



# Key Elements in a HEALTH & SAFETY PROGRAM

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I have numerous times written about, or in my preferred method, spoken directly with many of you about a “safety program.” I simply can’t emphasize enough the value of a quality health and safety management system, often referred to simply as a “safety program.” WorkSafeBC requires that you have one if you are a registered employer. It will be “formal” if you are an organization with 20 or more employees, or “informal” if you have fewer than 19. And yes ... if it is just the two of you and you are registered with WSBC, you need some sort of a simple program.

The safety program is a great system for ensuring compliance with health and safety regulations and legislation. It is the best method for keeping, tracking and providing proof that you are addressing important matters related to safety. A well-maintained and “alive” program will address the key questions asked by a WorkSafeBC officer in consultation, during a routine inspection or as part of an investigation should a mishap, incident or accident occur.

- A. What is the problem?
- B. What have you done about it?
- C. How can you prove it?

A safety program is a good record keeping system that can also serve as the appropriate material storage/keeper for ensuring that workers receive an orientation to the site and the task that you are asking them to perform. It is a great place to house the risk and hazard assessments you have completed on tasks and activities that are part of your operation. Meeting forms and notes are often kept within the program as are such important things as your first aid assessments dictating your requirements. The safety program is a great way to integrate health and safety into your business. The reality is that issues related to worker well being, worker health and safety, are not going away. You have an obligation to attend to these things and AgSafe, as always, will be there to help you build, organize and implement a viable, realistic, “doable” program. It is my absolute belief and firm understanding of the things done on a ranch most of

the issues are easily folded into the way you do business. Safety Programs, when attended to or identified as a sidebar issue or an aside to how business is done, rarely work. When safety is something done on top of or in addition to the way a ranch is run, it never meets compliance and does little good for providing you with the defense known as due diligence.

#### For example:

A safety program is a great tool for helping you get a new worker started, or an experienced worker started on a new task. You want to walk them through the task that they will undertake. You can do this with an effective orientation to that task, it ensures you do not forget or miss things you want them to know. You want them to be aware of the way that they can get hurt doing that task or using that equipment, the risk assessment/hazard assessment will help make sure you point that out. You want to

know that they can do the task, so a demonstration of their competence related to the task is something you would want to see. These are all steps that you would normally do in the process of orientation, the extra and critical step is to keep records of the training. The program works for you in providing a form that you can

■ “Everyone who undertakes, or has the authority, to direct how another person does work or performs a task is under legal duty to take reasonable steps to prevent bodily harm to that person, or any other person, arising from that work or task.” *Section 2.17.1 in the Criminal Code* ■

work through and check off. This helps you do what you are already doing by making it easier and making you better at it. It becomes part of the way you do business and addresses these all important and legally required aspects of health and safety.

The actual look and workings of the program will be customized the way you want it to be. We have developed some

simple models that can be built with you and for you with your input. No one should be a slave to a "safety program." The program must work for you. It must be part of the way you do business while addressing the requirements of the regulations and the A, B, C's noted above. For this and all your health and safety needs, please give AgSafe a call. AgSafe exists to help you achieve compliance and to assist in all your health and safety matters, either myself, or one of my guys in the field throughout the province will be happy to help you.



Photo credit: Tom, Mrs. & Missy Williams, High East Ranch

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