



Starting a Safety Committee

Guidelines for Success

Appoint a Chairperson or Leader:

- ⇒ This person must display leadership skills such as organization, dedication, excellent working knowledge of the company and respect from other members.

Diverse Membership:

- ⇒ The committee should be comprised of an equal number of management and non-management employees that represent all areas within the company such as manufacturing, maintenance, shipping/receiving and office personnel. Limiting the size of the committee to 4 – 12 members will help keep meetings moving and to allow for everyone to be involved. These members should have knowledge of company operations, safety hazards, possess a strong teamwork attitude and be able to effect change within the company's safety program.

Effective Meetings:

- ⇒ Meetings should be scheduled at least monthly with a planned agenda and last no more than 1 hour. Limiting meetings to 1 hour keeps things moving and the agenda on track. In addition, it limits the time employees must spend away from their daily job duties.

Set an Agenda:

- ⇒ The agenda of a meeting may vary, but typical ones include a record of attendance, review of recent accidents/injuries, unfinished or new business, safety inspection reports, special projects and/or presentations.

Document the Committee's Efforts:

- ⇒ A written record of the meeting's proceedings should be prepared by the committee's designated secretary. Previous month's meeting minutes should be discussed at each meeting, as well as any follow-up actions from the meetings. Meeting minutes should be distributed to all members, posted for all company employees to read, as well as sent to key management personnel. Maximum benefit will be obtained by publicizing the committee's efforts. Those benefits include increased safety awareness and keeping employees and management updated on the progress of the committee.

Safety Committee Duties and Functions

Conduct Periodic Safety Inspections:

- ⇒ Inspections should not only include production areas, but should cover offices, warehouse areas and the outside of the facility. Document unsafe conditions by taking digital pictures of the situation. The photo should then be shared at the monthly meeting, as well as stored in an electronically shared folder for future reference.

Assessing Injuries:

- ⇒ Review the causes and circumstances of accidents/injuries and suggest corrective action.

Training Employees:

- ⇒ Keep employees informed by posting information on the company's intranet site, disseminating information at employee meetings and conducting training sessions.

Periodic Reviews:

- ⇒ Review existing company safety policies and develop new ones.

Gathering Employee Input:

- ⇒ Listen to suggestions by employees, report them to the committee and make appropriate recommendations to management.

Getting Management Involved:

- ⇒ Offering suggestions to management for the improvement of the safety program.

Creating Employee Awareness:

- ⇒ Observe unsafe conditions or work practices, and report them to the committee, supervisors and/or management.