized OSHA Challenge to help develop a robust routine self-inspection program using the site's EHS database to allow ASTs to perform these routine self-inspections digitally with tablet computers, which helps the site track completion of inspections and with hazard correction

tracking of the findings that result from these inspections. The quality of inspections has increased, with hazard correction tracking becoming a strength rather than a weakness of the health and safety management system.



In December of 2022, the Westlake Lake Charles South facility received recognition from OSHA for successfully completing all 3 stages of the OSHA Challenge Program. The site has entered their application for VPP Star, the next milestone the facility is hoping to achieve in their journey towards zero incidents and EHS excellence.

Submitted by: Michael Guidry, VPP Coordinator, Westlake and Cindy Lewis, Challenge Administrator, Cindy Lewis, Challenge Administrator, Fay W. Boozman College of Public Health University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences