

MBAA Safety Tool Box Talk



LEADING INDICATORS

SAFETY ASSURANCE

Traditionally, safety performance was measured by the number of accidents or lost work days that occurred. Although it is useful data to track our long-term results - and hopefully improvements - they are lagging indicators of what is actually occurring out on the brewery floor.

Leading Indicators are measurable actions or results that proactively reduce the likelihood of accidents in the brewery. Think of it like Quality Assurance versus Quality Control. In Quality Control, we measure our beer once complete to be sure it meets our specifications. What if it doesn't? Too late to do anything about it.

Quality Assurance focuses on building quality into the beer from the earliest stages. Focusing efforts on quality ingredients and proper SOPs builds confidence and increases the likelihood that the finished beer will meet or exceed your minimum specifications.

If you apply this to Safety, we should focus our efforts on those actions, procedures and programs that we know will create a safer workplace. We can then have a high level of confidence that our lagging indicators; DART Rates, Incident Rates, Workers Comp costs, etc., will improve.

So what **Leading Indicators** should we focus on? Here are a few.

TRAINING

OSHA does not specifically tell us what training we need to provide, but rather that we have the obligation to assess the workplace for what risks there are and train appropriately. Properly trained employees are safer employees.

PROGRAMS

Most industrial workplaces are required by OSHA to have programs and trainings on topics such as the following: Hazard Communications, Emergency Action Plan, Fire Safety, Walking/Working Surfaces and Medical and First Aid. Others may be required based on your workplace risks. If you have these programs in place – and live by them – you will have a safer brewery.

AUDITS

Regular self-audits of your brewery, with broad employee participation, will help to ensure your programs are in practice and your risks are being minimized. Proper follow-up procedures must be in place to be sure that the inevitable problems are quickly addressed. A self-aware brewery is a safer brewery.

COMMUNICATIONS

Do you have open Communication systems in place? Do you report safety performance to all employees? Do employees have a quick and direct way to communicate safety concerns and near misses? Good communications leads to a safer brewery.

HAZARDS AND NEAR MISSES

How well do your employees recognize unsafe conditions? Do they report them as well as near misses? Does the brewery have a means for them to report these directly to someone with the authority to fix the issue? Quick action to recognized hazards and near misses creates a safer brewery.

CULTURE

Have you stepped back to evaluate what the culture of your brewery is, especially as it relates to safety? Culture permeates from the top down. Change has to be supported from that direction as well. Culture change may be one of

your biggest challenges and will make or break your efforts in all other areas you are working on. A brewery with a safety minded culture is a safer brewery.

BEHAVIORS

We often focus only on unsafe conditions, but unsafe behaviors can lead to more accidents, especially once you have addressed most of the conditions throughout the brewery. Politely and directly addressing unsafe behaviors with involved employees leads to a safer brewery.

OUTSIDE RESOURCES

Do you utilize outside resources? Many exist; OSHA, State Government Safety Offices, Independent Consultants or even safety professionals from other breweries or local industries can provide a different perspective on your efforts and the brewery conditions. These viewpoints can be invaluable in a brewery seeking continuously improved safety performance.

Build safety into your employees, your building, your equipment and your processes, and better safety results will follow.

LINKS

- [OSHA Compliance Quick Start](#)
- [OSHA Training Requirements](#)
- [OSHA Outreach Training – General Industry](#)
- [Brewers Association - Safety](#)

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ON
BREWERY SAFETY PROGRAMS,
PLEASE VISIT THE MBAA SAFETY
WEBSITE AT**

www.mbaa.com/brewresources