

TRU Waste Processing Center (TWPC) EFCOG Safety Culture Pilot Program Implementation

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TWPC Brief Description

TWPC was designed and built to process Contact Handled, Remote Handled, and Low Level waste

- Operated by EnergX, LLC, under contract to DOE ORO
- About 200 employees and contractors (increasing with ARRA)
- Supernate process for CIP (completed)
- Glove Box line (CH)
- Box Break-down Area (BBA) (CH)
- Hot cell for remote handled waste (RH)
- Designing sludge process for MVST tanks
- Build out of sludge process scheduled in 2010 -2011

Expectations of Pilot Organizations

- Management commitment to assess and improve safety culture, using EFCOG methodology as a guide
- Perform some assessments of safety culture during 2009 to identify safety culture improvement targets
- Identify some improvement activities based on targets identified by assessments
- Provide feedback to EFCOG/DOE on the safety culture assessment and improvement approach

DOE Definition of Safety Culture

Organizations with a positive safety culture are characterized by communications founded on mutual trust, shared perceptions on the importance of safety, and by confidence in the efficacy of preventative measures.

Management Commitment

- The TWPC Deputy General Manager and Directors have agreed to operate as an EFCOG pilot organization
- Separately and independently (of the EFCOG initiatives), TWPC Senior Management has thoroughly discussed and agreed to improve our culture as a means to continue our outstanding safety record.

Assessments Performed/Scheduled

- Safety Conscious Work Environment Assessment
- DOE VPP Assessment
- VPP Independent Assessment (ORISE, CH2M HILL Hanford)
- VPP Self-assessment ~ 70% of population interviewed
- DOE VPP STAR Assessment
- Safety Conscious Work Environment Assessment
- Completed February 2008
- Completed March 2008
- Completed September 2008
- Completed March 2009
- Scheduled May 11-14, 2009
- Scheduled Fall 2009

Improvements Identified by Assessments

- From SCWE survey:
 - Improve communications
 - Teaching Consultive Communications
 - Established V.O.I.C.E. and ABE processes
 - Established monthly newsletter
 - Conducted Performance Improvement Feedback sessions with all hands by Senior Managers in groups of 5-6 (complete)
 - Address perceived fear of retaliation by ~ 10% of workforce
 - Emphasize alternate methods of communicating up chain of command (ECP, Ombudsman, other managers) (ongoing)
 - Institute SCWE manual containing performance expectations for employees, managers and senior managers (complete)
 - Conduct training to “operationalize” expectations, change behaviors throughout organization (ongoing)
 - Conduct “Recognizing and Preventing Retaliation” for Senior Managers, Managers, and employees. (Senior Managers complete, Managers and employees ongoing)

Improvements Identified by Assessments (continued)

- From DOE VPP Assessment (March 2008):
 - Improve maintenance work control process and interface with AHA (complete)
 - Improve aging of Timely Orders, ensure closure and incorporation into procedure within a year (complete)
 - Improve and demonstrate ECP (complete)
 - Perform Independent VPP Assessment (complete)
 - Improve regular safety inspections (complete)
 - Review and/or revise AHA process (complete – see first bullet above)
 - Seven longer-term improvement initiatives from observations (ongoing)

Improvements Identified by Assessments (continued)

- From VPP Assist Visit (September 2008) – essentially the same set of issues as the DOE VPP assessment in March; the assist team observed our progress to date, gave suggestions on how to proceed.
- From VPP Self-assessment, March 2009:
 - Prepare comprehensive Safety Improvement Plan (complete)
 - Include VPP tenets in Safety Policy/Program (ongoing)
 - Train managers in performance evaluation program (ongoing)
 - Issue a written disciplinary policy (complete)
 - Increase employee involvement in investigation process (ongoing)
 - Review/revise assessment plan for ISMS, VPP, Safety Procedures (ongoing)
 - Improve communications (ongoing)

Improvements Identified by Assessments (continued)

- From VPP Self-assessment, March 2009: (continued)
 - Provide managers annual HPI training (ongoing)
 - Small number of manager's behavior contradicts stated commitment to safety; need to address (ongoing)
 - Identify metrics (complete from EFCOG literature)
 - Provide additional training to inspectors and revise checklist (complete)
 - Revise Safety Committee procedure (complete)
 - Quarterly hazard recognition training for managers and safety committee (ongoing)
 - Quarterly safety inspection training for managers and safety committee (ongoing)
 - Improve feedback to employees on results of surveys (complete)
 - Provide managers monthly behavior training (ongoing)

Improvements Identified by Assessments (continued)

- From VPP Self-assessment, March 2009: (continued)
 - Improve recognition of individuals on event/accident investigations (ongoing)
 - Improve timeliness of issuing various reports & surveys (ongoing)
 - Redeploy General AHAs (ongoing)
 - Conduct peer safety observer training for safety committees (ongoing)
 - Revise and issue Incident Reporting Procedure (complete)
 - Use trend analysis to communicate to employees (ongoing)
 - Make monthly H&S reports available to employees (complete)
 - Fill open H & S position (complete)
 - Conduct management assessment of work control process (ongoing)
 - Improve employee response to emergency conditions (element of surprise) (ongoing)
 - Evaluate current training practices (classroom vs. required reading) (ongoing)
 - Improve safety training by incorporating emphasis on safety behaviors (ongoing)

Additional Initiatives Planned/Undertaken

- HPI for managers and for trainers (completed April 2009)
- Consultive (group) problem solving and decision-making training (Summer and Fall, 2009)
- HPI training for all hands (Summer and Fall 2009)
- SCWE Training for all hands (Fall 2009)

Observations (by the author)

“There ain’t no such thing as a ‘safety’ culture.”

Point: An organization’s culture has attributes (norms) that support good safety attributes (norms), or it doesn’t.

Examples:

- If good safety practices require information flow up the chain of command as well as down, and if flow up is not a cultural norm in *all* aspects of the organization, then it won’t be a norm in the safety aspect for very long.

Observations (continued)

- Examples: (continued)
 - If employee involvement in planning is not a norm for the organizational culture, then employee involvement in safety planning won't be for long.
 - If employee responsibility for employee actions is not a norm in the organizational culture, then employee responsibility for safety won't last long.
 - If clear and agreed-upon expectations for performance are not a norm for the organization, then clear and agreed-upon expectations for safety performance won't be a lasting norm, either.

Observations (continued)

If the attributes/norms for the organizational culture are not the ones needed for the safety culture, the safety culture will regress to the organizational culture as soon as attention on the safety culture diminishes in the slightest.

Therefore, the organizational culture must change. One cannot focus just on the safety aspects of culture. This is a broader task, and takes more effort and focus on the part of the organization, from top to bottom.

Organizational Culture Elements

