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Safety Programs Among Selected Manufacturing Companies in Maine 1989

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Safety Programs Among
Selected Manufacturing Companies
in Maine, 1989
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Prepared by:
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and Ruth Gribbin, Intern

Maine Department of Labor
Bureau of Labor Standards
Research and Statistics Division

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Introduction

The Maine Bureau of Labor Standards, Research and Statistics Division, conducted a survey of Maine's Manufacturing sector during 1989 to find out who had safety programs, to find out what the programs consisted of, and to determine what was preventing companies from either starting a program or expanding their existing program. Survey forms were sent to 650 manufacturers, with a usable response rate of 40.6 percent (249 usable returns). Because the response rate was low, the results may not be representative of the entire manufacturing industry.

Two interns worked on this project. Susan Pinette of Brunswick conducted the survey and prepared the early drafts of this publication. Ruth Gribbin of Falmouth revised the publication and developed the charts and graphs. Staff of the Research and Statistics Division provided guidance to the interns.

Methodology

The Safety Program Survey was a voluntary survey of a sample of Maine's manufacturers. To encourage response, the survey form was limited to the front and back of one page and to questions requiring either check-marks, yes/no, or very brief answers.

Why were only manufacturing companies surveyed? First, manufacturing operations have a wide range of working conditions, including some of the most hazardous. Second, the manufacturing industry has companies of all sizes. Third, we already had a pre-selected sample which would have represented the manufacturing industry if an acceptable number of responses were received.

A pretest of the survey form was sent to a sample of 70 manufacturing firms not selected for the actual survey. There were 44 responses. Minor modifications were made to the survey form based on an analysis of the pretest returns.
Existence of Safety Programs by Major Industry Groups

The Lumber and Wood Products division had 82 employers respond to the survey, with only 48.8 percent having a safety program. Printing and Fabricated Metal industries had 18 companies each respond to the survey with 38.9 percent and 55.6 percent, respectively who had safety programs. Conversely, Chemicals, Petroleum and Coal Products, Paper, Electric and Electronic Machinery, and Furniture manufacturers had very few employers responding to the survey but the majority reported having a safety program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major Industry Division (SIC)</th>
<th>Total Respondents</th>
<th>With Programs Number Percent</th>
<th>Without Programs Number Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>59.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lumber &amp; Wood Products (24)</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>48.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printing (27)</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>38.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fabricated Metals (34)</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>55.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food (20)</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>70.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonelectrical Machinery (35)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>62.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stone, Clay &amp; Glass (32)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>71.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leather (31)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>64.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electric &amp; Electronic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment (36)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rubber &amp; Plastics (30)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>70.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation Equipment (37)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>75.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textiles (22)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>62.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper (26)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>83.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furniture (25)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>80.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous (39)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apparel (23)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemicals (28)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Precision Instruments (38)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petroleum &amp; Coal Products (29)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Metals (33)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Existence of Safety Programs

Many smaller companies reported that they had no program; however, most large employers (100 employees or more) did have a program. Figure 1 illustrates the percent of companies with safety programs by size group. Among the respondents with 49 employees or less, only 37.4 percent had safety programs. However, among the respondents with 50 employees or more, over 90 percent had safety programs.

Figure 1. Existence of Safety Programs
By Number of Employees

![Bar chart showing the percent of companies with safety programs by size group.](chart.png)
**Years in Operation**

Companies in operation for more than 10 years are more likely to have an established safety program. Surprisingly, companies in operation between six and ten years were less likely to have programs than companies in existence for five years or less.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>With Program</th>
<th>Without Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>62.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 or less</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>56.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 - 10</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>46.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 - 25</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>more than 25</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>71.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No yrs. given</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>60.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Willingness to Start or Expand Safety Programs**

Table 3 shows the number of survey respondents willing to either start a safety program or expand an existing program. Over 60 percent of those companies without formal programs indicated that they did not want to start a program. Nearly 60 percent of those companies with programs in existence, however, were looking to expand them.

Respondents in the size class of 20 to 49 employees showed a desire to establish (63 percent) or expand (58 percent) safety programs in their workplaces. Most of the small employers, approximately 72 percent, indicated that they would opt to continue their current practices. Larger employers (100 or more workers) were evenly split between expanding current programs or maintaining their programs as they are.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size of Respondents</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Start Program</th>
<th>Expand Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Respondents</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-19 employees</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-49 employees</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-99 employees</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100-249 employees</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>250 or more employees</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Safety Program Components

A copy of the Safety Program Survey appears in Appendix 1. Answers to question number five, shown in table 4, tell what the respondents safety programs consisted of. At least 80 percent of respondents with programs had the following components in their safety program: procedures for reporting accidents and/or exposure; first aid or accident response; procedures for handling hazardous materials; written materials on safety issues; procedures for reporting hazards; and safety education and training programs. Only 56 percent of respondents use safety committees, most were large employers.

Table 4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size of Respondents and Response to Question</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Question 5*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Respondents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondents with 1-19 employees</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondents with 20-49 employees</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondents with 50-99 employees</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondents with 100-249 employees</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondents with 250 or more employees</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Question 5: Does your safety program include the following?

5.1 Procedures for reporting hazards
5.2 Procedures for reporting accidents/exposures
5.3 Procedures for the handling of hazardous materials
5.4 On-site medical personnel
5.5 Safety education and training program
5.6 First aid/accident response
5.7 Bulletin boards, newsletters, or other educational materials about safety issues made available to employees
5.10 Safety committee
Barriers to Starting/Expanding a Safety Program

Figure 2 illustrates the reasons that respondents listed for not starting a safety program or not expanding an existing safety program. More than one reason could be given for this question (see number 6 on the survey form in Appendix 1). Figures are grouped by the number of employees in each company. Time was listed as the biggest barrier to starting or expanding a safety program. Expense was listed as the second greatest barrier (over 25 percent). Small employers (1 to 19 workers) with no current program most often named expense as a problem. Slightly more than 20 percent of the respondents felt that lack of expertise was a barrier; over 44 percent of respondents in this group selected it as a barrier to starting a safety program. Medium-sized employers (20 to 99 workers), with no formal safety program, expressed that lack of expertise was a big concern.

Figure 2. Barriers to Starting/Expanding a Safety Program
By Number of Employees
Maine, 1989
On-Site Medical Personnel

Nearly 59 percent of large employers (100 or more employees) indicated that they had on-site medical personnel, the majority having nurses or nurse practitioners. Of the medium-sized employers (20 to 99 workers), nearly 30 percent had on-site medical personnel. Only 12.2 percent of companies with less than 20 employees had such personnel on-site. The majority of small and medium-sized employers having on-site medical personnel employed either Emergency Medical Technicians or First Aid Responders.

Table 5. On-Site Medical Personnel of Survey Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size of Respondents</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Companies with Medical Personnel</th>
<th>Doctor</th>
<th>Nurse</th>
<th>Nurse Practitioner</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>249</td>
<td>83 33.3%</td>
<td>11 4.4%</td>
<td>29 11.6%</td>
<td>6 2.4%</td>
<td>54 21.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-19 employees</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>10 12.2%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3 3.7%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7 8.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-49 employees</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>13 26.5%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3 3.7%</td>
<td>7 13.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-99 employees</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>13 34.2%</td>
<td>2 5.3%</td>
<td>2 5.3%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>12 31.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100-249 employees</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>22 44.9%</td>
<td>3 13.6%</td>
<td>7 31.8%</td>
<td>2 9.1%</td>
<td>12 54.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>250 or more employees</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>25 80.6%</td>
<td>6 19.4%</td>
<td>17 54.8%</td>
<td>4 12.9%</td>
<td>10 32.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 1: Safety Program Survey

Maine Department of Labor
Bureau of Labor Standards
State House Station 45
Augusta, Maine 04333-0045
(207) 624-6440

Safety Program Survey

1. How long have you been in operation at this location? __ years

2. Do you have a formal safety program? (y/n) ___

3. If yes, what is the title of the person in charge of this program? ______________________________________

4. Does this person have other responsibilities in addition to the safety program? Please list additional typical duties:
   ______________________________________

5. Does your safety program include the following? Check all that apply:
   ___ Procedures for reporting hazards
   ___ Bulletin boards, newsletters,
   ___ Procedures for reporting accidents/exposure
   ___ Procedures for the handling of hazardous materials
   ___ Safety education and training program
   ___ First aid/accident response
   ___ Employee assistance program
   ___ Drug testing program
   ___ Safety committee
   ___ On-site medical personnel

6. If your company does not have a safety program or you would like to expand your existing program, what would you say are the greatest barriers?
   a. Expense
   b. Lack of expertise
   c. Time
   d. Other. Please explain.
   ______________________________________

7. Would you start/expand a safety program if you had assistance? (y/n) ___

8. What types of assistance would be useful/appropriate for a state agency to provide an employer in your circumstances?
   ______________________________________

Please complete the other side
Appendix 1 (continued)

9. Does your safety program include the following?

Safety and health training for:
- New employees?
- Experienced employees?
- Management personnel?
- Is this training done on company time?
- Is this training done on-site?
- Does it include health related issues as well as safety?
- Does it include safety/health off the work site?
- Who conducts the training?
- Company personnel?
- Consultants?
- Other? Please specify.

10. If applicable, please answer the following questions about your safety committee:

a. Members
- Are they from management, labor, or both? ____________________________
- What is the makeup? (e.g., 50/50) ____________________________
- How are members chosen? __________________________________________
- Who heads the committee? _________________________________________
- Do all members have equal authority?

b. Function/Authority of the committee:
- Do they change or make policy?
- Do they make policy recommendations only?
- Do they conduct safety inspections?
- How often? ____________________________
- By whom? ____________________________
- Do they investigate accidents/exposure incidents?
- Do they respond to complaints?
- What is the procedure? ____________________________
- Can they stop dangerous operations?

11. If applicable, please answer the following questions about training for the handling of hazardous materials:

- Are instructions verbal or written? ____________________________
- Who gives these instructions? ____________________________
- Do all employees receive this training?
- Is someone in the company trained to deal with an accident or injury that may result from working with hazardous materials? (y/n) ______
- What is the title of this person, and is she/he available full-time?

12. Do you have on-site medical personnel? Check all that apply:
- Doctor? ______ Nurse? ______ Nurse practitioner? ______ Other?
- Is this person(s) available full-time?
Appendix 2: Maine's Consultation and Training Programs

The Maine Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Standards offers safety consultation and training programs to businesses in the state. These services are provided free of charge. Since Maine is a Federal OSHA state, the Bureau of Labor Standards operates in a non-enforcement manner in an attempt to foster safety awareness and voluntary compliance. Through these programs, the staff of the bureau:

*help Maine employers to develop and maintain safe and healthy workplaces.
*offer penalty-free and cost-free safety and health inspections.
*discuss the problems found during inspection and suggest ways to correct them.
*provide a written report covering the problems found during the inspection, including suggestions for correcting them.
*offer a pre-construction review of plans or specifications for possible safety and health problems.
*offer help in measuring possible safety and health problems.
*offer help in correcting violations found during an OSHA inspection.
*offer training in many occupational safety and health topics.

If you would like more information about this program or would like to request a consultation, call the Bureau of Labor Standards' Safety Division at 624-6460, or write to State House Station #82, Augusta, Maine 04333.

Maine's Low Interest Loan Program

The State of Maine has a low interest loan program for Maine employers who wish to purchase equipment which will improve the healthfulness and safety of their workplaces. Loans of up to $50,000 are provided at 3 percent interest for a maximum repayment period of 10 years. For further information about this program call the Bureau of Labor Standards at 624-6460 or call the Finance Authority of Maine at 287-FAME.