

Achieving VPP

A Safety Professional's Perspective

NOTICE

**I DON'T REPRESENT OSHA
I AM NOT AN OSHA EMPLOYEE
MY OPINIONS AND EXPERIENCES ARE MY OWN
I AM NOT REPRESENTING ANY COMPANY
I AM A SAFETY NERD**

Respect

GIVE IT



TO GET IT

- Quiet Cell Phones
- Respect Opinions
- Ask Questions
- Actively Participate
- Don't Fall Asleep
 - If you do don't all out of your chair!



What is VPP?

- The Voluntary Protection Program (VPP) is an OSHA program that recognizes and promotes effective safety and health management
- VPP is Section (2)(b)(1) of the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, which declares the Congress's intent
 - "to assure so far as possible every working man and woman in the Nation safe and healthful working conditions and to preserve our human resources by encouraging employers and employees in their efforts to reduce the number of occupational safety and health hazards at their places of employment, and to stimulate employers and employees to institute new and to perfect existing programs for providing safe and healthful working conditions"

How Does VPP Work?

- VPP sets performance-based criteria for a managed safety and health system, invites sites to apply, and then assesses applicants against these criteria.
 - **Star:** Recognition for employers and employees who demonstrate exemplary achievement in the prevention and control of occupational safety and health hazards the development, implementation and continuous improvement of their safety and health management system.
 - **Merit:** Recognition for employers and employees who have developed and implemented good safety and health management systems but who must take additional steps to reach Star quality
 - **Demonstration:** Recognition for employers and employees who operate effective safety and health management systems that differ from current VPP requirements. This program enables OSHA to test the efficacy of different approaches.

How Does VPP Work?

When participating in VPP, management, employees (both company and contractor), and OSHA participate in a cooperative relationship at a workplace that has implemented a strong and effective safety and health program



Key Elements of VPP



Management leadership



Employee involvement



Worksite analysis



Hazard prevention and control



Safety and health training

Eligibility

- VPP Online Application
 - Federal OSHA has an online application process for those that are eligible
 - State Plan States work through the State VPP Manager
- 3-year average be below at least ONE of the BLS rates for your industry (based on NAICS code).
 - The three-year TCIR and DART rates must be below at least one of the three most recent years of specific industry national averages for nonfatal injuries and illnesses at the level published by BLS for that industry.
- Must have a signed Union written letter for VPP support
- Successful on-site audit

Eligibility

- Any of the following enforcement activities will disqualify a worksite from VPP:
 - Open enforcement investigations at the time of application
 - Pending or open contested citations or notices under appeal at the time of application
 - Willful citations or unresolved Whistleblower cases where OSHA issues a Merit Finding or 11(c), International Safe Container Act (ISCA), or Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) cases where the Office of the Solicitor of Labor files a complaint in district court during the 60 months prior to application
 - Unresolved, outstanding enforcement actions such as long-term abatement agreements or contests
 - Work-related fatality of an employee during the five years months prior to the application or a work-related fatality of a contract employee during the last year prior to application
 - Inclusion in OSHA's Severe Violator Enforcement Program (SVEP) at the time of application

VPP Benefits



My VPP Experience

Potential risk hazards and exposure include, but not be limited to:

- Radiation Exposure
- Radiological Contamination
- Hazardous material (chemical) exposure and control
- High noise areas
- Heat stress
- Confined spaces
- Inhalation Hazards
- Rotating equipment
- High pressure, high temperature steam and fluid
- Fall hazards
- Lead acid batteries

My VPP Experience

Potential risk hazards and exposure include, but not be limited to:

- Exposure during maintenance on high, medium, and low voltage equipment
- Compressed gases
- Underwater hazards
- Asbestos exposure
- Lead exposure
- Hydrogen gas
- Sodium Thiosulphate
 - Diesel Fuel, Gasoline and Propane
 - Weather Related Exposures
 - Hexavalent chromium exposure

The Journey

Leadership Commitment

Leadership support is crucial. Top management must be committed to safety as a core value. This commitment should be communicated and demonstrated consistently

Assessment and Benchmarking

Understand your current safety culture. Use surveys, assessments, and benchmarking against industry best practices to identify strengths and weaknesses.

Set Clear Safety Expectations

Establish clear safety policies, procedures, and expectations. Ensure they are well-communicated and understood at all levels of the organization.

Training and Education

Provide comprehensive safety training for all employees. Training should address hazards specific to your industry and the skills needed to mitigate them.

Employee Involvement

Encourage employees to actively participate in safety initiatives. They should feel comfortable reporting hazards and suggesting improvements.

The Journey

Effective Communication

Foster open and transparent communication channels for safety-related matters. Regularly share safety information, updates, and lessons learned.

Accountability and Consequences

Implement accountability mechanisms. Recognize and reward safe behavior while addressing unsafe actions with appropriate consequences.

Continuous Improvement

Establish a culture of continuous improvement in safety. Regularly assess and update safety practices and protocols based on feedback and data.

Safety Resources

Allocate sufficient resources for safety, including personnel, equipment, and budget. Ensure that safety efforts have the necessary support.

Safety Committees

Form safety committees or teams that represent various departments and roles within the organization. These teams can identify safety issues and drive change.

The Journey

Measurement and Metrics

Use key performance indicators (KPIs) and safety metrics to track progress. Monitor incident rates, near-misses, and other relevant data.

Behavioral Safety Programs

Implement behavioral safety programs that focus on understanding and influencing the behaviors that contribute to safety outcomes.

Safety Audits and Inspections

Regularly conduct safety audits and inspections to identify hazards and ensure compliance with safety standards.

Positive Safety Culture Symbols

Create symbols and reminders of your safety culture, such as safety slogans, posters, and visible safety equipment.

Feedback Mechanisms

Establish a feedback mechanism for employees to report safety concerns, near-misses, and suggestions for improvement.

The Journey

Celebrate Milestones

Celebrate safety milestones and achievements. Recognize individuals and teams for their contributions to building a safer workplace.

Leadership by Example

Leaders should model safe behavior. When employees see leadership prioritizing safety, it reinforces its importance.

Learn from Incidents

Conduct thorough investigations of incidents and near-misses. Use these as opportunities to learn and prevent similar occurrences.

Legal Compliance

Ensure strict compliance with all applicable safety regulations and standards.

Persistence and Patience

Be patient and persistent, and continuously reinforce the importance of safety.

WHAT DO
YOU THINK



- [Voluntary Protection Programs Policies and Procedures Manual | Occupational Safety and Health Administration \(osha.gov\)](#)
 - Recently updated
- [OSHA's Cooperative Programs | Occupational Safety and Health Administration](#)
- [Voluntary Protection Programs | Occupational Safety and Health Administration \(osha.gov\)](#)

