

## Safety Recognition Programs

Safety recognition in the workplace can be beneficial to your company's overall efforts when carried out properly. Unlike traditional safety incentive plans, developing a strategy that recognizes employees for matters they have control over can be more effective in improving your workplace safety program.

Consider refraining from rewarding or incentivizing employees for trivial instances that can be seen as random, such as "days without injuries" or other similar scenarios. These types of rate-based incentives are permissible under the current OSHA regulations and can be part of an overall safety program effort as long as they are not implemented in a way that discourages injury reporting. However, they can fail to connect between "cause and effect" as it relates to how injuries occur and what specific strategies are needed to prevent them.

Instead, companies should recognize individuals and groups for measures taken to prevent injuries or illnesses in their day-to-day activities. Doing so will help reinforce practices that foster the safety culture. The more you can develop specific safety policies, procedures, practices, activities, etc., the more successful your recognition program will be.

Recognition programs should be tailored to your unique workforce. Use your safety committee or establish a focus group to develop and implement the program. The following should be considered as you look to introduce recognition into your work environment:

- The program should have the full support of upper management.
- Develop several measurable or identifiable safe behaviors, practices, activities, etc., that can be used to recognize staff. These can include:
  - Following established rules and safe work practices.
  - Participating in safety meetings, safety committees and conducting routine inspections.
  - Keeping tools, equipment and vehicles well maintained.
  - Providing ideas for safety improvement.
  - Identifying and reporting unsafe working conditions.
- Determine what type of recognition would be most effective and most valued by the employees.
- Frequently recognize team members to maintain focus and encourage participation.
- Provide training at all levels of your organization to introduce the program.
- Use visuals to convey safety messages and track results in conspicuous places.
- Remember to encourage employees to report workplace injuries immediately as part of this program since they are entitled to medical attention when an injury or illness occurs.

If you have any questions or would like further assistance in developing your safety recognition program, contact your CompWest loss control consultant or visit our online resources at <https://www.compwestinsurance.com/> for related information. The advice presented in this document is intended as general information for employers.

### The CompWest Difference

CompWest customers are assigned a dedicated loss control consultant to identify and address loss trends while serving as a safety resource.