Submitted by:

South Central Solid Waste Authority
Steve Mauer, Regulatory Compliance Specialist
smauer@las-cruces.org
575-528-3587
SWANA Membership Number 1076877
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Safety is a high core value at South Central Solid Waste Authority (SCSWA). The organization is determined to focus and improve its safety record which had a trend toward increasing accidents and injuries. The company experienced two deaths and 4 OSHA inspections with an experience modifier of 1.8. Safety was lacking the employees buy-in. The organization had to change the culture and get the employees to buy-in from the Director, supervisors, to the spotters. Beginning with introducing all employees with weekly tailgate training and re-dedication to safety. SCSWA reduced its accidents, incidents and work comp claims by 80%, and the new program was recognized by NM OSHA with SHARPs program. The award is identified as Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program (SHARP). SCSWA is above NM OSHA’s compliance in 2016 and SCSWA’s modifier was lowered to .84.

Figure 2 Steve Mauer (SCSWA), Mike Gonzales (NM OSHA)
SECTION 1: DESCRIBE YOUR SAFETY PROGRAM, INCLUDING USE OF SAFETY MONDAY AND OTHER INFORMATION PROVIDED BY SWANA

Staff Engagement: In 2014 SCSWA hired a new Safety Coordinator and was given a directive to find a new way to change the bad behavior of the employees with full control of the safety program to improve workers’ safety. The first thing accomplished, was SCSWA’s safety program and conducted a site audit/inspection. Once this was completed, the Safety Coordinator sat down with all the supervisors, asking for input on issues they may have. The Coordinator came up with a plan for the Director and supervisors for their buy-in to pass down to the employees. The coordinator met with all employees to get their concerns and to obtain their buy-in to the safety program.

Training and Evaluation: First, all supervisors are required to complete 8 hours of safety training or leadership training. Employees are required to complete 16 hours of safety training. We began with tailgate meetings once a week, and once a month all employees attend a two-hour safety training class. Training classes include personal protective equipment, slip, trip, and falls, lockout/tagout, Hazcom, National Safety Council Defensive Driving Course 6, proper lifting, and asbestos and other safety topics. Each month a different topic for the two-hour safety meeting relates to the job at hand. Once the employees became accustomed to the new program, employees perform safety audit/inspection every three months. This helps with the buy-in and team building which is vital to an organizations success. We reinstated the Employee Safety Committee, which meets at noon every fourth Thursday of the month. The committee discusses all safety issues that have come to their attention.

Once the Coordinator became a member of SWANA and started receiving the Safety Monday, this replaced our tailgate meetings with this program. Safety Monday is posted in the breakroom, scale house, and restrooms for everyone to see, not just SCSWA employees. We are working to keep everyone safe who enters our facility. We also coach our employees on the Five to Stay Alive, Safety Matters, Slow Down to Get Around.

Risk Reduction: It is mandatory for all employees to wear a hard hat on the tipping floor with a Class 2 safety vest, safety glasses, steel toe boots, and carry a hand-held radio for communication. If you drive a commercial vehicle or are a customer with a dump trailer and use the commercial side, they must wear a safety vest and not go past the red line on the floor. Due to an open pit. The tipping floor gets painted every quarter to keep parking lines in view, keeping customers in line to reduce any near misses, incidents, or accidents. Training, facility inspections, safety meetings, incident investigations, employee engagement, and reducing risk is key in making improvements and reviewing all data to keep employees safe at work.
SCSWA encourages all employees to report near miss incidents. The safety committee and supervisory staff, review all incidents, accidents, injury, and property damage, to determine if they are preventable and what corrective actions need to be incorporated to negate repeat incidents/accidents. One thing that has changed with corrective actions, SCSWA is utilizing a coaching/verbal warning depending on the severity of the incident/accident. This helps with employee’s willingness to report trouble and not being afraid of getting in trouble with a verbal or written warning. Since this has been in place, incident/accidents, have been reduced by 80%. SCSWA’s Safety Manual was updated in 2016 and more comprehensive along with the Safety Data Sheet binder (SDS). Annually it addresses new risks and hazards. Collections safety staff go out on the routes early in the morning to assess roads conditions resulting from inclement weather. To further address these risks and hazards, SCSWA is developing and revising several collection operational policies including safety footwear purchases, personal protective clothing requirements, safety glasses, camel back for hydration and neck cooling wraps. In winter (employees) are provided with a high visible safety yellow parka jacket, glove liners to keep hands warm and provide an extra layer of protection.
CRITERION 2: HOW DO YOU MEASURE RESULTS FOR YOUR SAFETY PROGRAM?

At SCSWA there are two ways to measure results of our safety program. First, we compare the use of funds spent in claims, injuries and accidents. Second, we compare the lack of claims, injuries and accident. When money matters, the focus must be on reducing behaviors, changing the culture or controlling the hazards, getting employees to recognize unsafe conditions and reporting unsafe conditions or fixing the issue on the spot. Some indicators are most tangible such as, How many accidents? How many recordable and non-recordable injuries? How many lost time days? This data can be analyzed by using our OSHA 300 log and other spread sheets used to keep incident\accident data. SCSWA has refocused towards developing a stronger and more effective program to include tailgate meetings, personal protective equipment, slip, trip, and falls, lockout/tagout, Hazcom, National Safety Council Defensive Driving, proper lifting, and asbestos, waste screening, and Emergency Action Plan (EAP), along with other safety trainings. By reinstating the safety committee and having that committee perform safety inspections and review near misses, incidents, and accidents we are seeing the reduction in claims and accidents. Also, we have implemented an employee of the month for safe actions rewarded an employee with day off from work with pay. The last insurance renewal policy showed that our work compensation insurance went down nearly 90 thousand dollars in savings.
CRITERION 3: WHAT RESULTS DID YOU USE AS A BASELINE FOR COMPARISON TO DETERMINE IMPROVEMENTS BETWEEN 2016 & 2017?

SCSWA uses a variety of tools and metrics to measure the performance of the Health & Safety Program. Data collected through the following methods reports provides a breakdown of each incident and a summary of number of lost time accidents, days lost, incidents requiring medical aid, hazard reports, and types of injuries sustained is used to annually benchmark the performance of the improved health, safety and wellness program. In keeping with Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) 300 Log reporting requirements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>2016 Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recordable Injuries</td>
<td>OSHA 300 Log</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Days away from work</td>
<td>OSHA 300 Log</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2016 SCSWA employees had 114,419 hours of work.

CRITERION 4: HOW DID YOU MEASURE SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS ACHIEVED IN 2017?

SCSWA used financial worker’s compensation data as a tool to measure of the success safety program. Our 2017 Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) 300 Log shows the following information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>2017 Data</th>
<th>Reduction Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recordable Injuries</td>
<td>OSHA 300 Log</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Days away from work</td>
<td>OSHA 300 Log</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2017 SCSWA employees had 139,890 hours of work.

In 2017 SCSWA employees worked 25,471 more hours than in 2016. There were more hours worked yet still had a reduction rate of 80% on recordable injuries and 95% reduction rate on days away from work.
CRITERION 5: TO WHAT DO YOU ATTRIBUTE THE IMPROVEMENT IN SAFETY PERFORMANCE IN 2017?

As noted in the first criterion, SCSWA safety program has many integral parts. With the efforts of all employees, management, and board members who take ownership in the program and responsibility for themselves and each other’s safety. Having employees and supervisors to commitment to safety and voicing their concerns to safety committee and coordinator are the biggest keys that has helped the safety performance in this transfer station facility. In the past, workers thought the organization didn’t care about their safety, but as the lines of communications opened, they relished that they were being heard and not put off for a rainy day, knowing their safety was a primary concern for SCSWA. The Director and Supervisors spent more time in the field with staff, followed all safety rules and PPE requirement thus showing the total buy-in from the top. Employees were trained in hazard identifications, near misses and were encouraged to report any hazards that they felt were unsafe no matter how small it is. Knowing something small could turn into something much larger.

SCSWA has been working hard at changing its appearance to protect the employees. These changes are as follows: high visible personal protective clothing and jackets, class 2 safety vest at the facility to be more to visible to customers, improved lighting system in the tunnel, painted lines for the drivers to back up into the tunnel, additional cameras to the fleet including backup cameras on commercial and non-commercial vehicles. SCSWA began allocating additional funding for safety resources. The employee receives a uniform and boot stipend to insure they purchase items that are in compliance with the organization safety requirements and they are also comfortable with their purchase. SCSWA also pays for employee prescription safety glasses to perform their job in a safe manner and meeting the ANSI Z87 standard. By adding these improvement in safety this has played a substantial role in 2017’s worker safety.
CRITERION 6: WHY DO YOU THINK YOUR SAFETY PROGRAM DESERVES THIS AWARD?

The history of SCSWA safety program was in a tailspin. Having two deaths at this facility with numerous OSHA inspections, there had to be a significant change and commitment form everyone from the top to the bottom. As previously stated in 2014 SCSWA hired a new safety coordinator to bring in new ideas and change the safety culture and start a new a paradigm. Every organization has a safety program and it takes passion from safety coordinators to get the message across and get everyone’s buy-in to make this program work. Instead of trying to be the safety police we need to change as a team. Changing the safety culture by putting safety first benefits everyone in the organization. By focusing on the employees, supervisors, and the director, the safety tone has been set and culture has made a dramatic change under current leadership.

We feel we deserve this award, because SCSWA had two tragic deaths at this facility. An employee was crushed by a bailer machine and another fell in a 15’ pit. Hiring a new safety coordinator to change the safety culture and get the buy-in from all employees, was crucial. Once this was accomplished the safety coordinator called NM OSHA in to the facility for consultation/inspection and asked to be placed on the list for OSHA SHARPs program. OSHA preformed their consultations and inspections and was impressed by the turnaround and effort instilled in the safety program. The consulting inspector even brought the NM OSHA Department Head down for one last inspection (total of 4 inspections). Once they were satisfied, they recommended SCSWA be awarded OSHA Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program (SHARP). SCSWA is 1 of 8 facilities in New Mexico awarded this distinction with SCSWA being the only municipality to be recognized.