

Getting Started



Key SHARP Elements

Management Leadership	Hazard Anticipation and Detection
Employee Involvement	Hazard Prevention and Control
Planning and Evaluation	Administration and Supervision
Safety and Health Training	

1. What is SHARP?

SHARP, the Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program, was developed to provide Oregon employers with the opportunity to become self-sufficient in managing their safety and health management systems. SHARP is open to Oregon employers (private sector and state or local government entities) who have been in business for more than one year, regardless of size or type of business.

A SHARP safety and health management system must successfully incorporate the following seven elements and their sub-elements:

- Management Leadership
- Employee Participation
- Hazard Anticipation and Detection
- Hazard Prevention and Control
- Administration and Supervision
- Safety and Health Training
- Planning and Evaluation

It is important to understand that there is no template. No two companies are exactly alike, and no two SHARP companies have gone through the SHARP process in exactly the same way. The SHARP process is designed to be flexible enough to 'fit' virtually any company, and help the employer determine where they are in managing safety and health, so they can work to improve in the areas needed.

Finally, SHARP is not a goal. SHARP is a process that a company can go through in order to help achieve a goal of reducing workplace injuries and illnesses. When that goal is met, other benefits, such as improved morale, increased productivity, and reduced absenteeism are usually realized as well. For more detailed information about Oregon OSHA's SHARP program, go to the SHARP web page at <http://www.cbs.state.or.us/external/osh/subjects/sharp.html>.

2. What are the benefits of SHARP to my business?

The foremost beneficiaries of SHARP are workers, who, at the end of the work day, can go home safe and healthy to their families. Fewer injuries and illnesses can mean greater profits for employers as workers' compensation premiums and other costs decline. As safety and health programs improve, morale, quality and production begins to increase while injury and illness rates, absenteeism and error rates begin to decline.

SHARP sites become models for other sites to follow. They begin to influence industry best practices, which raise the bar for all other employers in their respective industries.

As SHARP companies become increasingly self-sufficient in managing their own safety and health programs, their dependence on Oregon OSHA gradually decreases, and they can graduate from the program, freeing up Oregon OSHA resources to work with other Oregon employers who may need the services more. The following quotes are from SHARP Graduate employers who have benefited from going through the SHARP process:

“The SHARP program offered by OR-OSHA was one of the best things that ever happened to our safety program here at Pioneer Cut Stock.

It became the tool we used to not only identify and improve in certain areas but it was, and continues to be, the tool we use to establish our goals for continuous improvement. Use of this program created a new sense of teamwork and cooperation. The initial goal was to improve safety. The side effects were increased morale, more production, higher quality and less turnover. An atmosphere of pride and accomplishment came to be associated with the term SHARP.”

*Gerry Gerlach, Human Resource Manager
Pioneer Cut Stock, Inc.
Prineville, OR. 97754
(541) 447-5962*

“The SHARP program has saved this division of this company (Core-Mark International) over a third of a million dollars, as well as having saved employees from many months of unnecessary pain and suffering. Through the savings generated by our involvement in SHARP, we have been able to afford many building and system upgrades. It has been the backbone of production increases, higher building sanitation scores, lower employee turnover, increased employee morale and much employee recognition through the local and regional news media.”

*Jack Cooper, Division Operations Manager
Core-Mark International
Grants Pass, Oregon
(541)476-6651*

“Oregon OSHA and the SHARP program have provided a valuable catalyst to our company. The consultative efforts and support of Oregon OSHA have allowed us to develop a premier safety culture, built on a solid foundation and continuously improved through employee involvement. A sampling of employee statements regarding the impact of Oregon OSHA and the SHARP Program include:

- *The SHARP program opened the door to work with OR-OSHA as a partner rather than an opponent.*
- *The SHARP program served as a vehicle to strengthen our Injury and Illness program.*
- *OR-OSHA started us with a simple approach that developed strong programs and raised our awareness.*
- *They helped us bring all the layers together.*
- *OR-OSHA provided positive help and direction. The SHARP program taught us how to be successful with our own resources.*
- *We refer to OR-OSHA and Marvin Wood Products as part of the same team, it's not US and THEM anymore. Marvin Wood Products was recently recognized as a fourth year SHARP company, our next goal is to achieve VPP.”*

*Dennis Elder, Human Resource Manager
Marvin Wood Products
Baker City OR 97814
(541) 523-6318*

We have received most of the positive benefits that we expected when we first applied for the SHARP certification. Among the benefits we expected were a lowered Incident Rate and by extension less Lost-Time injuries. In obtaining these goals we have naturally lowered the costs resulting from injuries. A price cannot be placed upon the feeling of confidence we now have that our employees can come to work and go home while being free of injury.

*At the same time, through the SHARP Program, we have been able to demonstrate time and again to our employees that we truly care about their safety. Morale has definitely been impacted by this. **One area of benefit that we didn't predict is how we now have a great tool to attract new clients. It's amazing how many large companies with well established safety programs are now requiring their vendors to provide a safe working environment.** From time to time, one of these companies will ask for some "evidence" of the quality of our safety program. As a SHARP recipient and a SHARP Alliance delegate, I can now send our potential clients a link to both websites where we are listed prominently.*

*Jeff Anderson, Safety/Environmental Director
Graphic Arts Center, Inc.
Portland, OR 97209
(503) 224-7777 Ext. 428*

3. What do I need to do to start?

The prospective SHARP employer initiates the process by asking for a SHARP consultation. When the employer indicates they are willing to work toward SHARP, the employer will be asked to formalize their intent by signing and submitting a SHARP Commitment Letter to signify their commitment to and understanding of the SHARP process. Simply download the [commitment letter](#) agreeing with the basic tenets of SHARP from the SHARP web page, complete it, and submit it to the nearest Oregon OSHA Field Office at the address below.

Field Consultation Manager
Portland Field Office
1750 NW Naito Parkway
Portland OR 97209-2533

Field Consultation Manager
Salem Field Office
1340 Tandem Ave. NE, Suite 160
Salem OR 97301-4282

Field Consultation Manager
Eugene Field Office
1140 Willagillespie, Ste 42
Eugene OR 97401-2101

The Field Consultation Manager or a consultant will contact your facility to get the information required to prompt a consultation. Consultations are assigned to Oregon OSHA staff on a first come, first served basis.

To prepare for the initial SHARP visit, you should make sure that your written safety and health programs and policies are available for the consultant to review. The consultant will also wish to review your injury and illness records, including OSHA logs, 801 forms, accident and incident investigation forms.

You will want to ensure that senior management is available for an opening conference to start the consultation and a closing conference at the end. There should be at least one individual who is able to accompany the consultant on a walk-through hazard assessment of your facility. Additionally, you should be prepared to free up employees for interview purposes.

4. What is the process?

In the SHARP process, your business will be evaluated by Oregon OSHA consultation staff to assess or 'measure' where your safety culture is. This evaluation is done during a comprehensive consultation, using a Safety and Health Assessment Worksheet. An Oregon OSHA consultant will schedule a time to conduct a comprehensive consultation of your facility. You should be prepared to allow one to two days for a thorough evaluation, depending on the size of your company. A comprehensive consultation normally covers:

- Injury and illness records review
- Written program review
- Safety Committee review
- Hazard assessment
- Safety and health program assessment

After the initial assessment is completed, the consultant(s) will complete a written report which describes findings, recommendations, and guidance necessary to resolve noted deficiencies. The Safety and Health Assessment Worksheet will be included with the report and the consultant will consider how identified hazards could be prevented or controlled by an appropriate element of the safety and health program.

Approximately two to four weeks after you receive the report and assessment, the consultant will assist as you hold an Action Plan meeting. The purpose of this meeting is to develop a plan of action intended to map out the steps necessary to qualify as a SHARP facility. It is important that the necessary staff members attend this meeting. The consultant's role in this meeting is that of a coach. The prospective SHARP employer will develop the action plan to cover correction of identified hazards and deficiencies with specific assignments and time frames.

After you have completed your action plan, arrange to have the consultant return to your site for another assessment. If you meet the SHARP qualifications, the consultant will recommend SHARP approval. If you do not yet meet the requirements, you will receive assistance in developing another action plan, and this cycle will continue until all requirements are met.

5. What are the requirements to receive SHARP status?

In order to receive certification as a SHARP employer, an Oregon worksite must have fully implemented a safety and health management system that incorporates all seven of the elements outlined in #1. above. Employees must be meaningfully and actively involved in all aspects of your safety and health management system.

The SHARP employer must have corrected or abated all hazards identified in the consultation process and must be working diligently to reduce workplace injury and illness rates.

Finally, the SHARP worksite must receive an acceptable rating of at least 2 on all 58 elements of Oregon OSHA's Safety and Health Assessment Worksheet. This worksheet is also available on the SHARP web page, at <http://www.cbs.state.or.us/external/osha/subjects/sharp.html>.

6. When do I get removed from the scheduled enforcement inspection list?

After a company is approved as a second-year SHARP site, the Consultation and Services Manager may have that SHARP company removed from the scheduled inspection list used by Oregon OSHA Compliance. The

inspection exemption lasts as long as the company remains in the SHARP program. SHARP is designed so that companies can graduate from the program after five years of participation. The inspection exemption will expire approximately three years after a site graduates from SHARP.

7. What do I need to do to maintain my SHARP status?

SHARP recognition is granted in 12 month increments. To continue in SHARP, employers must apply for renewal during the last quarter of the approval year. In response to that request, an Oregon OSHA consultant will return to your site to conduct another comprehensive consultation and assess your systems.

SHARP employers must also report major changes in management, process, ownership, etc. to consultation within 60 days. Oregon SHARP employers are expected to work to continuously improve their safety and health management systems while they are participating in the program.

8. How can I lose my SHARP status?

If a SHARP employer fails to renew their SHARP status within two months of their scheduled renewal date, that employer will be automatically terminated from the program. If the Consultation and Services Manager, and the Oregon OSHA Administrator determines the employer failed to meet, or maintain SHARP requirements, that employer will lose their SHARP status as well as any inspection deferral.

9. Where can I get more information?

You can get more information about the SHARP program from an Oregon OSHA Consultant at your local Oregon OSHA Field Office, or you can visit Oregon OSHA's SHARP web page at <http://www.cbs.state.or.us/external/osh/subjects/sharp.html>.

The Oregon SHARP Alliance is a non-profit organization comprised of Oregon SHARP employers, companies working toward SHARP and others interested in the promotion of safety and health in the workplace. The Oregon SHARP Alliance is an advocate for excellence in occupational safety and health management. Among the Alliance's goals are "promoting the achievement of SHARP recognition, assisting companies in the process of becoming SHARP and assisting all Oregon companies in safety and health management.

Members of the Oregon SHARP Alliance may be able to offer networking and mentoring opportunities for other Oregon companies interested in pursuing SHARP certification. For more information about the Oregon SHARP Alliance, go to their website at www.sharpalliance.org.