



Safety Committees

Every organization's loss control program can benefit from a properly constructed and functioning safety committee. The success of the committee will depend on the purpose, makeup, responsibilities assigned, and support received from top management.

The basic function of the safety committee is to help create and maintain all employees' active interest in safety. To achieve this goal, there must be a spirit of cooperation and a commitment to safety as a shared responsibility between top management and the employees. The proper safety attitude of the members will have a positive influence on others. Display of interest in safety by committee members promotes employees to show an interest in safety.

The makeup of the committee can vary depending on the needs, size, and type of organization. Consider the following when forming a safety committee:

- 1. Chairperson** – The person appointed must display leadership and command abilities. They should obtain respect from other members through their positive actions.
- 2. Type** – Committee type can be comprised of management personnel only or management and employees. It can also be formed specifically for special safety projects.
- 3. Membership** – Membership is usually limited between four and ten members. These members must be knowledgeable of hazards, have experience with operations, and possess a cooperative attitude.
- 4. Meetings** – These should be scheduled at least monthly. They need to have a planned agenda and meeting length should not exceed one hour.

The agenda of a meeting will vary but a typical one is outlined below.

1. Record of attendance.
2. Consideration of unfinished business.
3. Review of recent accidents and trend analysis.
4. Reports on special projects of the committee.
5. Report on inspections performed by committee.
6. Special program features- films, speakers, demonstrations.
7. Presentation of new business.

A written record of the meetings' proceedings should be prepared by the committee secretary. Minutes of the meeting should be distributed to all members, key management personnel, and copies posted on employee bulletin boards. Maximum benefit will be obtained by publicizing the committee's efforts.

The duties and functions of the committee will be determined according to the responsibilities assigned to it by top management. Typical responsibilities of the safety committee and its members include:

1. Conducting periodic safety inspections.
2. Reviewing the circumstances and causes of accidents. Develop recommendations for corrective measures to reduce recurring accidents.
3. Offering suggestions to management for improvement to the safety program.
4. Increasing the knowledge and understanding of safety for all personnel through promoting educational activities such as films, talks, etc.
5. Observing unsafe conditions and work practices and reporting them to supervisors.
6. Listening to suggestions by employees, reporting them to the committee, and making appropriate recommendations to management.

Top-level management support of the committee is critical to its success. Deciding to make a committee and assigning it responsibilities are not enough. Adequate facilities and sufficient time must also be provided to conduct the committee business.

Safety committees involve the employees who make positive contributions to the safety effort. They aid and advise both management and employees through monitoring, educating, investigating, and evaluating safety efforts.