

Determining factors are vapor pressure, molecular weight, structure, and polarizability. Breakthrough patterns for several compound classes can at best serve as a rough guide for untested compounds within a homologous series.

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¹Reference to trade names does not imply endorsement by the Bureau of Mines.

Management and Employee Safety Committee

Safety should never be an area of controversy or dispute in management-labor relations. There is mutual interest in accident prevention which requires joint cooperative programs to prevent accidents and injuries. The lack of such effort will surely result in unhappy employees and an increase in the frequency of accidents. Although the responsibility of safety rests with management and its representatives, cooperation and participation by workers in the safety program can be a valuable tool which management should utilize. No company safety program is complete without employee participation.

An effective method of getting employee participation in your safety program is to organize a management-employee safety committee. This joint program will have a positive effect upon the worker's attitude toward his job. The worker will have the responsibility of checking hazards in his workplace. He will see direct action taken to correct these hazards as the result of his suggestion and, therefore, will find a vehicle for expressing himself in relation to his work, which in itself is of great importance.

Careless acts and lack of knowledge about safety are among the major causes of accidents in industry. Employee attitudes must be developed to instill the sense of safety awareness in employees in performing their jobs.

What better way could be formulated for influencing and improving employee attitudes than by including employees in the safety program through the activities of the management employee safety committee? Although the employee would still not have direct responsibility for finding solutions to safety problems, he would receive direct exposure to the safety program.

The administration of the OSHA law, practically speaking, depends a great deal upon voluntary compliance. Some companies have achieved this voluntary compliance fairly easily by giving employees the opportunity to actively participate in the identification of safety problems and make recommendations for solutions. Such participation can be invaluable when simulated, in-house OSHA inspections are conducted.

The functions of the management-employee committee are generally divided into three categories: (1) Eliminate safety hazards, thereby, prevent accidents. (2) Create and maintain employee interest in the company safety program by employees. (3) Serve as a means of safety communication to members of management within the plant and to the officers of the union.

The size of the management-employee committee is usually determined by such factors as the safety philosophy of management, the size of the company or plant, the degree of hazards in the manufacturing processes, and management-labor negotiations.

Committee members must be enthusiastic about safety and be familiar with the equipment and production processes throughout the facility. The members must be knowledgeable in the federal, state, and local safety and hygiene laws. Each member must have a personality that is compatible with the other members in order to prevent conflicts that reduce the effectiveness of the committee. Members should never be selected on the basis of popularity with the workers, but they should be well known throughout the facility. The size of the committee should be as small as possible to be effective and to eliminate unnecessary debate.

The committee must be allowed by management and the union to func-

tion as an independent group, free from the economic pressures of management and free from union politics. But this independence must be earned by the committee through its actions. To achieve this independence, the committee must approach each safety problem in a professional manner and be completely objective in solving safety problems. In short, the company members cannot be pro-company and the union members cannot be pro-union—both sides of the committee must be pro-safety. Any other approach to solving safety problems would reduce the effectiveness of the committee.

Since the committee can only make recommendations, it must build credibility with management and the local rank and file. To achieve credibility, the committee should widely publicize its activities. This could be done by distributing the minutes of the committee's meetings to management and to officers of the local union. The company newspaper could be a means for announcing new safety programs or achievements of the committee. A member of management or an official of the union could be invited to attend committee meetings to observe the committee in action and to discuss specific problem areas.

An effective safety program starts and ends with the worker in the performance of his duties. The employee and his supervisor should work through the committee in making the workplace as safe as possible.



New members to the Rubber and Plastics Section mean new ideas and a broader base for sharing experiences and adding depth to our knowledge of the art of safety. We welcome the following new Section members:

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