

HEALTH & SAFETY ACTIVITIES LOG

The following is a recordkeeping device designed to organize health and safety concerns and activities in a user (and OSHA inspector or Auditor) friendly fashion. This guide is further designed to assist your facility in garnering as much credit as possible for activities already taking place, which very often inadvertently evade the health and safety activities document trail.

Safety Committee's Users

This chart is a good device for safety committee to keep track of its findings and activities. It serves as an excellent supplement to committee minutes to present the issues, discussions, actions, and status of any given subject, at the ease of a glance.

Safety Program Documentation

Often times, activities take place throughout an organization that impact on safety performance, and is in fact, a part of safety management. These 'operational' elements, wherein safety management is actually occurring as part of the system, may not necessarily be expressed through the Safety Committee or safety specific programs. Without a keen screening system to document and credit yourselves with safety management activities, you may be hard-pressed to show full evidence of your safety stewardship, even though there are operational benefits and safety performance will ultimately increase. The following are some common examples of safety management activities that often go undocumented under safety activities or programs, but reflect excellent safety stewardship, nonetheless.

Example 1: In a healthcare facility, the Nursing Dept. decides to go with a self sheathing needle system, or a needleless system to cut down on the number of needlesticks or lancet cuts. Upon its introduction, nursing realizes a considerable return in savings from decreased cost of time lost and medical costs avoided, although the inventory may have cost upwards of seven folds at first. There was a process of hazard evaluation/assessment, abatement, and follow-up. However, if this was treated as a 'nursing' issue, that may or may not have even been discussed or documented through QA. This important safety management activity may not even be noted when superficial safety inspections are conducted by less concerned or knowledgeable agents if it is not also recorded within the document inspection path.

Example 2: Director of Housekeeping and/or Food Services reviews the list of chemical inventories. He/she applies chemical safety management principles and decides that a different combination of cleaners would do the same job, but with: less toxic materials; and/or less quantity of stored materials on-site; and/or less number of different types of

materials; and/or less to no probability of inter-reactivity of chemicals present. This notable process of safety management may not be recorded anywhere, never mind via the official safety system.

Example 3: A Maintenance Director secures the door to the elevator shafts and places an approved permanent sign on the door, “Confined Space - Restricted Entry”.

Example 4: A maintenance supervisors notices frayed wires and missing grounds on plugs periodically on in-house electrical appliances. He suggests a low impact system of color tagging all cords and appliances throughout a given year to ensure that each piece of equipment is inspected at least annually. His idea is implemented and becomes part of the preventative maintenance plan and activities of his department.

Example 5: Team Leaders give each shift a short summary or morning meeting to each shift before they begin to brief them on the status of the operations of their unit. The report includes a change in protocols to enhance the safety of a particularly tricky task, or warnings are passed on about the quirks of a piece of equipment, warnings are passed on about ergonomic risks of a new shipment of materials, the whereabouts of lift assistive devices, or personal protective equipment that have been moved from its normal place. Sharing relevant safety information from remarks in a shift log is comparable to this.

Example 6: An orientation on workers’ compensation insurance, costs, and a review of the claims is provided to management staff, or regular staff to provide them with an understanding of the problems in the facility, and its personal and financial impact on the injured employees, remaining staff, and the institution.

Example 7: A manager or supervisor solicits the advice of a specialist or consultant about OSHA compliance or health and safety management.

Optimal Use of The Health & Safety Activities Log

This Health & Safety Activities Log & this Guide is designed for in-house facility use to encompass as much of those activities already ingrained through operations that are also safety management activities. The basic tenants of safety management are:

- Monitoring/Evaluation/Assessment of hazards
- Development and Implementation of a Solution or ‘*Abatement Method*’
- Follow-Up actions to ensure resolution of the issue and/or to verify the effectiveness of the abatement method

If you find any management staff or regular staff engaged in any of the above, document it on this Log. The following is a more detailed list of common activities that are part of this safety management process:

- *Communicating Downstream* - not only about policies and procedures, but resident care (infection control, workplace violence prevention, etc.)
- *Communicating Upstream* - employee feedback

- *Providing Feedback* - work procedures, performance, *including positive*
- *Training* - both formal, and informal one-on-one feedback and demonstration
- *QA*, in assessing staff knowledge of protocols, and consistency of practice
- Monitoring, benchmarking, evaluating or assessing performance

What Subjects to Report on?

Subjects to be reported on, of course should not be limited to any given laundry list so long as it falls within the realm of safety management as discussed above. Some common subjects to report on include but are not limited to the following. This list may assist you and your management staff to begin to identify those typical operational activities that are automatically engaged, that should be reported on this Log in order that you garner as much credit as possible for safety management activities:

- ***Machine Guarding***
- ***Slips, Trips & Falls***
- ***Ergonomics*** - Body Mechanics/Proper Lifting Design & Techniques
- ***Lockout/Tagout*** - Electrical Energy Isolation
- ***Electrical Safety***
- ***Fire Safety***
- ***Hazard Communication*** - Chemical Safety
- ***Bloodborne Pathogens***
- ***Infection Control*** - TB
- ***Workplace Violence Prevention*** - safety and security
- ***Confined Spaces*** (securing potentially dangerous areas from regular or employee entry, entry by authorized personnel only)
- ***OSHA 300 Log*** - Review of employee work related injuries & illnesses
- ***Employee Participation in Safety*** - formal systems of feedback, meaningful participation (with appropriate training) in safety teams, or committees

What Activities to Log?

When attempting to determine whether an activity within a subject should be reported on this log, consider if the activity decreases exposure to the potential hazard, or decreases probability of injury or illness, and/or if the activity increases health, safety, awareness, or better work practices regarding the same subject. For example:

- ***Ergonomics*** - changes or activities that decrease repetitive motions, exposure to poor posture, or encourages poor body mechanics or poor posture
- ***Ergonomics*** - Changes or activities that increase better body mechanics (i.e. proper materials storage and design of storage areas, use of materials handling devices, etc.)
- ***Hazard Communication*** - changes or activities that decrease chemical inventory, chemical storage amounts, number of chemicals present, reactivity of substances

- *Hazard Communication* - changes or activities that increase chemical hygiene practices (providing appropriate personal protective equipment, training, enforcement including positive reinforcement, constructive feedback, counseling, to disciplining).
- *Workplace Violence Prevention* - changes or activities that decrease probability of employee sustaining injuries from combative residents
- *Bloodborne Pathogens/TB - Infection Control* - changes or activities that decrease the probability of employee exposure to bloodborne pathogens, or TB and/or increase and reinforce proper work procedures, awareness
- *Employee Participation* - any activities that encourage employee participation in learning, inspecting, monitoring, reviewing losses and findings, identifying hazards, determining solutions, abatement, following up, etc.

Other Practical Notes on Using the Log

A Safety Committee could be the driver for all recordable activities using this Log. However, if your Committee is already the focal point of the majority of this type of information, then your existing minutes will probably reflect this already, and this Log will merely serve as a supplement to monitor and present activities.

Or, each department may be given this package and asked to begin to keep their own Logs themselves, and even go back in time to record issues that have been resolved that demonstrate good safety management. They can submit a copy quarterly or so to the Safety Committee or Safety Director for compilation. On-site managers' workshop/seminar can be given on how to optimally utilize this guide and log. (Contact us.)

Note, it is **not advisable to provide **Safety Committee minutes** to an OSHA inspector. They would not normally ask to review them. This is turf that is fiercely fought over between the reach of enforcement and the legal protections of in-house safety audit and records. Instead, you may want to keep a Log of items that are **resolved**, or expected to be resolved shortly, to show the inspector. A complete Log of all issues should be kept with the Safety Committee minutes that you would not share with an inspector.*