

OSHA VPP: Employee Involvement Opportunities

Employee involvement is a critical piece of any safety management system (SMS). 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 SMS and a positive safety culture. 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 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 in S&H
- 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 their input for S&H is important
- Incentivize employee involvement as a form of motivation
- Give positive feedback to provide ongoing motivation for their efforts
- Be sure employees can describe the activities they are involved in.



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TRACKING INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES

Think about how to document all involvement opportunities to demonstrate employee involvement at your worksite. It is suggested to keep a list of these opportunities and to take pictures showing how your employees are involved. This information is beneficial when writing the annual VPP self-evaluation and creating presentations to show off your SMS.

EXAMPLES OF EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT

There are many employee involvement opportunities you can implement at your worksite. Keep in mind, additional training may be required so your employees can fully understand their expectations while participating in these opportunities. Common activities you can use to get employees involved in S&H at your worksite 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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