

Creating a Safety Policy Statement

APPLICABLE STANDARD: N/A

EMPLOYEES AFFECTED: All

WHAT IS IT?

A safety policy statement is a document that declares your company's commitment to safety. It recognizes safety as a company core value, on a par with production and quality. The document demands safe work practices from every employee and safe decisions from the management team. It's important that the safety policy statement be signed by the owner or principal of the company.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Many people believe that their company's commitment to safety is obvious. It only makes sense that working safely is to everyone's benefit, and that everyone is expected to "be careful" on the job. All too often, however, the pressures of a dynamic production-oriented environment muddy the safety message. By creating a written safety policy, you make your intentions crystal-clear.

WHAT IS REQUIRED?

- Create a safety policy statement that demonstrates the company's commitment to safety.
- Ensure that the chief executive of the company or location signs the safety policy statement.
- Introduce the document to all employees.
- Emphasize the safety policy during all new employee orientations.
- Emphasize the safety policy as part of ongoing employee training.
- Make the safety commitment part of the company's decision-making process.
- Review and revise the safety policy statement annually to ensure it is still relevant to current operations.

HOW DO YOU DO IT?

The process for creating a safety policy statement does not have to be difficult. The document itself does not have to be long or complex. In fact, some of the most effective safety policy statements are very short so they can be easily communicated and remembered by all employees.

It is very important that the policy statement be honest and capture the true commitment of top management. The Internet is filled with hundreds of sample

safety policy statements that all say the “right things.” While these are good examples to work from, the best safety policy statements are developed internally. ISRI’s Safety Pledge appears in Appendix A. This can be used as your safety policy statement if it truly captures your company’s commitment to safety.

Once the document is created, it should be signed and dated by the leader of the company. This demonstrates that safety starts at the top.

Once completed, the document should be distributed to all employees. Think beyond just attaching it to paychecks. Consider holding a companywide or yardwide event to formally introduce the safety policy statement. A “big splash” event can be particularly useful for companies that may have allowed unsafe work practices in the past but are trying to recommit to a safety effort.

Make the safety policy statement part of everything you do. Share it with new hires, describe it to potential hires during the interview process, include it with bid proposals, etc. The more visible the document is, the faster it will become part of your organization’s culture.

