Ensuring a Safe Work Environment

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Introduction and Objectives

- Recent work with Dr. Liz Wagstrom at the National Pork Board with Michele Schermann and Kerry Leedom Larson.

Objectives:

- Very briefly explain and describe OSHA’s “hot buttons” when it comes to worker safety and health.
- Describe benefits for “ensuring” a safe workplace that go beyond regulatory compliance.
- Outline seven specific areas of concern based on potential harm to workers.
- Locate specific resources to assist with your efforts.

OSHA, Workplace Safety Regulation

- A few things you need to know…
  - Coverage
  - State programs
- 59 inspections documented since 2000 in osha.gov database*

Note: SIC 0213 (for searching)

Injury and Illness History MN — Minnesota Employers

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Injury Type</th>
<th>Percent Reporting Injuries</th>
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<td>slips/falls</td>
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<td>strains and sprains</td>
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<td>needlesticks</td>
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<td>back/neck injury</td>
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<td>cuts</td>
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Injury/Illness NC — NC Employers

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<tr>
<th>Injury Type</th>
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A Few Observations on the Types of Things OSHA Looks for

- Standard “agricultural” coverage by OSHA standards (tractors and machines).
- Increasing use of the “General Duty” clause of OSHA for coverage of things like:
  - Needlesticks
  - Confined space entry
  - Respiratory protection
  - Electrical safety – code compliance with installations, extension cords, etc.
  - Exits for personnel

General Duty Clause

- 29 U.S.C. § 654, 5(a):  Each employer shall furnish to each of his employees employment and a place of employment which are free from recognized hazards that are causing or are likely to cause death or serious physical harm to his employees.
- Also says EMPLOYEES have the duty to comply.

Beyond “OSHA” Why be concerned?

- Care and concern.
- Decreased levels of turnover and absenteeism.
- Reduced costs.
- Safe animal handling and attention to “animal welfare” issues (if you know basic animal behavior will work more safely and will know the correct ways to move/handle animals).

Top Seven List....

- My opinions only, based on OSHA plus what the data tells us.
- This is only a start.
- Safety and worker health is a continuous PROCESS (without an end point).
- It takes a team --- Workers need to be on board!

1. Change the “Safety Culture”

- It’s more than common sense.
- Working around a hazard is like playing Russian Roulette.
- Safety is about specific steps to get rid of hazards.
- Important concept --- Getting rid of hazards through task re-design, etc. is preferred OVER PPE and other methods.

2. Needlesticks = A Real Challenge

- Many sticks occur when recapping needles.
- Don’t carry needles in pockets.
- Replace often – injuries more frequent when dull.
- Ask your vet.
- Recommend against women of childbearing age injecting certain products.
3. Lifting Blows Out Backs!

- "Safe" lifting = more than bending your knees and lifting with straight back.
- Consider smaller packages for bagged products.
- Frequent lifting tasks can be re-designed.
  - Weight, frequency, duration, height of object, lifted, twisting required, distance from person to object.
- Protocol and equipment for common high risk tasks (like moving dead animals)
- Work SMART, not hard – Our bodies do wear out.

4. A Sow Versus Artis Hicks(??)

- Injuries when working with large animals are very common.
- Injury occurs when ENERGY is transferred.
  - Energy = \( \frac{1}{2} \times \text{mass} \times \text{velocity}^2 \)
- Understand animal behavior (vision, flight zone, appropriate ways to move animals)
- Note comments on next slides about solid panels and moving animals

5. Outsmart Airborne Hazards

- Three ways to deal with airborne hazards
  - Control them at the source
  - Once they’re there, get them out
  - Wear PPE
- The PPE choice is the most troublesome.
- In pork production facilities – feed, waste (solid, liquid, CO\(_2\)) contribute the most.

6. Confined Spaces Kill

A Bit more on PPE

- Beards only filter out the big chunks.
- We’re most concerned about the finer particles (and vapors/gases).
- PPE “program” is needed.
7. It’s Not Rocket Science

- General “housekeeping.”
- Handwashing and hygiene.
- Crescent wrench ≠ Hammer.
- Two ways out of every area.
- Match clothing with the task.

Contact Information

- John Shutske – shutske@umn.edu
- Web site: safety.cfans.umn.edu
- Study #2 unpublished Master of Public Health Plan B paper by Tegwin Taylor.