

## **Tips For An Effective Safety Committee**

Safety committees can be a very important part of an employer's safety program. A safety committee can also be an enormous waste of time and a source of frustration for management if not properly implemented. It is not unusual for an organization to establish a safety committee only to have it "die" after a period of time due to lack of interest, hostility, and failure of management buy in to it. This does not have to happen!

If your organization has a safety program or is thinking about developing one; forming a safety committee is a great first step towards achieving the goal of providing a workplace environment that is safe for employees and the general public.

How do you create a safety committee? Generally, membership should be voluntary. The committee should represent a mixture of departments and should not be comprised solely of management. If all levels of employees are allowed to participate, there is a greater likelihood that the committee will be accepted by the organization as a whole. The committee should have a chairperson, usually a Safety Director or Coordinator. Here are some general goals of a safety committee:

1. Involve employees in safety programs.
2. Lower the frequency and severity of accidents and injuries.
3. Maintain a safe environment for employees and visitors.

To achieve goals, a safety committee should do the following:

1. Develop a safety program and work to effectively train all employees on the program.
2. Serve as a safety review board for all incidents, and recommend safety measures that will help prevent similar occurrences in the future.
3. Establish a procedure for reporting hazardous conditions or activities.
4. Conduct facility and/or premises inspections to identify and correct unsafe conditions before they create an incident.
5. Coordinate and assure that evacuation and shelter-in-place drills are being conducted.
6. Assure that first aid kits and personal protective equipment needs are met.
7. Develop and conduct safety orientation training for new employees.

Most importantly, the safety committee should meet monthly at a set time with a set agenda. A good way to have an unsuccessful safety committee is to constantly change the time, day, and agenda of the meeting. By holding the meetings at the same time and day of the month, safety committee members can plan ahead and be ready for the meeting as it will become a part of their normal routine.

In conclusion, by forming a safety committee that is diverse; has set goals, functions and duties and meets routinely, an organization can expect to have a successful safety committee and perhaps a safer workplace environment for the employees and the general public. So, if your organization does not have a safety committee, or has a safety committee that is ineffective, try using these tips to help yourself!

### **Reference:**

Sherman, Z. Larry. Tips For An Effective Safety & Health Committee,

*“Managing Risk for Loss Prevention and Cost Control”.*