SAFETY AND HEALTH PROGRAMS

MODULE DESCRIPTION

This module will introduce you to the benefits of Safety and Health Programs, and the topics these programs should cover.

OBJECTIVES

After completing this module, you will be able to:

Describe the major elements of an effective occupational safety program.

Identify the methods for hazard identification.

List the methods used in hazard prevention and control.

MODULE OUTLINE

1. Introduction

Safety and health programs are recommended for all general industry businesses, but are voluntary.

Safety and health programs are an effective way to:

- Reduce work related injuries and illnesses
- Improve morale and productivity
- Reduce workers compensation costs

The best safety and health programs involve every level of an organization, instilling a cultural mindset of safety that reduces accidents and improves the end result for managers. There are four major elements of an effective occupational safety and health program.

These four major elements are:

- Management commitment and employee involvement
- Worksite analysis
- Hazard prevention and control
- Safety and health training

Common characteristics of a safety and health culture are:

- Management believes that safety and health on the job is an important company goal, along with cost control, quality, and productivity
- Individuals within the organization believe they have a right to a safe and healthy workplace
- Each person accepts personal responsibility for ensuring his or her own safety and health
- Everyone believes he or she has a duty to protect the safety and health of others

Businesses and organizations have safety and health policies they abide by and goals they would like to reach. These include:

- Clearly stating a worksites safety and health policy

- Establishing and communicating a clear goal and objective for the safety and health program
- Involving top management in implementing the program

Employee involvement is also key in an ideal work environment. Businesses and organizations should encourage employees to get involved in the safety and health programming, decision making process, and communicating responsibility for all program aspects.

While responsible parties of safety and health programs must have the authority and resources to implement the programs, managers, supervisors, and employees should be held accountable for meeting their own responsibilities. To ensure continued success, each program should be reviewed annually to evaluate, identify deficiencies, and revise as needed.

2. Worksite Analysis and Comprehensive Surveys

A thorough worksite analysis should be performed to identify any existing hazards, and to manage conditions and operations where changes may occur to create hazards. These areas should be maintained to prevent any harmful occurrences. Management must provide resources and authority so that all personnel can locate hazards and eliminate or control them promptly.

In addition to worksite analysis, a comprehensive survey can also be used to conduct a baseline survey for safety and health at a worksite. These surveys are based on the Job Hazard Analysis (JHA), which involves studying and recording each step of a job, identifying existing or potential job hazards, and determining the best way to perform the job to reduce potential hazards.

OSHA-funded, state-run consultation services can conduct comprehensive surveys for small businesses. Larger businesses can find the needed expertise at the company or corporate level.

3. Safety and Health Inspections

Safety and health inspections should be made on regular intervals, usually on a weekly basis, and are designed to catch hazards missed at other stages. In addition, daily work inspection procedures should be established.

A check list is a necessity when performing a daily work inspection; if one is not provided, make your own. It should be based on:
- Standards that apply to your industry.
- Input from everyone involved.
- Your companys safety practices and rules.

Remember:
- Inspections should cover every part of the worksite.
- They should be performed on a regular basis.
- In-house inspectors should be trained to recognize and control hazards.
- Identified hazards should be tracked until corrected.
- Inspector information should be used to improve the hazard prevention and control program.

4. Incident/Accident Investigations

Any near miss incident, first aid incident, or accident should be investigated, so that its causes and means for prevention are identified.

Six key questions that should be asked in the accident investigation and report are: who, what, when, where, why, and how.

Additionally, thorough interviews that include everyone involved in the incident are necessary. All documentation of such incidents should be regularly analyzed to determine if any common cause pattern exists that can be addressed. The results from such an analysis should then be used to determine corrective action plans.

5. Hazard Prevention and Control

Hazard prevention and control is very important. The first step in this process is to determine if a hazard or potential hazard exists and then attempt to eliminate the hazard(s) by using an effective design of the work or worksite. If the hazard cannot be eliminated, use hazard controls. Eliminating or controlling hazards should be done in a timely manner.

Hazards can be controlled by:
- Engineering Controls
- Administrative Controls
- Personal Protective Equipment
- Communication of Safe Work Practices

Engineering Controls: Where feasible and appropriate, the first and best strategy is to control the hazard at its source. Engineering controls do this, unlike other controls that generally focus on the employee exposed to the hazard. The basic concept is that the work environment and the job itself should be designed to eliminate hazards or reduce exposure to hazards.

Administrative Controls: Administrative controls include exercise breaks and rotation of workers. These types of controls are normally used in conjunction with other controls.

Personal Protective Equipment: PPE is the last level of control. It is a supplementary method of control that uses clothing or equipment when hazard exposure cannot completely be eliminated using engineering controls, and when other forms of control cannot provide sufficient protection.

Communication of Safe Work Practices: Safe work practices include your companys general workplace rules and other operation-specific rules. Communication of such rules and work practices can be performed by:
-Training and positive reinforcement.
-Correction of unsafe performance.
-Enforcement.

6. Hazard Prevention Planning

Hazard prevention planning is just as significant as controlling a hazard. Prevention a hazard includes:
- Maintaining the facility and equipment.
- Emergency planning
  o Training and drills, as needed.
- Medical programs
  o Maintaining first aid on site.
  o Ensuring that physician and emergency care is available nearby.

Training is key for hazard prevention; it is the backbone of the system. Therefore, safety and health responsibilities must be addressed during training.

Orientation training must be given to site and contract workers. Employees must understand the hazards they may be exposed to and how to prevent harm to themselves and others from hazard exposure.

7. Safety and Health Training

Who needs training?
- New hires, contract workers, employees who wear PPE and workers in high risk areas, as well as managers and supervisors.
- Managers who have an important role in visibly supporting the safety and health program, and setting a good example.
- Supervisors who work with company policies and procedures; hazard detection and

control; accident investigation; handling of emergencies; and are responsible for how to train and reinforce training.

- Long-term workers who have job changes as a result of new processing materials.

Keep in mind that the entire workforce needs periodic emergency response training in how to respond to an emergency.

Supervisors are responsible for analyzing work to identify potential hazards in areas of responsibility, maintaining physical protections in work areas, reinforcing employee training through performance feedback, and, if needed, enforcing safe work practices.

As previously mentioned, specific training needs include:

- Hazard recognition
- Training required in standards
- Emergency response
- Accident investigation
- Emergency drills