

SAFETY ORGANIZATION AND SAFETY INSPECTION

In addition to employee manuals, company publications and the general press and radio-TV can be used to continually train employees and interest them in company goings-on. Details on how to work with company publications, and the working press in general, are given in Chapter 8, "Publicizing Safety."

Safety rule enforcement

Enforcement of safety rules is actually a matter of education. To set a good example for employee education, top management and supervisors must know and believe in the rules, and must religiously follow them.

Education often succeeds where discipline fails, and it is usually used when supervisors find violations. Some companies, in addition to instruction, give a warning on the first violation. The second offense may be followed by a stronger warning or a short layoff. The third offense often results in an extended layoff or, in extreme cases, discharge.

Where labor bargaining groups represent employees, they should be consulted on proposed methods of enforcing rules. Such an agreement should prevent later misunderstandings.

In some organizations, the foreman does not have the right of discipline, but refers the offender to the personnel department or some plant official. This plan is often effective where personalities are involved.

Administering reprimands for the violation of rules demands tact and good judgment. This duty should be performed by someone in authority who commands respect and who is sympathetic without being lax. Reprimands should never be given publicly or even before a committee.

When management feels the worker is deliberately disobeying the rules, and where he continues through unsafe acts to endanger his own life and lives of others, prompt and firm action is justified. It is far better to use extreme measures than to allow accidents to happen because of laxness in the enforcement of safety rules.

Many companies feel that a spirit of cooperation, or mutual understanding and agreement, make drastic measures of enforcement unnecessary. Indeed, this philosophy should be the goal of safety rules. See Chapter 8, "Safety Training."

Inspection of Work Practices

The safety department should assist supervisors in instructing employees in the safe way of doing each job. But accidents can be prevented only when these recommended procedures are based upon a thorough analysis of the job and when these procedures are followed without exception. Hence, to prevent accidents, continuous observation is necessary to ensure that the task is executed in the safest way, and that workers comply with these procedures.

The safety department can provide most effective assistance to the supervisors by observing all workers in the performance of their tasks to eliminate unsafe procedures. In this way, foremen and supervisors are appraised of all weaknesses in the safety program within their domain and can have a common reference point for monitoring these occurrences.

Safety observation plan

A safety inspection of work practices requires the active participation of all supervisory personnel. Basically, this inspection is a safety observation plan by which supervisors at the various organizational levels, and particularly the first-line supervisors directly responsible for employee safety, observe work while it is in progress. These observations cover the use of tools, material, and equipment, as well as any unsafe method or order of procedure in performing an act which indicates a lack of planning or failure to take into account all the circumstances surrounding the particular job.

In large plants, where constant observation by supervisors or members of the safety team is impossible, supervisors should set up an observation schedule that will permit observation of the maximum number of employees during a month. In addition, no opportunity should be overlooked to make routine or unscheduled observations whenever possible. Unsafe practices may occur at any time, and supervisors should record them whenever they appear. One comprehensive way of determining unsafe practices is a "safety sampling" technique.*

*Vincent Pollina "Safety Sampling" *Journal of the American Society of Safety Engineers*, 7 19-22 (August 1962)