

Facts About SHARP:

Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program

About SHARP

The Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program (SHARP) created by the U.S. Department of Labor, recognizes small, private-sector, Texas employers for exemplary safety management programs and low incidence rates of related injuries and illnesses after participation in the Division of Workers' Compensation (DWC) Occupational Safety and Health Consultation (OSHCON) program.

OSHCON recognizes the commitment of the employers it works with who take extraordinary measures to exceed the requirements of the OSHA standards. OSHCON consultants can help qualifying employers apply for OSHA's Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program (SHARP).

Benefits

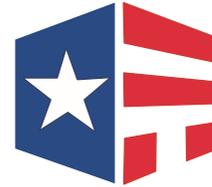
During the preparation for SHARP eligibility, employers have the opportunity to learn how to maintain safe and healthy workplaces through the development and implementation of proven and effective management systems. Qualified OSHCON professionals experienced in helping employers develop safety and health management plans provide assistance and training.

The safety and health program management system an employer institutes, paired with a SHARP certification, has many long-term benefits for the company, including:

- receiving public acknowledgment of safety efforts;
- reinforcing management's commitment to employee and customer safety;
- preventing workplace injuries and illnesses;
- saving the company money by reducing workers' compensation, medical, training, and other costs associated with injuries and illnesses;
- protecting company assets, including employees, equipment, supplies, products, and facilities; and
- receiving an exemption from programmed OSHA inspections.

Eligibility Criteria

SHARP is available to private sector Texas employers who have:



SHARP

- 250 or fewer employees at the worksite which is considering SHARP;
- 500 or fewer employees corporate-wide;
- fixed worksite operations;
- Days Away Restricted Time (DART) and Total Reportable Cases (TRC) below the national averages for the industry;
- requested a consultation visit that provides a complete safety and health hazard survey of all working conditions, equipment, processes, and OSHA-mandated safety and health programs at the worksite, including a comprehensive assessment of the worksite's safety and health management system; and
- at least one (1) year of operating history at the particular worksite for which the employer is seeking SHARP participation.

Requirements

As a SHARP participant, employers must:

- correct all hazards identified by the OSHCON consultant during the comprehensive visit;
- involve employees in the consultation process;
- maintain DART and TRC rates below the national industry averages;
- agree to notify the OSHCON consultant before making any changes in the working conditions or introducing new hazards into the workplace; and
- maintain a safety and health management system that, at a minimum, addresses OSHA's 1989 Safety and Health Program Management Guidelines, which include:

- management commitment;
- employee involvement;
- training;
- inspections; and
- hazard analysis.

Comprehensive OSHCON Consultative Visits

A comprehensive OSHCON consultation, which is a requirement for SHARP, allows employers to take an in-depth look at the company and the safety of its employees. When helping the employer prepare for SHARP, the OSHCON consultant evaluates several aspects of the business in detail, including:

- a physical review of the workplace, which includes an on-site examination of records and logs, review of any inspection history, an inspection of conditions at the facility, and assessment of overall safety and health programs;
- interviews with management and employees;
- a hazard study to help identify any existing or potential physical or environmental hazards or unsafe work practices;
- recommendations for improving safety at the facility;
- an evaluation of the facility's job safety and health management plan against recognized effective principles, including identifying weaknesses and providing recommendations for improving the plan;
- hands-on training and technical assistance with hazard abatement; and
- a comprehensive report detailing the findings of the consultation.

Certification and Inspection Exemption

After the employer satisfies all SHARP requirements, the OSHCON Program Manager can recommend the worksite to OSHA for final SHARP approval and certification. The first time OSHA formally recognizes the worksite as a SHARP site, the company is granted a one-year exemption from programmed inspections.

The company may request renewal of the exemption, provided it:



- applies for renewal during the last quarter of the exemption period;
- allows an additional, comprehensive consultation to ensure the exemplary safety and health management system is effectively maintained or improved;
- continues to meet all eligibility criteria and program requirements; and
- agrees, if requesting a two-year renewal, to conduct an interim-year self-evaluation based on the elements of the 1989 Safety and Health Program Management Guidelines, including OSHA's required injury and illness logs (available online at OSHA.gov) and submit a written report to the Texas Consultation Program Manager.

To schedule an OSHCON consultation or learn more about SHARP, contact the Texas OSHCON program at 1-800-252-7031, option 2, or www.txoshcon.com.

For more free DWC Workplace Safety publications and free occupational safety and health audiovisual loans, visit www.txsafetyatwork.com, call 800-252-7031, option 2, or email resourcecenter@tdi.texas.gov.