

**SPECIAL POINTS
OF INTEREST:**

- Key Duties
- Setting Up the Committee
- Defining Committee's Role
- Frequency of Meetings
- Good Practices

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Hats ON for Safety

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Safety Committee

A health and safety committee can

make an important difference in a company's safety efforts. It could help you negotiate better worker-compensation rates and insurance premiums. Like anything else, a committee works best when it's done right.

Key benefits of setting up an in-house committee include increased worker awareness about the importance of a safe workplace and building

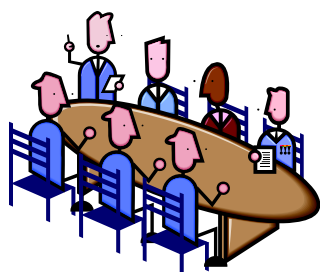
Setting Up Your Committee

How many members should you have? Enough to make every part of the organization feel represented but not

ownership of the program among employees.

Key Duties of a Safety Committee

- Identify workplace hazards or unsafe practices and recommend corrective action.
 - Address safety suggestions and concerns raised by employees and management
 - Investigate and review accidents, near misses and incident reports, investigate any property damage
- Generate employee awareness, interest in and commitment to safety
 - Review the firm's safety training and retraining program.
 - Do periodic inspections to assess the safety of equipment, facilities, working conditions, job procedures and the overall site.



so many as to encumber the committee's work. It should have at least one if not two senior managers committed to the process. They should be able to speak on behalf of the business.

Other members should be interested volunteers or employees with the right skills or knowledge to help. 5-8 members works best.



Defining the Committee's Role

You need to spell out what you expect your safety committee to do. If it's a new committee don't try to do too much too fast. Start out with limited roles.

- **Investigating accidents and near misses**
- **Responding to employee complaints.**

This gives the committee a chance to learn the ropes and develop the experience to take on more proactive roles like:

- **Safety Training;**
- **Lockout procedure development and auditing;**
- **Inspections;**
- **New process and equipment review;**
- **Ergonomics training and process evaluations;**
- **Promotion of health and safety;**
- **Observation safety training audits.**



Frequency of Meetings

You should meet regularly. The frequency will depend on the

- **Volume of business.**
- **Size and spread of the workforce.**
- **Type of work done in the workplace and associated risks**
- **Issues to be discussed and other relevant factors**

If there has been a major incident or specific developments affecting health and safety like the introduction of new machinery, or organizational changes, you may want to hold special meetings.

Let us know if you have any ideas for our safety newsletter. E-mail kathy@southernbuilder.org.

Good Practices

• **Plan Meetings in Advance**

Where possible, plan a series of meetings in advance.

• **Communicate** All committee members should have a copy of the planned meeting dates.

• **Keep the date** Do not postpone or cancel meetings.

• **Involve a variety of people**

• **Represent all groups** Keep the total size reasonably small, but ensure all significant employee groups are represented.

• **Keep a balance** Make sure employee representatives are not out-numbered by management.

• **Represent employees**

Consider agreeing to more employee representatives rather than equal numbers of employee and management. This shows you are not dominating the committee.

• **Keep a single location** Ensure a committee's work is related to a single establishment not a collection of different locations.

• **Think about minor incidents**

When considering statistics on accident and injury records, examine information about minor injuries and incidents.

• **Address strategic issues** To be effective, health and safety committees should address strategic issues.

• **Who to Choose** You should

choose at least 2 yard and warehouse

employees,

one inside

sales, one

clerical, one

outside sales

and maybe even a truck driver.



What safety concerns do you have? What's your business doing that is unique when it comes to matters of safety? Let us know!

Some information for this newsletter was taken from www.safetyxchange.com