



WAC 296-800-130 CORE RULE REGARDING SAFETY COMMITTEES

Summary

Important: This rule requires that the University have a method of communicating and evaluating safety and health issues brought up by University employees and students. As such, the University must establish a safety committee. Smaller entities on campus (Departments or Colleges) have the choice of either establishing a safety committee or holding safety meetings with management representative present.

There is a difference between a safety committee and a safety meeting.

- A safety committee is an organizational structure where members represent a group. This gives everyone a voice but keeps the meeting size to an effective number of participants.
- A safety meeting includes all employees and a management person is there to ensure that issues are addressed. Typically, the safety committee is an effective safety management tool for a larger employer and safety meetings are more effective for a smaller employer.

Your Responsibility

To establish a safety committee or hold safety meetings to create and maintain a safe and healthy workplace for all employees.

You must:

Establish and conduct safety committees.
WAC 296-800-13020

You must:

IF:	THEN:
You employ 11 or more employees on the same shift at the same location	You must establish a safety committee
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure your committee: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Has employee-elected and employer-selected members. – The number of employee-elected members must equal or exceed the number of employer-selected members.

Note: Employees selected by the employees bargaining representative or union qualify as employee-elected.

(1) Establish a Safety Committee

- The term of employee-elected members must be a maximum of one year. There is no limit to the number of terms a representative can serve.
- If there is an employee-elected member vacancy, a new member must be elected prior to the next scheduled meeting.
 - Has an elected chairperson.
 - Determines how often, when, and where, the safety committee will meet.

Note:

- Meetings should be one hour or less, unless extended by a majority vote of the committee.
- If the committee cannot agree on the frequency of meetings, the department of labor and industries regional safety consultation representative should be consulted for recommendations.

You must:

(2) Cover these topics:

- Review safety and health inspection reports to help correct safety hazards.
- Evaluate the accident investigations conducted since the last meeting to determine if the cause(s) of the unsafe situation was identified and corrected.
- Evaluate your workplace accident and illness prevention program and discuss recommendations for improvement, if needed.
- Document attendance.
- Write down subjects discussed.

(3) Record meetings

- Prepare minutes from each safety committee and:
 - Preserve them for one year.
 - Make them available for review by safety and health consultation personnel of the department of labor and industries.

Purpose of the CWU Safety and Health Council

The Safety and Health Council is responsible for developing policy and procedures to improve oversight of campus areas from a safety and risk management perspective. It is also responsible for establishing written institutional policies and guidelines, determining acceptable levels of risk for the institution, approving and endorsing training and audit procedures to ensure compliance with policies, and providing guidance to the Office of Environmental Health and Safety, the Department of Public Safety, and individual academic and administrative departments. The committee performs regular reviews of incident statistics including workers' compensation losses, automobile accidents, visitor injuries, property losses, fires/false alarms, and provides periodic reports of the status of the University's safety and risk management efforts in these areas.

Summary

1. Provide the EH&S Manager with supportive assistance in the development of university-wide safety and health policies and procedures.
2. Provide assistance to the EH&S Manager in identifying unsafe conditions and practices.
3. Evaluate the CWU workplace Accident and Illness Prevention Program and discuss recommendations for improvement, if needed.

Expectations and Understandings

- Meetings are open to all parties (campus community - students, faculty, and staff).
- Focus of the meetings are toward campus-wide issues.
- Individuals with specific safety questions or concerns are encouraged to raise them with their immediate supervisor. Dealing with safety issues through the supervisory chain of command is the preferred method, however, when this approach is unsuccessful in resolving a safety issue, concerns may be raised by direct contact with an EH&S staff member.
 - EH&S staff will, on request, keep the name of a complainant confidential, however, in some instances, this constraint may prevent thorough investigation and resolution of a complaint.
 - Several Departmental Safety Committees are in existence on campus (Biology, Chemistry, ETSC, FMD); they are an excellent place to bring up and resolve safety issues.
- Some “broad” issues might be brought to the attention of the council (e.g., bicycling within the inner campus, implementation of/for a non-smoking campus, and the like); these are beyond the scope of this council. Other councils and committees may/will be involved to address these matters.
 - Reason for the Ex-Officio members on the council. They can address these issues and/or bring them to the other council/committee’s attention.
- If warranted, EH&S conducts incident and accident investigations with assistance from the affected department. Findings will be presented to the council once finalized. Unlike some industry and the private sector businesses that would require the council to conduct routine investigations (as per L&I), the Office of EH&S has the resources and expertise to perform such investigations.
- Agenda, meeting minutes, upcoming meeting date/time, and information about the council can be found on the Health & Safety Council website at:
<http://www.cwu.edu/resources-reports/health-and-safety-council>