



TECHNICAL UPDATE

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SAFETY COMMITTEE FUNCTIONS

While overall safety committee objectives are generally the same from one county to another, safety committee functions can vary greatly from one county to another. Some committees are given or allowed more duties to fulfill, while other committees focus on a limited scope of service.

The following outlines a broad range of possible tasks that safety committees can take on. These are divided into general functions and member functions. General functions are the overall objectives for safety committees. For example, reducing accidents and injuries could be considered a general function of committees.

Your committee probably does not perform every single one of the functions listed here, but performs a variety of them. Use this information to generate ideas for your committee to adopt and determine areas for improvement or changes in your committee's activities.

GENERAL FUNCTIONS

The general functions of safety committees are similar to overall objectives; they define an end goal to achieve, without indicating how to get there. Some general functions that committees perform include:

- Identifying/investigating potential workplace hazards
- Finding ways to eliminate or reduce those hazards
- Enforcing safety rules
- Measuring safety performance
- Assisting the safety manager(s) in carrying out the safety and health program
- Creating and maintaining active participation and awareness in safety
- Communicating safety information
- Developing, administering, and monitoring the safety program
- Reducing accident frequency and severity rates
- Ensuring that the facility is in compliance with OSHA standards as a benchmark
- Increasing employee safety awareness and general morale
- Facilitating communication and cooperation between management and workers on safety and health
- Creating new safety policies and programs
- Demonstrating results to management and employees

MEMBER FUNCTIONS

Individual members also have general functions to fulfill for the committee and for the county. Members of the committee are asked to maintain an active interest in safety and serve as communicators between management and the employees. Their active participation motivates and persuades employees to cooperate in promoting safety and preventing injuries.



WHAT THIS MEANS FOR COUNTIES

A safety committee can establish goals for prioritizing safety efforts, conduct safety audits within county operations, make suggestions on identification of hazards, and provide the corrective actions to be taken. Committees can assist in managing claims costs and reducing injuries through their efforts with department-wide involvement. For more information on starting a safety committee, contact CTSI at (303) 861-0507.