

Who Is Responsible?

Management is ultimately responsible for providing a safe work environment for employees. However, since management cannot carry out all aspects of the loss control program, partial responsibility has to be delegated to others.

Management must retain the responsibility to motivate employees to get the program initiated and to oversee its operation. This can be accomplished by setting objectives and policies. The objectives will determine what action the management will take to assign responsibility. Policies establish exactly who will be assigned those responsibilities and what authority level accompanies their assignment.

All employees will have some responsibility for carrying out parts of the overall loss control program and providing feedback to help improve the safety for all. An effective loss control program involves staff functions, all levels of management and the labor force.

Those who manage production operations and supervise people are responsible for making sure the business runs efficiently and safely. It's well known that accidents and injuries greatly reduce efficiency. Therefore, an efficient operation must be a safe operation.

Plant managers, department heads and supervisors should be assigned the responsibilities to:

1. Assure that all materials, equipment and machinery are hazard-free or that adequate control measures have been instituted.
2. Assure that equipment, tools and machinery are being used as intended and are properly maintained.
3. Be aware of accident and injury trends. They must take necessary corrective actions to reverse those trends.
4. Assist in accident investigation.
5. Insure that all safety rules, regulations, and procedures are enforced.
6. Require that hazard analysis be done for operations, especially for dangerous situations.
7. Require that hazard recognition and control be included in all training.
8. Actively participate with and support the safety administrator, safety committee and their functions.

The safety director should be responsible for:

1. Identifying and analyzing the accident-producing practices and conditions. They should evaluate the potential severity of such accidents.
2. Developing accident prevention methods, procedures and programs.
3. Communicating accident and loss control data to those who are directly involved in containing losses.
4. Measuring and evaluating the effectiveness of the loss control system and recommending modifications to achieve optimum results.
5. Conducting safety meetings.

All employees have basic responsibilities. They must look out for their personal safety and that of their fellow workers. Employees are expected to follow all safety regulations and instructions just as seriously as any other company directives. They also have to recognize that safety is an important part of their job.

Non-production or safety functions also have related safety responsibilities.

The engineering department must design and plan workplaces and procedures with safety as their first concern.

Maintenance should be charged with the responsibility for making sure that all work is conducted in a safe manner. This is done so that temporary hazards caused by their activities are well controlled and do not hinder the safety of the production operations.

The purchasing department should consider safety when buying machinery, equipment and supplies.

The human resources department, on the topic of safety, should have the responsibility for proper selection, placement, education and counseling of employees.

To be effective, a loss control program must have the commitment and cooperation from everyone in the organization. The safety responsibilities must be carried out in a way that complements all levels of the safety effort.