

MWD Safety Talk

Employee Environmental, Health & Safety Information for Communicating Safety



Workplace Safety Culture

The strongest and most effective safety cultures are those where safety is a shared responsibility by everyone.

“Speaking up for safety” is the rule of thumb at Metropolitan. Everyone is empowered to speak up about safety issues without fear of reprisal. We all need to be respectful, objective, open-minded, understanding and patient when listening to each other’s point of view, concerns, and suggestions.

Why We Stay Quiet

So often, it seems so much easier to sit back and say nothing.

- We feel that it is someone else’s responsibility to speak up.
- We assume that others are too experienced to put themselves at risk.
- We fear being judged or ridiculed by others for speaking up.
- We fear repercussions from others, and from our managers.



But by not speaking up we become part of the problem, rather than part of the solution. Communicating a safety concern gives us the opportunity to fix it and continue to improve safety.

Reasons to Say Something

1. **Silence is deemed as approval.** We may think that keeping quiet keeps us from being involved in any conflict or problem, but it is quite the opposite. Staying quiet means that we are OK with the situation, even when we know or suspect it may be wrong.
2. **No one else may realize the issue.** When we notice a hazard that could cause an accident, we cannot assume what is obvious to you is obvious to others. Our experience and knowledge may have value in each situation because no one else has our unique perspective.
3. **You may not be alone in your concerns.** It is possible that your observations and conclusions are shared by others, but they are also unwilling to speak up. By speaking up first, you may give others the confidence to also speak up and voice their concerns and opinions as well.

Examples of Valuable Input

We value everyone's input in safety. We strive to provide a work environment that encourages open communication of health and safety (H&S) issues without fear of reprisal. Below are some examples of H&S items that we encourage employees to communicate:

- New or previously unrecognized hazards.
- Safety concerns, issues, and deficiencies.
- Safety improvements, suggestions, and solutions.
- Accidents, injuries and near misses.
- New substances, processes, procedures or equipment that can potentially introduce a new hazard.
- Work assignment concerns due to lack of:
 - Planning and/or job hazard assessment
 - Safe work practices/procedures
 - Specialized equipment
 - Personal protective equipment
 - Specific initial or refresher training

Communication Methods

Metropolitan has many methods of open communication where employees are encouraged to speak-up and not be afraid of retaliation, judgement, or ridicule. We encourage employees to comfortably use any of the avenues of communication as follows:

- Planning, toolbox and other safety meetings.
- Management and supervisors.
- Local Safety Committee.
- Site SRS Representatives or other SRS Staff.
- Confidential Hotline - (213) 217-5504 or Extension 75504



Speaking Up

When speaking up, employees need to be respectful and mindful of the following when bringing issues to light:

- **Be Specific.** Make sure you are clear on what are your concerns.
- **Be Objective.** Focus on the facts. Do not let personal issues get in the way.
- **Provide Solid Reasoning.** What is the safety concern? What are the possible consequences if not addressed?
- **Offer Different Solutions.** Add your ideas of how to correct the issue of concern. What safety improvement does it offer? What other benefits does it bring?

By speaking up, you become part of the solution.
When listening, be respectful, patient, and seek to understand.