

Manager/Supervisor Risk Management

#132– 3/7/13

A twice weekly e-mail training for YCPARMIA members

TOPIC: SAFETY – IIPP – SAFETY INSPECTIONS

A fourth element that the State requires in the IIPP addresses identification and correction of workplace safety hazards. Periodic safety inspections and follow-up procedures for eliminating or limiting the identified hazards must be documented and communicated to the entity's central safety committee.

Historically, YCPARMIA members have often come up short in this area. Reoccurring issues include:

- Failure to appreciate how big the scope of inspections is: YCPARMIA members (for insurance purposes) report almost 750 separate locations.
- Failure to schedule or hold periodic inspections; again the inspections are too often seen as something that we will get to when everything else is done, which means that they are seldom held.
- Failure to correct or address hazards identified during the inspection; it has been common to find the same problems existing during subsequent inspections a year or two later.
- Failure to communicate the results to the safety committee; this allows the problems to remain isolated in the same environment that allowed them to exist.
- Budget Constraints: fortunately most of the hazards identified during inspections involve quick and simple fixes that often cost nothing more than a short-term investment of some time.

YCPARMIA's recommendation for a "Best Practices" safety inspection program is to:

- Have the central safety committee develop an annual schedule of inspections based on the committee risk assessment, and overall safety plan;
- Notify the appropriate department and location of the planned inspection scope and date;
- Have the inspection conducted by a small team made up of:
 - Someone (rotating) from the safety committee tasked with reporting back;
 - YCPARMIA's Certified Safety Professional, for independent technical expertise;
 - Someone with access to (including keys) and knowledge of the inspected premises; and
 - If not the same person, someone responsible for taking corrective actions – note, many of the identified problems can often be fixed before the team leaves the location;
- Limit the time and scope of the inspection to avoid disruption – an hour should usually suffice;
- Be visible: make sure that the entity's employees at the inspected location know that the inspection is taking place, and give them an opportunity to express existing concerns without fear of reprisal;
- Schedule and conduct a short, but visible follow-up inspection to monitor and report results;
- Prepare a written report to the safety committee with a copy to the appropriate department management team -- the safety committee would include this report as part of their report to management;
- Lastly, encourage local/internal informal inspections with results reported to the safety committee for documentation, follow-up, and further planned action.

Next Topic: IIPP – Investigating Accidents