

OSHA VPP: Employee Involvement Opportunities

Employee involvement is a critical piece of any safety and occupational health management system (SOHMS). The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Voluntary Protection Programs (VPP) expects at least **three** meaningful ways of employee involvement in safety and health (S&H). Reporting hazards or other employee rights and responsibilities do not count toward employee involvement efforts.

The level of employee involvement at your worksite provides a good indication of whether your site has achieved a world-class SOHMS and a positive safety culture. Inviting and encouraging employees to actively participate in the operation and functions of your SOHMS promotes a sense of pride and personal ownership. Employee involvement benefits the entire organization—helping employees better understand S&H hazards to prevent injury and illness, showing commitment to S&H, improving employee morale, expanding input and support for S&H-related decisions, and contributing to the bottom line. This one pager provides ideas you can use to promote and expand employee involvement at your organization.



PROMOTING EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT

Consider utilizing the following strategies to promote and increase employee involvement in S&H at your worksite:

- Gain “buy-in” from leaders and supervisors to commit necessary resources toward involvement activities (e.g., time, people)
- Incorporate employee involvement into workplace policies and procedures
- Provide multiple opportunities for employees to become involved
- Market involvement opportunities at your worksite to raise participation
- Educate employees on involvement opportunities during new employee orientation
- Conduct an employee survey to gauge interest in involvement opportunities you offer
- Have top leadership emphasize and encourage employee involvement
- Make involvement interesting, fun, or even competitive in nature
- Show employees you value their input and suggestions
- Incentivize employee involvement as a form of motivation
- Be sure employees can describe the activities they are involved in
- Give positive feedback to provide ongoing motivation for their efforts.



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TRACKING INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES

Think about how to document activities demonstrating employee involvement at your worksite. Keep a list of these opportunities and take pictures showing how your employees are involved. This information is beneficial when writing your annual VPP self-evaluation and when creating presentations to show off your SOHMS to personnel and evaluators.

EXAMPLES OF EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT

There are many employee involvement opportunities you can implement at your worksite. Keep in mind, your employees may require additional training to fully understand the expectations of their participation in these opportunities. Common activities you can use to involve your employees in S&H and your SOHMS include:

- Conduct audits of worksite inspections (e.g., routine self-safety inspections, monthly emergency equipment inspections, preventative maintenance inventories)
- Participate on S&H committees, working groups, or teams
- Assist in mishap or near-miss investigations
- Create, review, and update hazard analyses (e.g., job hazard analyses, standard operating procedures)
- Develop, review, or revise site S&H procedures (e.g., confined space entry, lockout/tagout)
- Present S&H-related information in meetings
- Provide S&H training to new or current employees
- Mentor others on S&H rules and expectations
- Develop content for an employee safety handbook
- Update S&H posters, bulletin boards, or other informational displays
- Create or review S&H goals and objectives
- Participate in the selection of personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Assist in emergency drill exercises and debriefings
- Correct hazards on the spot, when possible
- Provide S&H suggestions
- Act as a safety observer.



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