

Off-the-Job Safety

Off-the-Job Safety is an extension of the employer's On-the-Job Safety Program that is directed to the employee when he or she is not at work. The principal goal of an Off-the-Job Safety Program is to motivate employees to utilize safe practices all the time, in all activities, not just at work.

Four important benefits from expanding your Corporate Safety effort to include an Off-the-Job Safety Program are:

- Conservation of the company's most precious resource – its people.
- Reduction in off-the-job and on-the-job accidents, and their associated costs.
- Improvement in safety motivation of workforce – increased employee interest in on-the-job safety.
- Enhancement of company's public relations and image.

The same principals and techniques used to promote and sell On-the-Job Safety should be utilized with Off-the-Job Safety. Specifically:

Positive motivators

- Pride – in safe workmanship, in good records; both individually and by department/location.
- Recognition – employee's desire for approval of others in department or family, for praise from supervisors.
- Participation – employee's desire to be "one of the gang".
- Competition – employee's desire to win over others, other departments, locations, etc.
- Financial gain – through awards, bonuses, prizes, etc.

Negative motivator

- Fear – of painful injuries,, death, loss of income or job, family hardships, group disapproval or ridicule, supervisory criticism.

Essential Off-the-Job Safety Program components should include:

- Top management commitment, involvement, support and direction.
- Statement of Corporate Safety Policy that includes the Off-the-Job Safety Program.
- Designation of an Off-the-Job Safety Program Coordinator.
- Assignment of Off-the-Job Safety Program responsibility with

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accountability.

- Communication of the Off-the-Job Safety Program to all levels of the organization, through the use of meetings, company magazine/ newsletter, bulletin board notices, paycheck stuffers, displays, posters.
- Employee motivation and training.
- Seasonal emphasis – vacation safety in the summer, fire prevention in the autumn, etc.
- Use of outside resources – Red Cross, YMCA, police and fire departments, etc. Employees should be encouraged to take advantage of swimming and life saving classes, safe boating courses, driver improvement classes, etc.

Specific areas which can be included in the Off-the-Job Safety Program include:

- Vehicle operation – use of safety belts, don't drink and drive, weather hazards, etc.
- Slips and falls – ladder safety, control of slip/trip hazards on stairs, in bathrooms, etc.
- Home safety – maintenance and repair activities, animals/pets, etc.
- Fire prevention – importance of smoke alarms/ detectors, hazards of smoking, emergency escape plans and drills, safe storage and use of combustible/ flammable materials, hazards presented by inadequate electrical systems, etc.
- Yard safety – play areas and recreational equipment, use of outdoor power equipment, storage and use of herbicides and pesticides, etc.
- Recreational activities – safe bicycling, boating, camping, exercising, fishing and hunting, skiing, swimming, etc.

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