Safety and Health Management System Guidelines

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Safety and Health Management System Guidelines

(a) **General.**

(1) Employers are advised and encouraged to institute and maintain in their establishments a program which provides systematic policies, procedures, and practices that are adequate to recognize and protect their employees from occupational safety and health hazards.

(2) An effective program includes provisions for the systematic identification, evaluation, and prevention or control of general workplace hazards, specific job hazards, and potential hazards which may arise from foreseeable conditions.

(3) Although compliance with the law, including specific OSHA standards, is an important objective, and effective program looks beyond specific requirements of law to address all hazards. It will seek to prevent injuries and illnesses, whether or not compliance is at issue.

(4) The extent to which the program is described in writing is less important then how effective it is in practice. As the size of a worksite or the complexity of a hazardous operation increases, however, the need for written guidance increases to ensure clear communications of policies and priorities and consistent and fair application of rules.

(b) **Major Elements**.

An effective occupational safety and health program will include the following four elements. To implement these elements, it will include the actions described in paragraph (c).

(1) **Management commitment and employee involvement** are complementary. Management commitment provides the motivating force and the resources for organizing and controlling activities within an organization. In an effective program, management regards workers safety and health as a fundamental value of the organization and applies its commitment to safety and health protection with as much vigor as to other organizational purposes. Employee involvement provides the means through which workers develop and/or express their own commitment to safety and health protection, for themselves and for their fellow workers.

(2) **Worksite analysis** involves a variety of worksite examinations, to identify not only existing hazards but also conditions and operations in which changes might occur to create hazards. Unawareness of a hazard which stems from failure to examine the worksite is a sure sign that safety and health policies and/or practices are ineffective. Effective management actively analyzes the work and worksite, to anticipate and prevent harmful occurrences.

(3) **Hazard prevention and controls** are triggered by a determination that a hazard or potential hazard exists. Where feasible, hazards are prevented by effective design of the jobsite or job. Where it is not feasible to eliminate them, they are controlled to prevent unsafe and unhealthful exposure. Elimination or controls is accomplished in a timely manner, once a hazard or potential hazard is recognized.

(4) **Safety and health training** addresses the safety and health responsibilities of all personnel concerned with the site, whether salaried or hourly. If is often most effective when incorporated into other training about performance requirements and job practices. Its complexity depends on the size and complexity of the worksite, and the nature of the hazards and potential hazards at the site.

(c) **Recommended Actions**

(1) **Management Commitment and Employee Involvement.**

(i) State clearly a worksite policy on safe and healthful work and working conditions, so that all personnel with responsibility at the site and personnel at other locations with responsibility

for the site understand the priority of safety and health protection in relation to other organizational values.

(ii) Establish and communicate a clear goal for the safety and health program and objectives for meeting that goal, so that all members of the organization understand the results desired and the measures planned for achieving them.

(iii) Provide visible top management involvement in implementing the program, so that all will understand that management's commitments is serious.

(iv) Provides for the encourage employee involvement in the structure and operation of the program and in decisions that affect their safety and health, so that they will commit their insight and energy to achieving the safety and health program's goal and objectives.

(v) Assign and communicate responsibility for all aspects of the program so that manages, supervisors, and employees in all parts of the organization know what performance is expected of them.

(vi) Provide adequate authority and resources to responsible parties, so that assigned responsibilities can be met.

(vii) Hold managers, supervisors, and employees accountable for meeting their responsibilities, so that essential tasks will be performed.

(viii) Review program operations at least annually to evaluate their success in meeting the goal and objectives, so that deficiencies can be identified and the program and/or the objectives can be revised when they do not meet the goal of effective safety and health protection.

(2) **Worksite Analysis**.

(i) So that all hazards are identified:

(A) Conduct comprehensive baseline worksite surveys for safety and health and periodic comprehensive update surveys:

(B) Analyze planned and new facilities, processes, materials, and equipment; and

(C) Perform routine job hazard analyses.

(ii) Provide for regular site safety and health inspection, so that new or previously missed hazards and failures in hazard controls are identified.

(iii) So that employee insight and experience in safety and health protection may be utilized and employee concerns may be addressed, provide a reliable system for employees, without fear of reprisal, to notify management personnel about conditions that appear hazardous and to receive timely and appropriate responses; and encourage employees to use the system. (iv) Provide for investigation of accidents and "near miss" incidents, so that their causes and means for their prevention are identified.

(v) Analyze injury and illness trends over time, so that patterns with common causes can be identified and prevented.

(3) **Hazard Prevention and Control.**

(i) So that all current and potential hazards, however detected, are corrected or controlled in a timely manner, established procedures for that purpose, using the following measures:

(A) Engineering techniques where feasible and appropriate:

(B) Procedures for safe work which are understood and followed by all affected parties, as a result of training, positive reinforcement, correction of unsafe performance, and, if necessary, enforcement through a clearly communicated disciplinary system:

(C) Provision of personal protective equipment; and

(D) Administrative controls, such as reducing the duration of exposure.

(ii) Provide for facility and equipment maintenance, so that hazardous breakdown is prevented.

(iii) Plan and prepare for emergencies, and conduct training and drills as needed, so that the response of all parties to emergencies will be "second nature."

(iv) Establish a medical program which includes availability of first aid on site and of physician and emergency medical care nearby, so that harm will be minimized if any injury or illness does occur.

(4) **Safety and Health Training**.

(i) 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, so that employees accept and follow established safety and health protections.

(ii) So that supervisors will carry out their safety and health responsibilities effectively, ensure that they understand those responsibilities and the reasons for them, including:

(A) Analyzing the work under their supervision to identify unrecognized potential hazards:

(B) Maintaining physical protections in their work areas; and

(C) Reinforcing employee training on the nature of potential hazards in their work and on needed protective measures, through continual performance feedback and, if necessary, through enforcement of safe work practices.

(iii) Ensure that managers understand their safety and health responsibilities, as described under (c)(1). "Management Commitment and Employee Involvement," so that the managers will effectively carry out those responsibilities.