

Joint Occupational Health & Safety Committee

Tip Sheet No. 2

Tips for an Effective Committee
and Common Mistakes by JOHSC

AWARE  NS

Nova Scotia Health + Community Services Safety Association

Tips to an effective JOHS Committee and Common Mistakes by Committee

To be effective, your Safety Committee needs to do the following:

1. Hold meetings on a regular basis, following a consistent schedule.
2. Set clear meeting agendas, publish them in advance, and follow them.
3. Keep minutes of each meeting that summarize the issues discussed, the proposed actions to be taken, and the person(s) responsible for follow-up on each item.
4. Minutes should be published and provided to each committee member, as well as made available to all employees in a timely fashion.
5. Members should be required to attend all meetings, except in the case of emergencies. If a member cannot attend a meeting, then an alternate should be sent. Attendance should be taken at each meeting and recorded in the minutes.
6. Chairperson must show strong leadership, keep things moving.
7. Publicize the Committee's accomplishments, be positive. Give credit where credit is due. Keep employees informed of the Committee's activities. Find ways to recognize the efforts of individuals and groups within the organization who make significant contributions to the Safety Program.
8. Top management officials should attend Safety Committee Meetings (at least periodically). They must show interest in the Safety Program to both supervisory management and labor.
9. Improved inspections. Implementing cooperative inspections that include workers and management representatives. Making inspections fun and gratifying by noting not just the negative but the positive conditions in the workplace, and Issuing rewards after inspections. (This many not fit all work place environments)

Common JOHS Committee Mistakes

1. The group has no clear-cut job to perform, or the committee has no reason to exist.
2. There is talk, talk, talk...without decisions.
3. People are appointed who are neither interested nor experienced.
4. The chairpersons are not qualified by experience, desire, or ability.
5. The group has no orderly plan, no time schedule.
6. People do not show up for meetings and inspections.
7. The work of the committee is not recognized by employees or management.
8. Agendas are sent out late or distributed only at the meeting.