

Plus

Oregon OSHA

FACT SHEET

Safety committees and safety meetings for agricultural employers

OAR
437-004-0251
Division 4/C

Safety committees and safety meetings for agricultural employers

Oregon OSHA has a new safety-committee/safety-meeting rule for agricultural employers – 437-004-0251. The rule, effective Jan. 1, 2011, includes an option for holding less-formal safety meetings.

Who has to comply?

The rule applies to all agricultural employers with *non-seasonal* workers. Count both full and part-time workers who you employ for more than 10 months during a calendar year. (Requirements for seasonal workers are covered in 437-004-0240, *Safety Orientation for Seasonal Workers*.)

- ▶ **When counting non-seasonal workers, you don't need to count members of your immediate family, including grandparents, parents, children, stepchildren, foster children, or any blood relative living as a dependent of the family.**

Can I have a safety committee or hold safety meetings?

All agricultural employers can have safety committees. Use this table to determine if you can hold safety meetings.

IF:	You can have a safety committee	You can hold safety meetings
You have 10 or fewer workers at a location	Yes	Yes
You have 11 or more workers at a location	Yes	No
You have satellite or auxiliary work sites with 10 or fewer workers at each location	Yes	Yes

- ▶ **Labor contractors:** You must have a safety committee or meetings based on the number of workers that you direct and control.

Safety committees – requirements

How many members does the committee need?

Membership depends on how many workers you have:

- Twenty or fewer workers: your committee must have at least two members.
- More than 20 workers: your committee must have at least four members.
- Members should represent the major types of activities at your workplace.

Who can be a member?

Your safety committee must have an equal number of management-selected and worker-elected (or volunteer) members. If everyone on the committee agrees, there can be more worker-elected members.

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Safety committees – requirements, *continued*

What does the committee have to do?

- Meet at least monthly – except when quarterly inspections occur. Employees must be paid at their regular rate of pay for attending the meetings, trainings, inspections, and other safety committee functions.
- Agree on a chairperson.
- Establish procedures for doing quarterly safety and health inspections. Those doing inspections must be trained in hazard identification.
- Review all quarterly safety and health inspection reports and recommend how to eliminate identified hazards.
- Work with management to establish procedures for investigating safety incidents, accidents, work-related illnesses, and fatalities. Investigators must be trained in the principles of accident investigation. All work-related lost-time injuries must be investigated.
- Evaluate investigation reports and recommend ways to prevent incidents from happening again.
- Set guidelines for training safety committee members. All committee members must be trained on the purpose and operation of the committee, in accident investigation, and in hazard identification.
- Evaluate your workplace's safety and health programs.
- Serve at least one year, when possible.

What records do I need to keep?

Keep a record of each meeting. Include:

- The meeting date
- Names of those attending
- All reports, inspections, evaluations, recommendations, management responses, and other safety and health-related items brought before the committee
- The date management agrees to respond to recommendations
- Keep the records for at least three years and make them available to workers who request them

Centralized safety committees – businesses that have more than one geographic location can have one central safety committee if the following apply:

- The locations are close enough so that workers know:
 - About the committee and who the members are
 - When the committee meets
 - How the committee shares information with management and workers
 - They have the right to have their safety and health concerns heard by the committee
 - How and where to report safety and health concerns, incidents, and accidents
- The central committee represents the safety and health interests of all workers at all locations.

Safety meetings – requirements

Who needs to attend safety meetings?

Include all available employees, including at least one management representative. Seasonal workers can – but are not required to – attend.

How often do we have to meet?

Meet at least monthly, on company time, with employees paid at their regular rate of pay.

What do we have to do at safety meetings?

- Discuss safety and health issues relevant to your workplace.
- Discuss reports and recommendations from quarterly workplace safety inspections and injury investigations.
- Give workers an opportunity to ask questions, bring up safety and health concerns, and make suggestions.

- ▶ Make sure that all workers can understand what's discussed at the meetings.

What records do I need to keep?

Keep a record of each meeting. Include:

- Meeting date
- Names of those attending
- Topics discussed

- ▶ If all your workers attend a safety meeting, just record the meeting date and the names of those who attended.

Keep the records for at least three years and make them available to workers who request them.

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