OSHA® **Fact**Sheet

Effective Workplace Safety and Health Management Systems

Every day, workplace injuries, illnesses and fatalities cause immeasurable pain and suffering to employees and their families. Recent estimates indicate that workplace injuries and illnesses cost our nation's businesses $170 billion per year in wasteful and often preventable expenses.

Effective Safety and Health Management Systems (SHMS) have proven to be a decisive factor in reducing the extent and severity of work-related injuries and illnesses. SHMS will result in reduced injury-related costs. These savings, when properly administered, will exceed the cost of a workplace SHMS.

Critical Elements of an Effective SHMS

The critical elements of an effective SHMS are: management commitment and employee involvement; worksite analysis; hazard prevention and control; training for employees, supervisors and managers. (See the reverse of this fact sheet for a checklist of action items for every SHMS component.)

OSHA Resources to Assist Employers with SHMS

- Small and medium-sized employers can benefit from OSHA's "Small Business Handbook" which contains specific information about SHMS: www.osha.gov/Publications/smallbusiness/small-business.html
- OSHA's "Compliance Assistance Quick Start" Web page is another online resource providing SHMS information: www.osha.gov/dcsp/compliance_assistance/quickstarts/index.html
- OSHA's "Hazard Awareness Advisor" is an online tool to assist in identifying and correcting safety and health workplace hazards: www.osha.gov/dts/osta/oshasoft/hazexp.html
- Employers seeking more comprehensive SHMS information, especially those with a safety and health professional on staff, can work with OSHA's Voluntary Protection Programs: www.osha.gov/dcsp/vpp/index.html and/or benefit from OSHA's "SHMS eTool": www.osha.gov/SLTC/etools/safetyhealth/index.html

Take Advantage of Free OSHA Assistance

Compliance Assistance Specialists are available in every OSHA Area Office to help you. Find the one in your local area: http://www.osha.gov/dcsp/compliance_assistance/cas.html

You may also contact your state's OSHA On-site Consultation program for free, expert assistance: www.osha.gov/consultation

The States that operate OSHA-approved State plans can also provide assistance; some have specific requirements for SHMS: www.osha.gov/dcsp/osp/index.html

OSHA's "$afety Pays" program is an interactive expert system to assist employers in estimating the costs of occupational injuries and illnesses and the impact on a company's profitability: http://www.osha.gov/dcsp/smallbusiness/safetypays/index.html

Safety and Health Management Systems Checklist

Management Commitment and Employee Involvement

❏ Develop and communicate a safety and health policy to all employees.

❏ Demonstrate management commitment by instilling accountability for safety and health, obeying safety rules and reviewing accident reports.

❏ Conduct regular safety and health meetings involving employees, managers and supervisors.

❏ Assign responsible person(s) to coordinate safety and health activities.

❏ Integrate safety and health into business practices (e.g., purchases, contracts, design and development).

❏ Involve employees in safety and health-related activities (e.g., self-inspections, accident investigations and developing safe practices).

❏ Recognize employees for safe and healthful work practices.

Worksite Analysis

❏ Evaluate all workplace activities and processes for hazards.

❏ Reevaluate workplace activities when there are changes in:

❏ Processes ❏ Materials ❏ Machinery

❏ Conduct on-site inspections, identify hazards and take corrective actions.

❏ Provide a hazard reporting system for employees to report unsafe and unhealthful conditions.

❏ Investigate all accidents and near misses to determine their root causes.

Hazard Prevention and Control

❏ Eliminate and control workplace hazards (e.g., engineering controls, workstation design and work practices).

❏ Establish a preventive maintenance program.

❏ Keep employees informed of safety and health activities and conditions.

❏ Plan for emergencies (e.g., create an evacuation plan, train employees and conduct fire drills).

❏ Record and analyze occupational injuries and illnesses.

Training for Employees, Supervisors and Managers

❏ Provide training on specific safe work practices before an employee begins work.

❏ Provide additional training for new work processes and when accidents and near misses occur.

❏ Provide refresher training on a routine basis.

(NOTE: OSHA regulations do not require employers to have a SHMS. Thus, the items on this checklist are strictly voluntary with the exception of construction industry employers.)

This is one in a series of informational fact sheets highlighting OSHA programs, policies or standards. It does not impose any new compliance requirements. For a comprehensive list of compliance requirements of OSHA standards or regulations, refer to Title 29 of the Code of Federal Regulations. This information will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. The voice phone is (202) 693-1999; teletypewriter (TTY) number: (877) 889-5627.

For more complete information:

OSHA® **Occupational Safety and Health Administration**

U.S. Department of Labor

www.osha.gov

(800) 321-OSHA

DEA 3/2008