City of Ocala
Public Works - Sanitation

2017 Safety Award Entry
Biggest Safety Improvement
E. Collection and Transfer
City of Ocala – Sanitation

Dwayne Drake
ddrake@ocalafl.org
352-351-6744
SWANA Member #: 896950
City of Ocala – Sanitation
City of Ocala, FL
Population: 57,500
Executive Summary

Prior to May 2015, the City of Ocala did not employ a person with specific safety responsibilities which meant that each department and division was left to handle their own safety concerns. That changed on May 26th, 2015 and since then, the Public Works Sanitation Division has worked hand in hand with the City’s Safety Coordinator in an effort to reduce both the frequency and severity of incidents from occurring.

The remainder of 2015 was used to benchmark the operations and it was not until 2016 that construction of the safety program began. Each component of the safety program explained below is a small victory that, in combination, has led to a culture shift.

Safety is no longer something that is addressed in a reactive nature. The Sanitation group is proactively monitoring itself to ensure that the safety of our employees and citizens is given the highest priority.

1. Describe your safety program, including your use of Safety Monday and other safety information provided by SWANA.

Below is a timeline that summarizes components of the safety program that have been implemented to improve the overall effectiveness of the program.

- January 2016
  - The first Sanitation safety status meeting occurred and was attended by the Public Works Director, the Sanitation Division Head, and the City’s Safety Coordinator. Objectives of the meeting were to review historical incident information as well as set safety goals for the upcoming year. This meeting has become an annual event with it being held again in January 2017 and a new objective was added to review accomplishments that were made in the previous year.
  - Prior to 2016, employees received an annual boot allowance of $75. This amount was doubled to $150 and footwear was no longer viewed as an employee benefit but rather a tool to safely perform the job. A contract with Red Wing and Boot Barn was established and employees are now required to receive footwear with protective toes and slip resistance.
  - A formal “Driver to Supervisor” documentation process to present concerns to management was implemented. The new process requires a paper trail where the employee fully describe the concern (e.g. low hanging lines, backing onto roadways) while ensuring that management appropriately follows up on the concern, implement feasible corrective actions, and communicate the findings back to the submitting employee.

- February 2016
  - The inaugural all employee monthly safety meetings were held for both the Commercial and Residential Sanitation groups. The meetings are designed to engage and encourage employee participation by providing direct access to department management to ensure issues can be dealt with in a timely manner. Each meeting consists of the following items:
Injury, property, auto, and liability incident review from the prior month to identify root cause in order to determine and/or implement potential corrective actions.

Assessment of DriveCam videos and statistics.

Rotating training topic of the month based on job hazard analysis. 2016 training topics included bloodborne pathogens, ergonomics, fire extinguisher, heat stress, and personal protective equipment.

Periodic review of industry best practices including:
  - SWANA Safety Monday topics;
  - SWANA “5 to Stay Alive”; and
  - SWANA Backing Best Practices

Review and discussion of relevant industry incidents.

Open discussion for any employee to voice concerns that they may have.

- March 2016
  - Communicated the department requirements that had not previously been enforced on a consistent basis. These requirements continue to be periodically reviewed and have been posted in the employee break area.
    - Personal Protective Equipment
      - Gloves, high visibility clothing, protective footwear, and safety glasses.
    - Vehicle Safety
      - Cell phones prohibited while operating a vehicle.
      - No exterior riders on a rear loader when the vehicle is traveling a distance greater than 0.2 mph or at a speed greater than 10 mph.
      - No exterior riders on a rear loader when the vehicle is reversing.
      - Seat belt use by all occupants of a vehicle.

- August 2016
  - DriveCam event recorders were fully deployed to the Sanitation fleet. The inward and outward facing cameras allow us to capture unsafe driving behaviors and utilize coaches to effectively mitigate the risk associated with driving.

- October 2016
  - A vendor was identified and brought onsite to present their vending machine inventory management system. It was determined that the machines could be used to provide readily accessible personal protective equipment (PPE) in addition to other consumable supplies. Since October, a contract has been executed and PPE sampling with employees has been performed. The machines are set to be installed by July 2017.
  - The decision was made to move from standard City issue uniforms to ANSI class II uniforms. Doing so eliminates the need for employees to wear a vest and ensures 100% compliance for high visibility and reflectivity clothing. The ANSI uniforms were received and distributed in February 2017.
• November 2016
  o Established quarterly field visits for both Commercial and Residential. The Division Manager and the City Safety Coordinator perform unannounced inspections of the shop areas as well as those employees out in the field.

• December 2016
  o Began the initial evaluation period for the first driver recognition program utilizing the DriveCam event recorders for tracking. Drivers who exemplify what it means to be a safe driver are thanked in a progressive reward program with the first recognition event set to take place in May 2017.

2. How do you measure results for your safety program? Examples include, but are not limited to: the frequency of accidents or injuries, workers compensation claims, amount paid for claims, reduction in hazards.

The safety program is measured in 4 different ways:

- **Leading indicators** (proactive measures) provide a way for the Sanitation Division to respond to hazards before an incident or near miss has occurred.
- **Lagging indicators** (historical incident data) are used to confirm whether or not the leading indicator actions were successful.
- **Employee engagement** is an intangible tracking method and only something that can be described by those persons who have consistently been involved with the Sanitation safety culture shift from May 2015 until now.
- **Management commitment** is another intangible tracking method but something that is visible, particularly in the monthly safety meetings. The Assistant City Manager, the Public Works Director, the Sanitation Division Head, the Commercial and Residential Managers, and the City Safety Coordinator attend the monthly safety meetings on a regular basis. These persons are among the crowd and active participants in the conversations which ultimately shows their pledge to the safety of the employees.

3. What results did you use as a baseline for comparison to determine improvement between 2015 and 2016? (This may be either a calendar or fiscal year.)

There was not any one result or metric that was used as a baseline and then compared against. While incident data is tracked, each safety program component outlined in question 1 must be factored in to accurately show the improvement of the safety program. 2016, in our opinion, was a transitional year where the foundation of the program was laid by implementing things such as safety meetings, field inspections, etc.
4. **How did you measure the safety improvement that you achieved in 2016? (Quantify reduction in one or more metrics identified in question 3.)**

Due to the relatively small size of the department, one year or even one incident could skew the numbers significantly. Instead, we have chosen to look at averages. For fiscal year (October – September) 2013/2014 through FY 2015/2016, the Sanitation Division averaged 15 reported injury incidents at an average cost of $50,000 per year. By extrapolating the data for the first half of FY 16/17, the injury projections at year end are 8 incidents at a cost of $0.

5. **To what do you attribute the improvement in your safety performance in 2016?**

The improvement of the safety program can be accredited to the commitment from management but more importantly to the willingness of the employees to become safety advocates.

Attitudes have changed which as a result has led to fewer risky behaviors. When using Herbert Heinrich’s safety pyramid as the model, by eliminating unsafe behaviors from occurring can, in effect, prevent incidents from occurring.

6. **Why do you think your safety program deserves this improvement award?**

The Sanitation Division has adapted and evolved over the course of 2016. While the emphasis has always been getting the job done, the focus was never on getting the job done safely.

As we all do, the Sanitation Division had a routine and that was disrupted each time there was a change made in the name of safety. At times, the consensus was that they were being targeted or picked on but as time went on the attitude of the overall division has done a complete 180°.

The standard safety message can come across as negative but this award will be used to reinforce that what they are doing each and every day is appreciated in an otherwise thankless position.