

Army *Safety* Gram

Leading on the Edge for Safety Excellence

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New Year's Resolution: Keeping Safety a Top Priority

As the new year approaches, it's a good time to reflect on the success of your safety program during the past year. Was safety a top priority for everyone in your organization? Did you manage to meet objectives, or do you perhaps need to undertake some new initiatives in 2008?



Hunt down and eliminate hazards.

One initiative that you might consider is to turn the spotlight on workplace hazards. For example:

- ♦ Take a second look at the layout and condition of work areas.
- ♦ Examine tools and equipment to make sure they are safe for employees to use (and review maintenance schedules to make sure they stay that way).
- ♦ Observe the way employees work (you might be surprised at how many unsafe behaviors you observe).
- ♦ Check to make sure that appropriate personal protective equipment (in good condition) is readily available to all workers.
- ♦ Identify potential fire, chemical, electrical, and other hazards throughout your facility and take action to eliminate these risks.

Emphasize training.

Employee training is probably the most important aspect of any successful safety program.

- ♦ Check OSHA standards for training requirements (many regulations have very specific requirements).
- ♦ Make sure training sessions are interactive and provide plenty of opportunities for questions and discussion.
- ♦ Take advantage of available technology to enhance and expand training options.
- ♦ Provide lots of demonstrations and hands-on experience during training sessions.
- ♦ Don't forget to provide training for supervisors and managers, too.

Encourage employee participation.

If employees at all levels in the organization are actively involved in promoting workplace safety, your safety initiatives for 2008 are much more likely to achieve objectives and improve overall safety.

- ♦ Encourage employees to make suggestions about how to improve workplace safety (and then be sure to give their suggestions serious consideration!).
- ♦ Involve employees in problem-solving when challenging safety and health issues arise.

Recognize and reward safe behavior.

Finally, don't forget to show your gratitude for the efforts employees, supervisors, and managers are making to create a safer workplace. Use recognition and reward programs to reinforce safe behavior and positive safety attitudes. Let employees know that their safety is your top priority this year, and ask them to join you in making it their top priority as well.

Resolve to make 2008 a safer year. Take some time now to consider your personal safety resolutions.

