



PRAIRIE VIEW A&M UNIVERSITY

A Member of the Texas A&M University System

June 2, 2009

OFFICE OF BUSINESS AFFAIRS MEMORANDUM No. FY09-85

Distributed via Campus Email

TO: Faculty and Staff

FROM: Mary Lee Hodge
Vice President of Business Affairs

RE: June is National Safety Month.

While the themes of National Safety Month change from year to year, the reasons behind it—the promotion and improvement of safety and health both inside and outside of the workplace—never change.

Here are a few suggestions on how you can promote employee safety and health on the job this month—and all year long.

1. Be a Hazard Detective

Workplace conditions are always changing, so if you let your guard down and take things for granted, a hazard might develop where you least expect it. And you can't assume everything's safe just because employees don't bring hazards to your attention or complain of safety problems. You have to get out there and see for yourself.

Take the time every so often to conduct a walk-through of work areas. Create a checklist of potential hazards and carry it with you on paper or in your head. As you walk around, watch employees working, too. Make sure they're wearing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and following safety procedures. Stop and talk for a minute with a few employees to see if anybody's having any problems.

2. Analyze Jobs for Safety's Sake

Every job should be formally analyzed to identify hazards at least once a year. If a different method will eliminate an identified hazard, introduce it. If PPE is required, make sure it's available. And think about housekeeping requirements, too. Sometimes hazards are created as a by-product of a job—combustible scrap and trash creating a fire hazard, for example, or tools left lying around where somebody could trip over them.

3. Emphasize Safety Training

Stress hazards and accident prevention during new employee orientation and follow through in routine safety meetings, informal toolbox talks, and required training sessions. Answer employees' questions about safety procedures. Give them the skills and information they need to work safely. And don't forget to explain all rules and

regulations thoroughly. Rules are less likely to be broken or ignored when employees understand why they were established and how they protect workers from injuries and illness.

4. Communicate Frequently

Talk to your people about safety at every opportunity. Use bulletin boards, newsletter features, safe worker awards, and so on, to spotlight safety and health concerns in your areas. Keep employees up to date on new information that affects their safety. Provide lots of feedback, rewarding safe performance, correcting unsafe behavior, and pointing out areas for improvement. And make sure communication flows both ways. Encourage employees to make safety suggestions, report problems, and ask questions.

5. Be Specific

Generalized statements about working safely are like sound bites—they don't tell you much, and they aren't too helpful. Be specific about what employees have to do (and how to do it) to protect themselves. If you're worried about employees remembering all the details, provide them handouts and job aids like checklists, procedural guidelines, and operating manuals.

6. Team Up for Problem Solving

Set up employee teams to solve safety problems in your areas. Let team members gather information, analyze possible causes of safety problems, develop and test solutions, and implement and monitor results. Being part of a safety team makes members feel that they share responsibility for workplace safety. And when other employees see their co-workers getting involved and making the job safer for everyone, they'll want to get in on the action, too.

Finally remember Safety is a Mindset not just a slogan, it needs to be part of your everyday mentality. For more information or assistance contact the PVAMU Environmental Health & Safety Department at EHS@PVAMU.EDU.

MLH/cpc

xc: Dr. George C. Wright