Electrical Contractor Safety Responsibilities and Strategies

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Presenters

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Objectives

• Analyze Safety Management Systems
  – People
  – Policies
  – Procedures
• Discuss the importance of a Management Commitment to Safety
• Provide a look at Electrical Contractor Safety Perspectives
• Discuss an Insurance Company Case Study
Policies and Responsibilities

- Safety Programs and Safe Workers
  - NECA Standing Policy 19
  - Contractor electrical safety policies
  - Contractor general safety policies

- Shared Responsibilities in achieving Safety
  - Leadership and Management
  - Communication upward and downward
  - Implementation – Supervision and Workers
Safety Management System

- Electrical contractor should establish and maintain a safety management system (SMS).

- The safety management system should be understood by the employer and the employee.

- The SMS should be implemented by the employer and workers.

- Employee safety orientation is an effective method of helping workers understand company safety programs and policies.
Safety Management System

• The three fundamental aspects of a safety management system can be compared to a three-legged stool.
  
  – Management Policy Aspects
  – Management People Aspects
  – Management Procedure Aspects

• If any one of these aspects fails or is deficient, the safety management system is compromised.

• The risks are higher, so are the consequences.
Safety Management System

• Company Safety Policies and Procedures require the following to be effective:
  – Accountability
  – Dependability
  – Adjustability

• Cooperation is required from owners, management, supervisors, workers.

Imperative Forces

• There are three imperative reasons for adopting a safety management system for business.
  – Ethical
  – Legal
  – Financial
Imperative Elements

- To address these important elements, an effective SMS should:
  - Define how the organization is set up to manage risk
  - Identify workplace risk and implement suitable controls
  - Implement effective communications across all levels of the organization
  - Implement a process to identify and correct non-conformities
  - Implement a continual improvement process

Safety System – Fit for Business

- A safety management system (SMS) can be created to fit any business type and/or industry sector.

- SMS models use different terminology but the process and workflow for safety management systems are basically similar.
Safety System – Fit for Business

• Policies
  – What are the established company policy statements?
  – What are the requirements in terms of resources, defining management commitment and defining OSH targets?

• Organization
  – How is the organization structured?
  – Where are responsibilities and accountabilities defined?
  – Who reports to who and who is responsible for what?

Safety System – Fit for Business

• Planning and Implementation
  – What legislation and standards apply to our organization
  – What OSH objectives are defined and how are these reviews, hazard prevention and the assessment and management of risk.

• Evaluation
  – How is OSH performance measured and assessed?
  – What are the processes for the reporting of accidents and incidents and for the investigation of accidents?
  – What internal and external audit processes are in place to review the system?
Management Commitment

• Management are those who have the authority to make decisions and oversee the organization and its operations.

• Their role is to coordinate and oversee activities to achieve organizational objectives in accordance with policies and procedures.

• Demonstrating a safety commitment must be through actions and words.
Management Commitment

- Effective managers lead by example and encourage open communication.

- Effective managers empower supervision to implement safety policies and safe work practices.

- Effective managers encourage workers to report safety concerns, including near misses.

Integrate Safety as a Value

- Safety should not be treated as a secondary function of business practices.

- Management should strive to develop and maintain a stable safety culture and integrate safe work practices throughout its operations.

- Safety must be integrated into project planning, company policies, performance evaluations, and communications.

- Businesses must never compromise safety for productivity.
Accountability

- A positive and effective safety company safety culture can be achieved by establishing accountability throughout the organization.

- Safety on projects is an accountable responsibility shared by owners, management, personnel, supervisors and workers, the whole organization.

- Specific responsibilities need to be defined at all levels.

- Safety must always be an integral part of daily operations.
Leadership

• Supervisors have the authority and ability to implement changes and correct hazards on a jobsite.

• How a supervisor leads and communicates are two of the most important factors in achieving a positive project safety climate.

• The company expectations are the key to shaping a supervisor’s safety-related attitudes and behaviors.
Empowering the Employees

• Involving workers in safety-related planning and decision making and allowing them to speak up and identify hazards helps bridge gaps in communication between management and workers.

• This also builds mutual trust and promotes a shared belief that a positive safety climate is integral to completion of a project.
Hierarchy of Safety Controls

- Contractors must ensure that supervisors and workers understand the hierarchy of safety controls.
- Elimination of the hazards is always the first choice in reducing risk.
- Using personal protective equipment is the last choice.
Improving Communication

- Clear and consistent communication about the priority of safety and its alignment with organizational objectives is the core of all factors in achieving a positive safety culture.

- Organizations must communicate informally and formally about safety issues; what is working and what is not.

- Effective communication promotes a strong safety climate, while ineffective or poor communication can stifle it.

Training at all Levels

- Employees must know and understand where and how they fit into the organization’s safety culture and climate.

- The best approach is to ensure that training is ongoing, on point, and tailored to the specific roles at each level in the organizations.

- Management must know what training is being provided, and seek qualified trainers (Internal and external).

- Supervisors and workers must equally understand the safety training.
Owner or Client Involvement

• More owners and clients are seeking safe contractors on their projects and properties.

• Many have developed their own specific safety programs and initiatives.

• Contractors must align their safety programs and policies to meet and exceed those of owners and clients.

• Often electrical contractors must identify and communicate hazards to owners and clients.
Electrical Contractor Perspectives

- An Electrical Contractor Safety Program is a vital component of the electrical contracting business.

- Safety programs are living documents that are constantly growing and being modified to address company safety-related work practices.

- These programs must align with latest Federal, National, and local safety regulations.

- Must include effective methods of documentation.
Company Safety Programs

- A safety program is only effective if there are established policies that align directly with the requirements contained in the program.

- Electrical safety on projects requires the company to ensure that all workers know and understand the policy on “working live.”

- Contractor’s policies must evolve based on current trends, and leading indicators.
Maintaining Electrical Safety

• Employers must know and understand their specific responsibilities in NFPA 70E *Standard for Electrical Safety in the Workplace*.

• NFPA 70E addresses electrical hazards including shock, arc flash, and arc blast

• Achieving an electrically safe work condition is always the first objective.
Company Policy on Energized Work

• It is important to have a company policy on performing “Energized Work.”

• Employers must know and understand when working energized is justified and de-energizing is infeasible.

• Inconvenience is not infeasibility.
Employee/Supervisor Safety Training

- Training workers and supervisors is important in achieving safety in the workplace.

- Supervisors must understand the regulations that apply to their projects and their workers.

- Supervisors and workers share the responsibility of implementing safe work practices and achieving a safe workplace.
Audits and Documentation

• Company safety audits can reveal deficiencies in a contractor safety program.

• Contractors and supervisors must be diligent to evaluate their safety programs and policies regularly.

• Safety meetings and encouraging worker input can be very beneficial.

• Record keeping and documentation are critical.
Improvement Action

• Action for Improvement
  – How are preventative and corrective actions managed?
  – What processes are in place to ensure the continual improvement process?

Contractor Safety Performance

• Contractors that achieve safety excellence are rewarded by low EMR ratings.

• Many owners and clients are demanding excellent safety records as a condition of securing a project contract.

• Many contracts are becoming more “safety specific.”
Developing Best Practices

- Contractors often enhance their safety programs by establishing and implementing best practices.

- Using modern technologies to leverage quality safety programs and safety excellence.
Insurance Case Study

• Arc-flash incident case scenario
Arc Flash Losses

- Scenario
- Damages and injuries
- What happened?
- Who Pays?
- Is it worth it?

You are hired to install upgraded service at a facility.

- Local Utility Company
- Facility Owner
- Facility Tenant
- You
Damages and Injuries

- Facility structure
- Other property at the facility
- Your property at the facility
- Injuries to your employees
- Injuries to the facility’s employees

Damage to the Facility Structure:

- Temporary repairs/shoring
- Actual cost of repairs
- Replacing power supply to facility
- Debris Removal and Clean-up
Damages and Injuries

Damage to Other Property:

- Cost/value of repairs or replacement
- Downtime/Lost Value of Production

Damage to Your Property:

- Property contracted to install
- Value of your work product
- Trade tools and equipment
Damages and Injuries

Injuries:
- Nature of resulting injuries
- Who’s injured?
  - Facility Employees
  - Your Employees
  - You

What Happened?

Who’s involved?
- Direct parties
- Insurers
- OSHA
- Plaintiff Attorneys
Preserve the Scene

Investigation Results

- Different experience in the moment
- Self-preservation always present
- What are the skills/training/history of these individuals
Preserve the Scene

Cause:
- Working energized
- “I thought power was off”
- Trouble-shooting reason for service call

Preserve the Scene

Who Pays:
- Never clear cut
- Can bring in still more parties
- Litigation is a common outcome
- YOU – administrative costs
  - indirect costs
Is It Worth It?

• Scenario
• Damages and injuries
• What happened?

• Who Pays?
• Is it worth it?
Summary

- A safety management system is essential and integral to electrical contracting operations. Four key factors are essential for improving jobsite safety.
  - Demonstrating management commitment
  - Aligning and integrating safety as a value
  - Ensuring accountability at all levels
  - Improving project safety leadership

Leadership in SAFETY

As leaders, we have no greater responsibility than the safety of our people...they are our greatest asset.
Questions

Up Next: Interactive Break in the Mezzanine
- How to Integrate an Exercise Routine Into a Packed Life
- Workforce Shortage
- How to Get the Highest Multiple for Your Business Sale: Eight Key Value Drivers for Your Business
- Threats and Opportunities: Operating in the Digital Era
- What Happens When CMs Don’t Manage?