



Forming Safety Committees and Teams

Why Have a Safety Committee?

Each year, employees are seriously injured or killed from slip and fall incidents on snow and ice in parking lots, on sidewalks, steps, ramps, entrances and interior walking surfaces. That's why forming a safety committee or team can be so critical. It creates a resource that can have an impact on preventing winter related slip and fall injuries. And during non-winter months, the team can focus on other safety topics such as tornado and severe weather awareness, safety training programs and building inspections.

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Share the resources we've made available on our website as a basis for your own campaign, including our "Create Your Own Campaign" guide

How to Organize

Management needs to take the lead role in forming a safety committee by selecting employees that would participate well in a team environment. Some initial training would be required, a meeting location provided and direction given to members on how to run their meetings.

During the winter months, the committee's focus should be on slip and fall prevention initiatives to raise awareness and prevent injuries. Recommended activities include development of handouts to be posted in the workplace or distributed by email or company intranet. Housekeeping and safety inspection checklists could also be created to incorporate common slip and fall exposures present during the winter months.

Organizations with a limited number of employees, resources and time can still have an impact through the use of a task force that is created for the purpose of sponsoring a slip and fall campaign during the winter months.

Best Practices

Challenge your teams to develop a first-rate slip and fall prevention campaign to create awareness of winter slip and fall exposures and foster employee participation in safety contests and events. Share the resources we've made available on our website as a basis for your own campaign, including our "Create Your Own Campaign" guide.

Additionally, the following contain information on best practices found within effective safety teams. If there is an existing team in place at your company, this information can be shared with them to see where improvements can be made.

Objectives – Written objectives give a new team a sense of their mission and purpose. They also provide the team with a focus to ensure their meetings and activities are effective. Develop a list of objectives for the safety committee that will give them a long-term view for injury prevention and a continuous improvement approach to safety management. Create your own objectives based on the needs of your organization using the list below as a starting point:

- Conduct an analysis of accident trends and create loss reduction goals.
- Review and update existing safety programs.
- Develop a safety training calendar for the year.
- Perform periodic safety inspections, discuss findings and assign responsibility for follow-up on action items.
- Discuss the facts of accident investigation reports, root causes and changes needed to prevent future occurrences.

Chairperson selection — The chairperson is the individual that leads the members and acts as the primary facilitator.

- They ensure the committee has adequate membership, is focused on their core objectives and goals, establishes the policies and procedures on how the committee functions, establishes and sets meeting dates and times, and facilitates discussion during the meetings.
- They may train new members and review their individual responsibilities, as well as prepare the agenda for each meeting and lead the group through its contents.
- Some responsibilities may be delegated to other committee members, such as taking meeting notes, leading the team during inspections, follow up on action items and communicating their accomplishments to other employees via email or bulletin board postings.

Committee membership — The number of members on a team is often determined by the goals established, size of the organization, activities being performed and needs of the company. Companies often choose to have a multi-disciplinary or cross-functional membership to ensure various departments and shifts are represented to take advantage of the expertise that exists throughout the organization.

Subcommittees and task forces — Management may wish to create a subcommittee or task force to focus on specific projects or initiatives like a slip and fall campaign. This may be a useful option when the general committee is already busy or the company has limited resources. The chairperson can choose a few current committee members to lead and facilitate the task force and then supplement with additional volunteers from the company. Subcommittees are generally disbanded after their project has been completed.

Meeting date and time — Establish a time and place to meet regularly. Establishing a specific day and time allows members to plan ahead and build the meeting into their schedule. It also becomes a target date for members to follow up on action items and report the status of issues back to the team.

Rules and procedures — As soon as the committee has been formed, determine the following:

- Define and clarify team's mission, goals and objectives.
 - Outline member roles and responsibilities.
 - Create an agenda format.
 - Develop a safety and housekeeping inspection checklist.
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{COMPANY NAME HERE}
A copy of this report should be kept on file and available for review.

Time: _____
Location: _____
Called by: _____

Committee:
 Management
 Employee/Management
 Employee

Average Number of Employees (last 30 days): _____
 Average Number of Employees (annual): _____

I. Attendees

1	6
2	7
3	8
4	9
5	10

II. Agenda Topics

1. Review prior minutes
2. Discuss unfinished business
3. Review inspection reports
4. Review accidents since previous meeting
5. New business
6. General comments
7. Adjourn

III. Minutes

IV. Action Items

- _____
- _____

V. Date and Time of Next Meeting _____

Committee Chairperson Signature _____

Safety committee activities — Based on the objectives and goals established for the team, a specific set of activities can be outlined to keep the group focused. The following list provides activities that are commonly used by safety committees. These examples are a good starting point, but management will need to consider the specific needs of their organization.

- Develop a slip and fall prevention campaign during the winter months.
- Create checklists and conduct inspections to detect slip and fall hazards, unsafe physical conditions and follow up on the status of findings from the last inspection.
- Discuss the emergency procedures for tornadoes and severe weather. Decide how severe weather will be identified and communicated to employees, post signs for the location of dedicated shelter areas and conduct employee drills.
- Review supervisory accident investigation reports to identify potential trends, review the root cause analysis and verify the status of outstanding action items that were recommended to prevent future occurrences.
- Create a safety training calendar for the year, picking monthly safety topics. Review current safety training programs and make updates.
- Create and revise safety procedures on jobs and verify the use of procedures during safety tours.
- Conduct job hazard evaluations for new or existing jobs or to comply with outside standards, such as OSHA's PPE standard.

Meeting agenda and minutes — An agenda should be developed before each meeting to keep the team focused on specific items. A sample agenda and minutes document can be found here: [https://clientservices.unitedheartland.biz/uh_guide/slip_and_fall_prevention/materials/Safety Committee sample template.pdf](https://clientservices.unitedheartland.biz/uh_guide/slip_and_fall_prevention/materials/Safety%20Committee%20sample%20template.pdf). Of note:

- A record keeper should take notes of the items reviewed and status of open action items.
- The minutes should be published and communicated to all employees to keep them informed of the progress being made on safety initiatives.

