Maximizing Your IIPP Meeting Kit

WHAT'S AT STAKE

Most successful injury and illness prevention programs include a similar set of common-sense elements that focus on finding all hazards in the workplace and developing a plan for preventing and controlling those hazards.

These basic elements – management leadership, worker participation, hazard identification and assessment, hazard prevention and control, education and training, and program evaluation and improvement.

CREATION OF IPP – Management Responsibility

The person or persons in charge of an IIPP must:

1. Be identified in your written IIPP and have management's full support.
2. Be knowledgeable about workplace's health and safety issues and hazard control measures.
3. Have the authority and responsibility for making necessary corrections and implementing the program.

HOW TO INFORM EMPLOYEES ABOUT AN IIPP? – COMMUNICATION

You need a system for communicating with employees. This means communicating in a way that is easily understandable by all affected employees on matters that relate to workplace safety and health. This means you should be prepared to communicate with employees in a language they understand. Communication can take place through trainings, meetings, announcements, email notices, memos, newsletters, and/or through the activities of a health and safety committee.

Schedule employee meetings on a regular basis (weekly, monthly, or

quarterly) and announce the schedule to all employees to achieve maximum attendance. Remember to do this for all shifts and if you have multiple shifts, consider holding meetings at shift change to capture more employees at one meeting. Management needs to be present at these meetings.

WHAT'S THE DANGER

WHAT HAZARDS EXIST IN THE WORKPLACE – HAZARD ASSESSMENT

Workplaces must have procedures in place to identify and evaluate all areas of the work environment for health and safety hazards, unsafe conditions, and work practices. These procedures include periodic inspections. The inspections are made when the safety program is first established, whenever new substances, processes, procedures, or equipment are introduced that represent a new occupational safety and health hazard, and whenever the employer is made aware of a new or previously unrecognized hazard.

Assessing hazards can be accomplished by conducting regular inspections of each work area and by obtaining information from employees through interviews or other methods. These inspections will tell you what hazardous conditions, equipment, and procedures exist in the workplace that could be potentially hazardous.

Your hazard assessment system must include input from employees about potential hazards and any suggestions they have for correcting safety and health issues.

WHAT CAUSED AN ACCIDENT/NEAR MISS? – ACCIDENT/EXPOSURE INVESTIGATION

Employers need a procedure in place to investigate occupational injuries and illnesses. Accident investigations should be conducted by trained supervisory or managerial personnel, with the primary focus of identifying why the incident or near miss occurred and what actions can be taken to prevent it from happening again.

The investigation report should be in writing and include a

description of the underlying factors that may have contributed to the incident and what can be done to prevent it from happening in the future.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

MAKE CHANGES TO IMPROVE SAFETY – HAZARD CORRECTION

Once hazards are observed or discovered, they should be addressed in a timely manner, based on the severity of the hazard. Hazard control is the heart of an effective IIPP and the basis for developing your safe work procedures and accident prevention training. Employers need to have methods and/or procedures for correcting unsafe or unhealthy conditions. If a hazard exists or is imminent and cannot be abated right away without endangering employees and/or property, remove all exposed personnel from the area except those necessary to correct the existing condition.

PERFORM JOB DUTIES SAFELY – TRAINING AND INSTRUCTION

Training is one of the most important elements of any IIPP. It allows employees to learn their job properly, brings new ideas into the workplace, reinforces existing ideas, and practices, and puts your program into action. An effective IIPP includes training for both supervisors and employees, in a language and manner they understand. Make sure your training program reaches all affected employees and that it covers all relevant topics.

The IIPP standard requires that training be provided to all workers on the hazards in their workplace when they start working for their employer, whenever they are given a new job assignment, and whenever new procedures and equipment are introduced.

Document Corrections, Changes, And Successes an Your IIPP – Recordkeeping

Workplaces must maintain a written IIPP and documentation of how the elements of their IIPP are carried out. Recordkeeping can enable you to learn from past experience, identify patterns of injury and illness, and help target prevention efforts.

- The name of the person(s) conducting the inspection.
- The hazards identified.
- The action taken to correct the unsafe hazards and/or work practices.
- Records shall be maintained for at least one year.

Documentation of safety and health training provided to employees, which must include:

- Employee names or other means of identifying employees.
- Training dates.
- Type(s) of training and the name of the training provider.

FINAL WORD

The difference between a good IIPP and a great IIPP can mean the difference between life and death for employees. If an IIPP is a dusty template in a binder and not a living, breathing guide, employees cannot make changes to maximize its effectiveness.