

Facts About SHARP:

Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program

About SHARP

The Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program (SHARP), created by the U.S. Department of the Labor, recognizes small, private-sector, Texas employers for exemplary safety management programs and low incidence rates of work-related injuries and illnesses after participation in the Division of Workers' Compensation (DWC) Occupational Safety and Health Consultation (OSHCON) program.

OSHCON recognizes the commitment of the employers it works with that take extraordinary measures to exceed the requirements of the OSHA standards. OSHCON consultants can help qualifying employers apply for OSHA's Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program (SHARP).

Benefits

During their preparation for SHARP eligibility, employers have the opportunity to learn how to maintain safe and healthy workplaces by developing and implementing proven and effective safety and health management systems. Qualified OSHCON professionals, who are experienced in helping employers develop safety and health management plans, provide assistance and training.

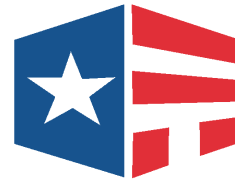
The safety and health program management system that you institute, paired with a SHARP certification, has many long-term benefits for your company.

- Receive public acknowledgement of your safety efforts.
- Reinforce your management's commitment to safety to your employees and customers.
- Prevent workplace injuries and illnesses.
- Save your company money by reducing workers' compensation, medical, training, and other costs associated with injuries and illnesses.
- Protect your company's assets: employees, equipment, supplies, products, and facility.
- Receive an exemption from OSHA programmed inspection.

Eligibility Criteria

SHARP is available to private Texas employers that:

- have 250 or fewer employees at the worksite considering SHARP;
- have 500 or fewer employees corporate-wide;



SHARP

- have operations limited to a fixed worksite;
- receive a comprehensive OSHCON consultative visit; and
- have days away restricted time (DART) and total case rate (TCR) injury and illness incidence rates below the national average for their industries.

Requirements

As a SHARP participant, you must:

- correct all hazards identified by your OSHCON consultant during the comprehensive visit;
- involve your employees in the consultation process;
- maintain your DART and TCR below the national averages for your industry;
- agree to notify your OSHCON consultant before making any changes in working conditions or introducing new hazards in your workplace; and
- maintain a safety and health management system that, at a minimum, addresses OSHA's 1989 Safety and Health Program Management Guidelines, which include:
 - management commitment,
 - employee involvement,
 - training,
 - inspections, and
 - hazard analysis.

Comprehensive OSHCON Consultative Visits

A comprehensive OSHCON consultation, which is a requirement for SHARP, gives you the opportunity to take an in-depth look at your company and the safety of your employees.

When helping you prepare for SHARP, your OSHCON consultant will evaluate several aspects of your business in detail, including:

- a physical review of your workplace, which includes on-site examination of records and logs, review of any inspection history, inspection of site conditions at the facility, and assessment of overall safety and health programs;
- interviews with management and employees;
- a hazard study to help identify any existing or potential physical or environmental hazards or unsafe work practices;
- recommendations for improving safety at the facility;
- an evaluation of the facility's job safety and health management plan against recognized effective principles, including identifying weaknesses and providing recommendations for improving the plan;
- hands-on training and technical assistance with hazard abatement; and
- a comprehensive report detailing the findings of the consultation.

Certification and Inspection Exemption

After satisfying all SHARP requirements, your OSHCON consultant may recommend your worksite for SHARP approval and certification. Once approved, DWC and OSHA will formally recognize your worksite. The first time your worksite is formally recognized as a SHARP site, you will be granted a one-year exemption from programmed OSHA inspections.

Subsequent renewals of SHARP may result in continued exemptions. You may request renewal of your exemption, provided that you:

- apply for renewal during the last quarter of the exemption period;
- allow an additional comprehensive consultation to ensure that your exemplary safety and health management system has been effectively maintained or improved;
- continue to meet all eligibility criteria and program requirements; and
- agree, if requesting a two-year renewal, to conduct an interim-year self-evaluation and to submit a written report to the state Consultation Program Manager that is based on the elements of the 1989 Safety and Health Program Management Guidelines (available online at osha.gov) and includes OSHA's required injury and illness logs.



To schedule an OSHCON consultation or learn more about SHARP, contact the Texas OSHCON program at 1-800-252-7031, option 2, or at txoshcon.com.

For more free DWC publications and for free occupational safety and health audiovisual loans, visit the TDI website at www.txsafetyatwork.com, call (800) 252-7031, option 2, or email resourcecenter@tdi.texas.gov.