

It's Time to Think Safety
By – Gary Hanson, President
American Safety & Health Management Consultants, Inc.

The holiday season is over, and springtime is on the way. The busy 2017 year is now in the books and hopefully everyone had a safe and prosperous year. 2018 as of this writing is looking to be another positive year. There is a general feeling that the economy is improving. The Dow Jones is over 26,000 and the legislation to reduce taxes has been approved by congress and signed by the President.

As you get ready for the upcoming year it is a good time to review your safety program to ensure you are ready. I recommend that the following be considered during your program review.

- What are the key OSHA standards that will impact your business?
- Are all required written programs and policies up to date?
- Is there a detailed employee safety training program that will cover the company safety policies, job specific safe operating procedures, and required OSHA training?
- All equipment inspected and guarded
- Emergency procedures in place and clearly communicated to all employees
- The shop area inspected and any safety concerns corrected
- Personal protective equipment available and provided to employees as necessary
- Has an appropriate level management representative been designated to oversee the company safety program?
- Is there a plan in place in case of an unexpected OSHA inspection?

It's a good time to review each of the above areas in detail. OSHA.gov the OSHA website has a list of the most cited OSHA standards for both general industry and construction. They also break these down by NAIC Codes. The following is a brief list of some of the key standards you should be aware of:

- Machine Guarding
- Hazard Communication
- Housekeeping
- Fall Prevention
- Lockout/ Tagout
- Electrical Safety
- Personal Protective Equipment
- Heat Stress

Employee training for all new employees should be conducted and this should be documented. General areas that need to be covered:

- Company Safety Rules and Policies
- Reporting Injuries
- Emergency Procedures/ First Aid
- Hazard Communication
- Personal Protective Equipment
- Fire Extinguisher Operation

- Heat Stress/ Fatigue
- Safe Use of Tools and Equipment
- Other Areas May Be Required Based on the Duties of the New Employee

Safe Operating Procedures for operating all equipment should be reviewed and updated as needed.

A regular safety inspection program should be implemented and the findings documented and when necessary corrective action taken.

Emergency Procedures and Reporting Procedures should be reviewed to ensure they are up to date. Emergency evacuation maps should be updated and posted. Emergency telephone numbers should be posted and reviewed with all employees.

All required personal protective equipment should be available and issued to employees and where required should be mandatory.

Designate a capable management employee to ensure your safety program is implemented. Give this individual your full backing. Employees need to understand safety is important to you and you will enforce all safety policies.

Have a plan in place in case of an OSHA inspection. The following will help:

- Have all your written programs up to date and readily available
- Have your training records up to date and documented
- Conduct regular safety inspections and correct unsafe conditions
- Have a point person that has a basic knowledge of OSHA requirements and knows where all your written programs and training records are located
- Where necessary call either your safety consultant or attorney for assistance

All of the above should be reviewed prior to the start of your busy season. This will help make implementing your safety program easier and more productive. In other words, **It's Time to Think Safety.**

If you have any questions or concerns about your safety program please give me a call at 1-330-495-3437.