

AWAIR

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Overview

In 1990, the State of Minnesota amended its Occupational Safety and Health Act to require employers in certain industries to develop written, comprehensive workplace safety and health programs. This legislation is known as A Workplace Accident and Injury Reduction (AWAIR) Act, and programs developed to comply with the act are known as AWAIR programs.

For Discussion

The AWAIR Act requires specific actions from employers, as described below:

Workplace Programs: A covered employer must establish a written workplace accident and injury reduction program that promotes safe and healthful working conditions and is based on clearly stated goals and objectives for meeting those goals. The program must describe:

1. How managers, supervisors, and employees are responsible for implementing the program and how continued participation of management will be established, measured, and maintained.
2. The methods used to identify, analyze, and control new or existing hazards, conditions, and operations.
3. How the plan will be communicated to all affected employees so that they are informed of work-related hazards and controls
4. How workplace accidents will be investigated, and corrective action implemented
5. How safe work practices and rules will be enforced.

Employers must conduct and document a review of the workplace accident and injury reduction program at least annually and document how procedures set forth in the program are met.

There are some important reasons for creating a comprehensive safety and health program such as the AWAIR program. Organizations with effective safety and health programs have significantly lower injury and illness rates than those who do not. Employees can help their employers with these goals by openly discussing safety issues, bringing concerns to their employer's attention, and by finding ways to do the job more safely for everyone involved.

Questions

1. What is AWAIR?
2. What are some things that the AWAIR act requires?
3. What are some reasons for the AWAIR program?