Elements of an Effective Safety and Health Program

Voluntary Safety and Health Program Management Guidelines

Wholesale and Retail Trade Sector
Healthy Workplaces
Effective Safety and Health Programs

- It has been found that effective management of worker safety and health programs
  - Reduces the extent and severity of work related injuries and illnesses
  - Improves employee morale and productivity
  - Reduces workers’ compensation costs
Common Characteristics of Exemplary Workplaces

- Use of organized and systematic methods to
  - Assign responsibility to managers, supervisors, and employees
  - Inspect regularly for and control hazards
  - Orient and train all employees to eliminate or avoid hazards
The Guidelines - General

- An effective program
  - Includes provisions for systematic identification, evaluation and prevention or control of hazards
  - Goes beyond specific requirements of the law to address all hazards

- Written program
  - “In writing” less important than its effectiveness
  - As size and complexity of worksite or process increases, so does need for written guidance
Major Elements

- An effective occupational safety and health program will include the following four elements
  - Management commitment and employee involvement
  - Worksite analysis
  - Hazard prevention and control
  - Safety and health training
Management Commitment and Employee Involvement

- Management commitment and employee involvement are complementary.
- Management commitment provides the motivating force and resources for organizing and controlling activities within an organization.
- Employee involvement provides the means through which workers develop and express their own commitment to safety and health protection.
Management Commitment and Employee Involvement (cont’d)

Recommended Actions:

- State clearly a worksite safety and health policy
- Establish and communicate a clear goal and objective for the safety and health program
- Provide visible top management involvement in implementing the program
Management Commitment and Employee Involvement (cont’d)

Recommended Actions:

- Encourage employee involvement in the program and in decisions that affect their safety and health (e.g., inspection or hazard analysis teams; developing or revising safe work rules; training new hires or co-workers; assisting in accident investigations)
- Assign and communicate responsibility for all aspects of the program
Management Commitment and Employee Involvement (cont’d)

**Recommended Actions:**
- Provide adequate authority and resources to responsible parties
- Hold managers, supervisors, and employees accountable for meeting their responsibilities
- Review program operations at least annually, to evaluate, identify deficiencies, and revise, as needed
Worksite Analysis

- Worksite analysis involves a variety of worksite examinations, to identify not only existing hazards, but also conditions and operations where changes might occur to create hazards.

- Effective management actively analyzes the work and the worksite to anticipate and prevent harmful occurrences.
Recommended Actions:

- So that all hazards are identified
  - Conduct comprehensive baseline and periodic surveys for safety and health
  - Analyze planned and new facilities, processes, materials, and equipment
  - Perform routine job hazard analyses
Worksite Analysis (cont’d)

Recommended Actions:

- Provide for regular site safety and health inspections
- Provide a reliable system for employees, without fear of reprisal, to notify management about apparent hazardous conditions and to receive timely and appropriate responses
Worksite Analysis (cont’d)

Recommended Actions:

- Provide for investigation of accidents and “near miss” incidents, so that their causes and means for prevention are identified.
- Analyze injury and illness trends over time, so that patterns with common causes can be identified and prevented.
Hazard Prevention and Control

- Triggered by a determination that a hazard or potential hazard exists
- Where feasible, prevent hazards by effective design of job or job site
- Where elimination is not feasible, control hazards to prevent unsafe and unhealthful exposure
- Elimination or control must be accomplished in a timely manner
Hazard Prevention and Control
(cont’d)

Recommended Actions:

- Establish procedures for timely correction or control of hazards, including
  - Engineering techniques, where feasible and appropriate
  - Procedures for safe work which are understood and followed as a result of training, positive reinforcement, correction of unsafe performance, and enforcement
  - Provision of personal protective equipment
  - Administrative controls
Hazard Prevention and Control (cont’d)

Recommended Actions:

- Provide for facility and equipment maintenance
- Plan and prepare for emergencies
  - Training and drills, as needed
- Establish a medical program
  - First aid on site
  - Physician and emergency care nearby
Safety and Health Training

- Addresses the safety and health responsibilities of all personnel, whether salaried or hourly
- Most effective when incorporated into other training about performance requirements and job practices
- Complexity depends on size and complexity of worksite and nature of hazards
Safety and Health Training (cont’d)

Recommended Actions:

- Ensure that all employees understand the hazards to which they may be exposed and how to prevent harm to themselves and others from exposure to these hazards.
Recommended Actions:

- Ensure that supervisors carry out their safety and health responsibilities, including
  - Analyzing the work under their supervision to identify unrecognized potential hazards
  - Maintaining physical protections in work areas
  - Reinforcing employee training through continual performance feedback and, if needed, enforcement of safe work practices
Safety and Health Training (cont’d)

Recommended Actions:

- Ensure that managers understand their safety and health responsibilities, as described under the Management Commitment and Employee Involvement element of the guidelines.