

National Safety Council

Position/Policy Statement

Safety Management Systems

The National Safety Council has an increasing body of evidence supporting the finding that comprehensive safety management systems are effective in reducing the risk of workplace incidents, injuries and fatalities. The National Safety Council encourages all companies to adopt a safety management system, and to measure results against defined criteria, demonstrate sustained management commitment and involvement in safety, and to engage workers and employee representatives (where applicable) to participate in the process.

A comprehensive safety management system can be defined as: a systematic, explicit and comprehensive process for managing safety risks that provides for goal setting, planning and measurement of performance. Effective safety management systems are woven into the fabric of an organization, becoming part of the culture, the way that people do their jobs. Successful safety management systems share certain attributes which include leadership from management and employee representatives to assure that necessary resources are available, technical and operational elements to assure there is ongoing reduction of risk, and cultural and behavioral considerations to maximize improvement by engaging the workforce and fostering collaborative efforts for all to contribute.

The National Safety Council model safety management system includes the following nine elements organized into three key performance areas.

Leadership – Management

- Management leadership and commitment
- System management and communications
- Assessments, audits and performance measurements

Technical – Operational

- Hazard identification and risk reduction
- Workplace design and engineering
- Operational processes and procedures

Cultural – Behavioral

- Worker and management involvement
- Motivation, behavior and attitudes

Training and orientation

This position statement reflects the opinions of the National Safety Council but not necessarily those of each member organization.

Adopted by the Delegates, May 27, 2010