

Safety Clips

Issue 13
June 2010

AMCA Supporting its Association Safety Plan

Arizona Masonry Contractors Association

How to Get the Right Results from Your Safety Committee

Provided by BLR Safety Advisor

<http://catalog.blr.com/>



Safety committees play an important role in workplace safety and health. In fact, OSHA highly recommends them. But to get the best results from your committee, you have to start with all the right ingredients.

Ideally, your safety committee is well established and effective, with employees eager to serve and management responsive to its recommendations. But there may be a significant gap between what you'd like to achieve and the committee you see today. Consider these tips and benchmarks for getting your committee from here to there.

Right size. The size of the committee depends on the size of your workforce. The experts suggest a committee of 6 to 10 members in a company of fewer than 200 employees. If there are 200 to 1,000 employees, a committee of between 6 and 12 members is recommended. And at businesses with more than 1,000 employees and/or various shifts and locations, consider having multiple committees. If you do have more than one committee, there's value in encouraging members to attend one another's meetings to ensure cross-pollination of best practices and information.

Right people. A good safety committee member is one who cares about the duties and the outcome. Choose active, productive people who work well in groups and are comfortable speaking out, and who are accessible to their colleagues. One of the most important roles of a member is to serve as a vehicle for rank-and-file employees to express their concerns about working conditions. You want committee members to whom everyone can reach out. As for a leader, some

experts advise a process in which the head of the committee is elected by members. Although corporate safety managers may participate on committees or serve as advisors, it's not advised that they lead the group. Committees stay fresh when members rotate on and off. A one-year appointment is usually long enough to permit members to get something done without getting burned out.

Right tasks. Although the purpose and activities of committees vary, the tasks generally include those on the list that follows.

Take a good look at your facility, your risks, and the special skills of your committee members. Consider special roles they can play that may be unique to your situation:

Accident investigations; Safety inspections; Behavioral observations; Review of equipment to be leased or purchased for safety controls; Hazard identification; including conducting job safety analyses. Reporting problems or concerns to management and/or maintenance; Recommending corrective actions; Monitoring new policies and procedures; Communicating safety and health information and updates to employees; Participating in safety training, including selecting materials and possibly leading a session; Developing and managing incentive programs; Serving as role models for safe practices

Right results. Ultimately, you won't find the right formula on any list. A strong, purposeful committee should be inspired by management's belief in the work of the committee and populated by members who sincerely want to improve the safety and health of their co-workers.

AMCA's Safety Committee is committed to providing support in your efforts to keep your employees safe and healthy. Safety Clips can be used in any number of ways: toolbox training sessions, company newsletter article or used as an opener for discussions in manager/supervisor's meetings, etc. Safety Clips is a means to keep safety topics fresh and in the forefront of your busy days and to make it easier for you to turn around and share with others in your company. If there are additional email addresses you'd like to add to the distribution list forward them to lori@azmasonry.net.