TOPIC: SAFETY – IIPP – CONTINUED

As stated previously, the IIPP is intended to provide the framework for the entity's safety efforts. It can address elements that are either required or regulated by the State, and broader general practices. The ultimate goal is compliance with the State requirement that the employer provide a safe and healthy work environment. The basic elements were covered in our last topic, and will be addressed in greater detail in coming topics, but an additional comment is needed. It is not enough to just have the program; there must also be proof that it is implemented and followed on an ongoing basis.

There are a few common issues that we see involving some YCPARMIA members and their IIPPs.

- The State requires the "employer" to maintain a safe work environment. Compliance would require an <u>overall, employer-wide, IIPP</u>.   Some of our members have a fragmented effort with some departments very active, while others are relatively passive. In these cases, there is usually a lack of overall direction, a lack of accountability, and diminished uneven results. The safety effort becomes dependent on the individual manager, rather than reflecting an employer commitment.   Any departmental IIPP (or any other safety policy for that matter) should be recognized and coordinated as a component of the broader entity IIPP.

- Another issue that comes up is the failure of a member to <u>involve all levels of the organization</u> in the IIPP. In practice it is generally expected that managers, supervisors, and workers are all responsible for safety in the workplace. While support from the top is crucially essential, mandated safety without buy-in and participation often falls short. It becomes someone else's responsibility or management's job. There is also the danger of mixed messages; management preaches safety until special circumstances or budgetary concerns supersede. Without the overall commitment of the entity, expediency rather than commitment can become the norm. Ironically the opposite of the mandated top-down program also occurs; responsibilities found in the IIPP are delegated by management to people and positions that do not have the authority to address identified safety issues. Their activities lead nowhere, or worse, to the message that a safety culture is not valued.

- A last issue that we have seen involves the IIPP itself – it becomes <u>a forgotten tool</u>.   Selected staff is often aware that it exists, but does not recognize their involvement or the responsibilities that it contains. It is reviewed and updated only after some unanticipated crisis has occurred.

The good news is that compliance with the average IIPP is relatively painless and inexpensive. It requires ongoing attention with activity spread over the width and depth of the organization. The structure and activities are spelled out in the document. As issues are identified and addressed the burden lessens.

Next Topic: IIPP – Management Commitment