Title: 2017 Safety Award Entry
Category: Most Improved
Technical Division: Collection and Transfer
Name of Organization: Plainfield Municipal Utilities Authority
Contact: Daniel Mejias, Executive Director
SWANA member #: 1001442
Jurisdiction: City
Population: 55,000 (approx.)

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Executive Summary

In 2015, under new leadership, the Plainfield Municipal Utilities Authority realized that safety awareness and training did not appear to be a priority. In 2016 the Authority addressed these issues and embarked on an aggressive campaign the prevent workplace injuries and other claims.

The most important factor in the success of this program was the appointment of Ivy Robinson as the Safety Coordinator.

Ms. Robinson instituted several key elements of the safety program including the creation of the Employee Safety Committee, providing mandatory safety training, the use of Safety Monday newsletters and tool box safety talks. The results have been fewer claims and new culture of safety awareness with all employees at the Authority including for the first time safety incentive awards sponsored by the employees’ labor union.

The Authority is truly committed to “Safety First” and therefore should be considered for the SWANA Most Improved Safety Program Award.
1) Describe your safety program, including your use of Safety Monday and other safety information provided by SWANA.

We have an aggressive safety program in place. We regularly distribute the Safety Monday newsletters that are specific to our operations. They have included subjects such as: defensive/distracted driving, facility hazards, pre and post trip checklists, backing instructions, and safe lifting to name a few.

2) How do you measure results for your safety program? Examples should include accident frequency, wc claims, claim costs and hazard reduction.

2016 had the lowest number of wc claims in 7 years. The average incurred costs of claims is down by 30%

The hazard reduction is a result ongoing safety training, job site assessments, tool box safety talks, and safety incentive programs.

3) What results did you use a baseline for comparison to determine improvement between 2015 and 2016?

Loss data provided by the New Jersey Utilities Authority Joint Insurance fund which provides all the property and casualty insurance coverage for the Authority.
4) How did you measure the safety improvements that you achieved in 2016?

WC claims were reduced from 24 in 2015 to 19 in 2016.

The average incurred costs of claims were reduced from $13,971 in 2015 to $7,116 in 2016.

These figures indicate that not only was the claim frequency down in 2016 but so was the claim severity.

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

The appointment of a new safety director, Ivy Robinson, has been the key factor in the reduction of claims and claims costs. Ivy initiated the Authority wide Safety Committee and conducts regular safety committee meetings. She also schedules safety training for all employees on a mandatory basis. Ivy is hands on and attends all the training sessions as well as the tool box safety sessions, sometimes held during the night or early morning to accommodate the different shifts.

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

The Authority, more specifically Ivy Robinson, has taken an almost nonexistent safety program and has ingrained into the daily activities of all employees. Under her leadership directors, supervisors and rank and file employees understand the importance of safety and loss control. They are fully engaged in the process and have become proactive in all areas of safety. In 18 months Ivy directed 40 employees to over 22 different safety classes.