



Green Cross for Safety® Awards 2023 Finalist | Excellence

Walgreens

Walgreens operates approximately 8,000+ drugstores in 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. About 78 percent of the U.S. population lives within five miles of a Walgreens or Duane Reade pharmacy. Walgreens sells prescription and non-prescription drugs as well as a wide assortment of retail products, including health and wellness, beauty, personal care and consumables, and general merchandise. The company is dedicated to the health and safety of its team members, vendors, customers, patients and the communities it serves.

In 2017, Walgreens began an in-depth analysis of workers' compensation claims that occurred within its retail locations. The company concluded that approximately 40% of injuries were slips, trips and falls that occurred within its retail stockroom environments. These slip, trip and fall claims were caused by excessive inventory stored throughout the stockroom and inventory stored at levels requiring the use of a ladder. Further analysis revealed there was an opportunity to improve storage organization and awareness to ensure a safer way to store product inventory.

These contributing factors resulted in scenarios where team members navigated walking surface hazards, the dangers of working at elevated levels and the potential for falling objects. Furthermore, the disorganization of product inventory storage contributed to the potential for regulatory risk and product damage/loss. Lastly, the unseen impact on team members from slip, trip and fall claims is often unmeasurable. Therefore, it is included as an additional reason for a safety enhancement.

An analysis done by Walgreens identified an opportunity to collaborate cross-functionally to redefine its stockroom inventory controls and storage layouts. Six years ago Walgreens began transforming its safety culture to a leader-led model and a team member care culture to support an improved safety environment for its team members. The company's goal was to make the stockroom safety program an integral component of daily operations.

Walgreens implemented a Safety Focused Stockroom program that concentrated on safe storage planograms and the safe storage of merchandise without the use of a ladder. The company's Safety Focused Stockroom program addressed many identified concerns as follows:

- Exercised basic principles to ensure items for sale are available for purchase by customers versus being stored in the stockroom, which it has titled *On Shelf Availability (OSA)*
- Removed excess metal shelving, fixtures and displays not being used
- Stocked product that needs to be frequently accessed at no more than six feet high to eliminate the need for ladder use
- Maintained stockroom aisles and stairs free of merchandise and other egress obstructions
- Practiced ongoing housekeeping to reduce walking surface hazards
- Reduced repetitive motion activities associated with frequent handling and reaching for products

Throughout its journey, Walgreens continued to focus on what may be contributing to injuries, acquiring feedback from its team members and field leadership teams, and continuing to stay abreast of safety regulations, industry best practices and innovative solutions. Some significant drivers continue to show positive and measured results.

- Workers' compensation claims associated to slip, trip and fall claims within the stockroom have been reduced by 66% over the last six years
- Safety Focused Stockroom did not require an extra spend and was developed by creatively working within existing budgets
- Its commitment to team member safety has resulted in a 96% average potential penalty reduction in OSHA citations

Year to date, Walgreens has successfully transformed more than 76% of its retail locations to ladder-less stockrooms through its Safety Focused Stockroom Program. The company continues to place a focus on improving its adoption of the program showing its commitment to managing risks and increasing safety awareness for its team members. This has resulted in a year-over-year reduction in stockroom claims to team members allowing Walgreens to capture the financial claim savings from fewer lost workdays, fewer restricted work cases and overall better care.

The journey to transform a safety culture into a grassroots movement takes commitment across the entire organization. Commitment to safety is everyone's responsibility at Walgreens. It is equally important to stay well informed of industry best practices and opportunities for improvement as it continues to recognize and engage its store leaders and team members to have a consistent and best-in-class commitment to safety.