

THE SAFETY COMMITTEE AND A GOOD SAFETY PROGRAM—A PRIMER

The Safety Committee. A safety committee is an "often overlooked tool" which may be effective at reducing both the frequency and severity of claims in a manufacturing facility.. The criteria of a truly effective Safety Committee may include the following:

- Is comprised of several levels of employee participation, a representative of the company's workers compensation carrier, and perhaps one of the company's medical providers.
- Meets regularly.
- Conducts periodic safety audits - reviews safety hazards and violations of safety regulations and also what is being done correctly.
- Authorized to take corrective action.
- Responsible to develop, implement, and maintain company safety programs.
- Investigates accidents.

The Good Safety Program. A manufacturing company should look at its present job safety practices and training program. If you already have accident prevention policies and procedures in place, now would be a good time to improve them. In other words, is your safety program effective? If you do not have a safety program, put one in place even if your company is very small. A good safety program has:

- Someone designated as responsible for safety and for investigating and reporting accidents.
- A written program that details accident prevention procedures, including hazardous materials handling and labeling, and the proper use of safety gear, including eye and ear protection and safety shoes.
- A system of logging safety training of employees.
- Posted safety standards.
- Accessible fire extinguishers and first aid kits.
- Inspections for safety compliance made on an irregular schedule to check for proper clean up and trash removal, proper tool maintenance, appropriate use of safety equipment, and accident prevention procedures.
- Regular safety meetings with employees.
- Rewards for following safety policies and procedures.