

ADMINISTRATION OF THE SAFETY PROGRAM

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What is the safety director's responsibility in carrying out General Motors seven basic principles of safety at the plant level?

As these principles cover many facets of safety and because the men engaged in the supervision of manufacturing processes have many areas of responsibility such as production, efficiency, scrap, and safety, they must turn to a service department for guidance and help in some areas of specialty. Because of the many safety rules, regulations and other requirements necessary in our present day operations, safety has become one of these areas of specialty and so these men turn to the safety department for help and guidance with their safety problems. It can truly be said that the safety director's role is one of advisor and administrator and it is his responsibility to see that men in all levels of management are provided with the necessary safety tools to do the safety job that is expected of them.

The seventh General Motors basic safety principle states,

"Special attention should be given to off-the-job safety, as employees have more accidents away from work than they do on-the-job. Our objectives should include efforts to promote the safety of employees and their families by:

1. Maintaining a comprehensive safety program for employees driving company-owned vehicles;
2. Providing material on highway safety to aid employees driving their own cars;
3. Encouraging employees to develop safe practices in the home, on the farm, and in recreational activities;
4. Participating in community safety activities."

Historically, when an off-the-job safety program has been considered the question was raised, "How do you control the habits and actions of people when away from their jobs?"

Certainly it is not an easy question and assuredly there is no magic formula. It presents challenges and opportunities that

are as unlimited as the problem is complex. This indeed is the same kind of challenge that those in industrial safety faced 50 years ago.

Let's consider just one category of off-the-job accident statistics, "home accidents." The statistics show there were 4,200,000 disabling injuries and 28,000 deaths due to home accidents during 1965. This is 40 per cent of all causes of off-the-job accidents. Over 100 years ago John Keats said, "Men heap together the mistakes of their lives and create a monster they call destiny." How apropos this is today. Much of this wasteful loss of life, needless loss of limb, the immeasurable pain and suffering is sometimes referred to as destiny — but we in safety feel it is the result of avoidable accidents that a good off-the-job safety program could help eliminate. The General Motors seventh basic principle of safety has this goal.

I would like to describe some of the program we have used at AC Spark Plug Division the last 18 months. AC Spark Plug Division manufactures some 30 major automotive parts and many related items; we have upwards of 13,000 employees, half of them women, and we utilize some 4 million sq. ft. of floor space.

Because of the increasing number of off-the-job accidents to AC employees in the first part of 1965, we analyzed the six-months off-the-job safety performance and found that the greatest cause of off-the-job accidents was *falls*, which accounted for 42 per cent of all off-the-job accidents. Of this 42 per cent, *home falls* accounted for 81 per cent.

We organized an off-the-job safety committee made up of key men in our organization, with myself as chairman. This committee was officially put in our safety organizational structure and designated as "safety committee number seven", as we have six other safety sub-committees. At the first meeting of this committee the off-the-job record was reviewed and it was clear that action must be taken. There was a strong feeling that whatever was done in the way