

Foundry Ergo Partnership (FEP)

1. Situational Analysis

Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSDs) have been identified as one of the leading causes of injuries and illnesses. In 1999, employers reported nearly 600,000 MSDs requiring time away from work. These injuries and illness account for \$1 of every \$3 spent on workers' compensation and amount to costs of more than \$15 - \$20 billion annually.

Foundries recognize the importance of ergonomics and want to be proactive in reducing ergonomic injuries in their industry.

2. Identification of Stakeholders:

Neenah Foundry
Waupaca Foundry
Brillion Iron Works
Roloff Manufacturing
OSHA Appleton Office
OSHA Region V Ergonomist
OSHA Health Response Team
Labor Unions
Wisconsin Health Consultation

Additional stakeholders may be added to the partnership as time progresses.

3. Goals and Measurement:

Goal 1. Analyze workstations and work processes for ergonomic hazards and eliminate as many risk factors as feasible. Hazard control will be accomplished by implementing those measures that are technologically and economically feasible.

Measurement:

- a) Number of workstations analyzed.
- b) Number of risk factors or stressors identified.
- c) Number of stressors significantly reduced or eliminated.
- d) Reduction in the number and severity of ergonomic injuries.

Goal 2. Document control measures including administrative controls and work practices.

Measurement:

Develop a best practices handbook, video, and or power point presentation showing possible solutions to ergonomic hazards. Incorporate failures and successes including information on the cost of controls and any payback realized.

4. Stakeholder Involvement

Each stakeholder will designate at least one representative to be a part of the FEP committee. This representative must be trained in the signs and symptoms of MSDs (musculoskeletal disorders) and identification of MSD risk factors (stressors). They must also be knowledgeable of the appropriate control measures. The committee will meet quarterly, as a minimum, to plan the next meeting's activity and evaluate the progress of the partnership.

Prior to the first meeting, each AFS (American Foundrymen Society) company will identify processes in their establishments that will be covered by this partnership. Processes will be identified based upon the following analysis:

- OSHA 300 log
- Workers' compensation cases
- Questionnaires or surveys
- Reports of signs and symptoms of musculoskeletal disorders
- Walkthrough inspections that identify stressors and risk factors.

Processes where control measures have already been implemented may also be included for addition to the best practices manual.

A minimum of three AFS members of the FEP committee will conduct on site visits to evaluate selected processes. They will be on site for as long as needed to accomplish the objectives of the visit. Processes will be video taped and digitally photographed. Control measures will be recommended for risk factors identified.

Wisconsin Health Consultation will participate in on all on-site visits.

The Appleton OSHA Office will not participate in the on-site inspections. The office will review videotapes and recommend control measures as needed. Any "plain view" violations that may appear in the videos will be not be cited with the understanding that the violations will be corrected. Difficult cases will be forwarded to the Health Response Time for further analysis.

The regional OSHA ergonomist will provide assistance by reviewing videotapes conducting on-site analysis if necessary, and conducting training.

It is expected that the number of MSDs may actually increase when an ergonomic program is first implemented. This is not indicative of the success of the program. As time goes on, the number and severity of the MSDs should decrease.

5. Safety and Health Programs:

Membership companies will develop a safety and health program to reduce ergonomic hazards. This program will be in writing and include the following elements:

- Management commitment and employee involvement
- Hazard analysis
- Hazard control
- Training
- Medical protocol

The safety and health program will be reviewed and approved by the Wisconsin Consultation Program (subject to provision in disclaimer).

6. Employee Involvement

If a union represents an AFS establishment, they must be given the opportunity to participate.

Each AFS establishment will have an ergonomic/safety committee. A member of the committee will participate in all on-site activity at their establishment. The FEP committee will consider any recommendations they make.

The ergonomic/safety committee members will receive training on signs and symptoms of musculoskeletal disorders and be knowledgeable in ergonomic control measures.

The FEP will seek recommendations from the employees who are working on the jobs being investigated.

Employees will be trained in the specific procedure for reporting musculoskeletal disorders.

7. OSHA Incentives

Up to 35 % penalty reductions for good faith.

Focused inspections.

Maximum use of phone and fax investigations of complaints in lieu of onsite inspections.

EISA penalty reductions of 40 %.

Priority consideration for on-site consultation by the State of Wisconsin.

General duty clause citations for ergonomic hazards (Section 5(a)(1) of the Act) will not be issued to FEP establishments that have implemented programs to reduce ergonomic hazards.

8. Verification and OSHA Inspections

FEP participants will not be exempt from programmed inspection activity and remain subject to OSHA inspections and investigations in accordance with established agency procedures. It is not necessary to inspect participants to determine that employers are upholding their responsibilities. Verification will be accomplished by reviewing the results and efforts of the FEP participant at the scheduled meetings. If it appears that an FEP employer is not acting in good faith (based upon their participation), a verification inspection will be conducted.

9. Program Evaluation

This partnership will include an annual evaluation to determine whether modifications are needed and to review the status. The FEP will accomplish the evaluation. The evaluation will follow OSHA directive Number TED 8-0. 2, OSHA strategic Partnerships for Worker Safety and Health, Appendix C. All required data to monitor the success of the program will be assembled at least quarterly.

10. Leveraging

This partnership requires that ergonomic control measures be documented and published for use by others in the foundry industry across the country. FEP participants who travel to other plants will gain insight into how to improve their own ergonomic programs and may become resources to others who have not had this experience. When engineering controls are attempted the results will be shared with other members of the AFS. This will include success stories and failures.

11. Termination

This agreement will be in effect until a satisfactory review of all the ergonomic problems have been accomplished. At the end of the second year, the stakeholders will meet to decide if the partnership has had enough success to continue. A signatory stakeholder may submit a written notice to withdraw prior to completion of the project. By majority vote, the FEP committee can request the resignation of any stakeholder that is not putting forth a credible effort or not contributing to the partnership. The partnership can be terminated by the FEP committee subject to a written proposal stating the reason(s).