

CCWD Employee Comments from 2011 Safety Perception Survey

Emails with a 'Safety tip of the Day'. Safety posters with pictures of CCWD employees and families - make it personal!

Too many meetings / committess. The cost of ALL these meetings could be going to more CCWD provided PPE. Also, medals and ??? (hats) are poor motivators. Staff are not pets needing "treats". Safety should be better bred into our procedures without all the fear of discipline. Please stop the connection of adherence to safety and disciplinary action in same phrase / sentence. This kills the good faith on the part of management.

Make people accountable for their actions, we have way to many SOP's at CCWD. We are constantly holding the workers hands like little children.

Don't confuse safety issues with other workplace conflicts or communication breakdowns. This can result in time and money wasted, without solving the root problem.

I think the current program is great. I like that it is part of orientation. I also like the newsletters.

I believe that management needs to provide the budget and manpower to provide O&M personnel to operate the gantry at MRIP when Tenera cleans their fish nets. We are currently on a path to have Tenera perform this with proper training, but I see that the safest approach is to have O&M operate it and Tenera focus on their nets. We have not provided adequate budget to do this with O&M personnel.

I have not received the support I would expect from our current Safety Officer, in dealing with certain issues.

I believe the employees of the District are still in "fear" of being looked down on for reporting certain injuries.

Look at the picture on the CCWD employee website of Directors and Senior Management at the partnership appreciation event shovelling dirt at the base of the Los Vaqueros Expansion Dam with no personal safety equipment whatsoever. This is a very good example of the double standard safety culture within the CCWD organization.

I would lower the height of the cubicle walls. It is often impossible to see who is coming or going and there are frequently near-collisions in the crowded corridors between cubicles. Lowering the height of the cubicle walls would enable you to see who is walking by. It is often impossible to see who is coming or going and there are frequently near-collisions in the crowded corridors between cubicles. Putting mirrors on the ceiling or walls isn't adequate to address this issue.

Additional staff for the safety officer. This would allow a safety officer to visit the work sites daily, and provide feedback to the crews directly.

Need greater personal responsibility; participants on the Safety Task Force and Safety Committees speak in third person versus first person when talking about things that need to change to improve Safety culture.

We need to find a way to get more employees actively involved so that they recognize they are all responsible for safety.

Keep up the good work.

There still is distrust. Greater emphasis on finding Solutions rather than Blame should be the goal.

Even in Blame one must determine the Cause and then a Solution can be achieved - be it increased training and awareness or termination (after 10 times of training, termination may be the Solution)

more info in regards to things that have changed that have more than likely saved someone from injury.

More training would always help. I believe most staff will do things safe if taught how to safely perform things.

I think we're doing better. But we're not quite there yet. I think that if we are not going to expand on our safety staffing, then we are going to really have to get the lower and mid levels of management actively involved in the program.

We need to reverse the initial direction to NOT have the supervisors involved and let the supervisors be part of the safety program, not just the scapegoat. The Supervisors need to be involved in the Safety Committees and be an integral part of the program.

Need more safety staff to create a learning/growing experience. When safety issues comes up, not a safety incident, There would be someone available to help those onsite to evaluate the potential issue, bring in outside information and work with onsite group and others if needed to determine safe actions.

Focusing on safety is great and I fully support the effort. While we can continue to expend a huge effort on creating safety procedures for every task, these are beginning to have dimensioning returns. We are at the point where real improvement requires individuals to take responsibility for their safety and we need to find a way to continue to move our people in that direction.

Offer more CPR/first aid training for office staff. Provide annual defensive road safety training given the injury and death rates from vehicle/pedestrian/worker accidents each year.

I believe the District has made amazing strides related to safety in the last couple of years under the leadership and dedication of Steve Welch and Spiro Zapantis. My only concern is that a few employees who may be dissatisfied with their supervisors, or who have other non-safety issues may use this as forum to vent their frustrations. Perhaps the District can also work towards building overall morale and trust, although for the most part that does not seem to be lacking.

Address safety concerns in a timely manner.

Make Safety Committee more effective

We have a great safety program, but there are still some individuals who do not use good common sense when approaching safety issues. Their negligence results in near-misses.

Keep up to good work. Seems to be slowly but surely improving safety awareness at the District

It is critical to provide our supervisors with support and assistance on how to effectively address employee safety concerns. Is it that they are not supportive of safety efforts, or that they don't know how to respond appropriately, and so shut ideas down for fear that it will result in more work or embarrassment for the supervisor?

District management should continue to build trust with all employees. It is important for District Management to earn this trust by being trustworthy and to openly communicate; but District Management should also understand that many of the District employees do not trust anyone in the District and this is a culture that will take many years to change.

provide office worker safety refresher course

I believe that senior management is naive to middle management's behavior. There are supervisors and superintendents who are not on board with the safety program. Want to keep the same methods in place. Are not willing to do the hard work it takes to insure all are safe and are working safe.

The organization of the Safety Committee needs to be evaluated for effectiveness. Why do you need so many members (12) on a committee? With so many people, how can you possibly expect to be effective (no wonder meetings take 2 hours!!!!). Why are terms limited to 2 years? If an employee has an express interest in serving then there should be no term limit.

Openly discuss long term/short term plans/opinions/ideas re: contaminated or potentially contaminated areas where pipelines are located.

The safety program is heading in the right direction. It hasn't reached perfection yet, but it is a process and is improving. The Safety Culture of the District has improved in the last few years and it's up to us to carry on with the best attitude on safety, "Safety is the No. 1 priority.

Previous Safety allegations had no merit. Please stop giving voice to malcontents.

The District has made a concerted effort to improve its safety culture, and I believe the employees appreciate that. Revolutions aren't accomplished quickly, but this one has made remarkable progress.

Overall, the effort made by everyone has made huge strides in improving the culture regarding safety. I feel everyone has the right to stop work and I have a hard time believing anyone would disagree after the past two years!

Safety Officer needs to spend more time with individual groups, with supervisor present.

The safety program does not adequately address the unique challenges of working at Los Vaqueros

The district is a team, Do not segregate workers by independently offering others more and refusing others. Treat all equal not just through safety related items but overall respect and maturity for all workers and management would get the respect they want. I feel that some managers are great but many could not make it at as a manager at a coffee shop.

We need to work on communication, it could be a lot better than it is.

I believe the issues we have had with safety are a symptom of CCWD's overall culture. The safety program improvement is important, but we still need to work on overall trust.

It's obvious that safety has become a top priority here.

Provide full time backup to single position classifications.

If you get hurt, the company treats you differently. People are afraid to report ergonomic medical issues or other medical issues that are work related. People know, if you get hurt, don't get hurt on the job, as the worker's comp system is lousy. Employees don't believe there is anyone on their side. managers need to learn to trust and respect staff, not each other. good people doing good safe work but no support or real concern.

I think we are working on safety too much. We have more people hurt now than before.

Senior Management needs to lead by example. If safety was a top priority, Then we should always have PPE on ! Even in a " none active work zone ". I have been an employee at the water district, for quiet a while and I always trying to do the right thing. I always try to be safe...always trying to be a great worker. I feel that there is a perception among employees that if they are injured on the job, management may feel that the worker doesn't want to come back. All my co-workers that were injured, wanted to come back to work. My co-workers that have been injured on the job feel they are being singled out by risk management and the employees believes that risk management is thinking that they are doing something duplicities. The employee also feels that nobody is truly on their side. We understand that risk manager and HR has a tuff job, we know that...but give us someone who is "neutral" at least, and someone who is definitely on the side of the worker. Also, the safety officer needs help - if safety is so important, than lets get him some (please).

We need to make sure that our safety rules/guidelines make sense to those who are actually doing the work. Safety is about keeping employees safe and effective in their jobs, not about management making easy, fast reaction decisions. That said.....we are making progress.

Get Spiro more help!!!!!!

board of directors upper management safety officers and mid managers all need to walk the walk and quick bs'ing everybody about their safety support, just look at the ground breaking photos for lv..don't tell me to wear my hard hat if you dont by example! your no better than us, Stop giving 'Spot Safety Awards' for simply doing our job. Many of the awards 'water down' the safety culture and make it seem like a joke. For example: (taken directly from our Saftey page on web site) "While doing his plant rounds & safety checks, Chris noticed a fire extinguisher that was not charged and another that hadn't been inspected for several years. These were both in critical work areas. Both extinguishers were inspected and recharged."

This was part of his job when making safety checks. Here's another: "Ramon took the time to ensure safety when installing check boards back into the canal. Ramon used a ladder, wore all his PPE and tied himself off." That is Standard Operating Procedure.

Here's another: "During a recent after hours Bollman power outage, the control room lost power to the master radios. At the time, Jim was the only operations employee on site and recognized the loss of communications. Jim immediately notified field units and Watershed staff of the communication interruption and implemented land line and cell communication to maintain safety checks for all employees." Again, Standard Operating Procedure. When awards are given out simply for doing our job, it takes away from those who truly are taking extra steps to be safe by doing that which is out of the ordinary and not ignoring something simply because 'it's not my job.'

I have watched the safety program evolve from a 4 to a 9. I believe we are on the right track.

GSM could get more involved with staff instead of just upper management. I'm not certain who you are.

The improved focus on safety is a welcome improvement.

The safety program (unfortunately) needs to include a disciplinary component that is clearly defined. People need to understand possible repercussions (beyond injury risk) if they chose to violate safety procedures. The District needs to enforce these consistently and fairly. It is not the message that upper management delivers that has fault, it is the inability to support that message with effective corrective action that makes the program weak.

I find it conflicting that CCWD spends time and energy (&\$) promoting "healthy living" (weight loss, blood pressure watch, etc.), yet I STRONGLY feel Sr. Management promotes employees to come to work sick. I feel this is unhealthy. I don't feel SAFE from illness if my co-workers are encouraged to come to work sick. Employees that come to work sick are usually taking some sort of OTC medicines that probably impair their ability to safely operate equipment.

The Construction should be more actively involved in the Safety Committee and generally in leading safety within the District as their work requires they be vigilant and knowledgeable. They are in a position to lead, but have generally taken a passive role in the overall District safety program.

I think safety is very important for all, and I do the best i can, the ccwd is doing there best to improve the safety culture but depending on your job title or supervisor, we are taking this to far,when the district pushes and pushes safety down your throat, its to much and becomes a joke.

They're on the right track, but need more communication District wide...not just with O&M where most safety incidents occur. Educate us all as things happen.

I almost never see OSHA required fall protection around deep excavations such as large valve replacement pits. I've suggested this many times, but management doesn't seem to want to address this, probably due to added cost. I usually just get blank stares when I suggest safety improvements that might cost money, but if someone got hurt I'm sure I'd be a scapegoat.

Require all supervisors to be on the safety comittee.

Safety program improvements are not a project but a contnuous journey! Improvements must be both top down and bottom up. Everyone needs to take responsibility for safety.

Safety issues often require decisive, on-the-spot decisions... That said our Safety Officer is not the most assertive person - just his personality. Supervisors and field crews absolutely cannot dismiss any comments or suggestions, no matter how they are presented. Lastly, the Safety Officer cannot be viewed as the "enemy" of production.

prehaps that members of the safety commities be involved in investigations and have a say on disapline.

Make a serious difference and those of us who are watching to see if management can put REAL thought into safety decisions will be on board.

Safety comment drop boxes should be placed all over the CCWD facilities.

An overall culture change to make the District a more positive place would help. Management tends to focus on whatever they can find that is "wrong" and employees get wrapped up in not being caught doing something that might be perceived as "wrong." The result is too much fear in the workplace and not enough recognition of all the things that are right and good. This problem has a long history here, so change is possible, but it will take time.

I believe management has taken TOO serious a stand on safety. It almost undermines the effort by reiterating the commitment to safety and having very optimistic goals that may be too high a standard for our first few years of implementing the stricter program. I believe you will always have employees who feel they are being made to work in unsafe environments....we don't work in a sandbox and get a juice for making a nice sandcastle. This is industrial level machinery and processes we deal with and as such, the employees should recognize the effort that goes into their safety. For instance, I think it is more important to focus on the fact that we perform electrical coordination studies to ensure we don't have Arc Flash conditions in our high voltage transformers (ONLY AS REQUIRED, we don't need to do this for less than 480V) than it is to make sure the rise and run on a set of stairs is accurate.

We should be able to tell our employees with a straight face that we are focused on their life safety, not tripping hazards. I think the safety program has improved some in the past two years, but a lot of work is yet to be done.

Non-management staff has been working in fear for many years and it's difficult to change that. I believe that a lot of this is centered around the pressure of having to make deadlines that are sometimes unattainable by following the "book", so people take (possibly harmful) shortcuts to meet those deadlines.

Concerns - Eventually there will be less O&M folks interested in participating in the DSC resulting in more office worker reps who have little understanding of the daily activities of field workers. Suggestions: anyone who steps up to participate in any of the safety committees (DSC, Task Force or Site Safety) should be formally recognized and not wait for their supervisor to make the recommendation (and who already find staff's participation impacting normal work duties.)

Some of the minor safety issues which could be corrected in a timely manner, take too long to be acted on at times.

We need to stop saying "this is the way we have always done it (safe or not)" and get out of our old habits and move forward to safer ways.

1. Employees should always work safely and should not need to have incentives to be recognized in order to be a safe worker.
2. It seems to be that most of the safety awards are awarded to be the same group of people in the company.
3. There are those of people who work safely daily without having to be seen and awarded with a safety recognition.

Need more tracking and activities at the site safety committee level. Tracking specific items should be done there and the

larger safety committee should focus on District wide issues and safety culture issues.

I definitely think the safety culture has improved dramatically over the past two years.

Management is definitely behind this new culture, I think the trust from staff will continue to grow. Management simply needs to continue to prove their commitment by their ACTIONS, not simply by their words.

My suggestion is that we need to stay the course. I think we are making progress forward in safety. Things are improving.

Sometimes it seems like two steps forward and one step back, but I believe the overall progress is forward and we just need to keep a steady course and not become discouraged when there are setbacks. From what I see, the safety culture is taking hold. It will just take time and persistence and good people who are willing to step forward (which we do have).

The general manager needs to be present at some of the safety meetings. 10% of the meetings or better.

I think in some ways we have gone from one extreme to the other. Before there was not enough emphasis on safety and now I believe we are bordering on overkill. Some policies lately don't always make sense or are not being explained clearly enough.

Seems like we have started a knee-jerk reaction to many things in a rush to think about the "safety angle" without always thinking realistically.

While the safety medals are good in theory; it has been noticed that medals have been awarded to employees that are, in fact, just doing their job. This can minimize the importance of the safety medal.

Just keep asking employees to keep eyes open for safety improvements in every area and dept.

Again, additional help for the safety officer

keep up the effort

People who violate safety rules go into long investigations that usually end up in a verbal or written warnings, or very short suspensions they view as extra vacation days. We need to give harsher punishments to violators so they take safety very seriously.

My rating on Senior Management was not near a 10 because their words say they want a World Class Organization but they do not provide the Safety Officer with any staffing. A World Class Organization with over 300 employees need a Safety Department of more than one.

The Spot Safety Metals being awarded to employees for doing their job lessens the value of the award. The awards should be earned for reasons beyond your normal duties and should not be handed out because of pressure from above.

The question about disciplinary fairness says the disciplinary process for safety violations wasn't fair in the past. Poorly worded. I do not feel discipline was unfair in the past-just perception.

Safety is a very important factor and it seems managers have turned it into a play game to get ahead, use as a threat, get rid of the politics

Spiro works! question about senior management- trust=4, respect=8

Global Safety Mgmt. has done a great job to expose the hypocritical ways that the district has operated. The culture is changing slowly but the trust that should go both ways doesn't. The atmosphere that Wally created of, us vs them, is still here. It will take more supervisors and mid-level managers facing the same laws that we face. Which they currently don't. They always get off way easier than we do. By the way the "BLACK LIST" that has been in place for years, needs to be exposed and abolished.

Managers/supervisors being better role models. Too much double talk.

I believe that Spiro needs additional support, many see him as the face of the safety program and he is not the "strong, decisive " leader type. Not slight on his qualifications, just an observation about needing a stanger face for the program.

Perhaps rotate assistants to Spiro that are staff members throughout the District, that are charged with field oversight on jobs...having peers police some of the District's workforce may help to accept observations and criticism about how staff handles certain tasks, or the investigations of incident.

OSHA training should be offered more frequently for Staff. I can't recall it being offered in the past year.

I realize the majority of our safety concerns are for the orange shirts and rightfully so. A little more awareness possibly for the office types.

Some of the questions in this survey do not apply to my current position. As far as I know, safety is now being addressed more than ever before, and that is great.

The biggest safety concern at the District for everyone is the hazardous drive in we have off of Concord Avenue. Since we were unsuccessful getting the City to change this safety issue, CCWD should address the driveway issue itself by relocating the main drive in either on Bisso Lane or further up on Concord Avenue.

Largest safety concerns are in the field, thus the safety program focuses on the field, as it should. But there should be some help for office workers beyond the standard ergo consultation. As the consultant says, if you do anything repetitively for 8 hours a day, your likely to be injured.

The District should provide a place and equipment for preventive physical therapy, which would likely be much cheaper than dealing with the workers comp claims on the horizon.

Most CCWD employees seem to be on board with safety and following procedures. Contractors working for CCWD could use some improvement

The safety program has been a priority for the last few years and it seems that the culture around the District is slowly shifting where more employees are taking responsibility and speaking up.

Discipline employees who fail to identify known hazards or stop unsafe work. A person who knowingly permits an unsafe to occur in their presence is as responsible as the unsafe worker.

For senior management to inquire to individuals sincerely what are their safety concerns. For them to listen to response without immediately getting defensive-as if they are expected to have all answers. I think folks realize its a collaborative effort and will take time, and with everyones input refine protocol until ideal is achieved. I'm glad someone initiated the ball on this program. I feel taken seriously, could mend a lot of distance within CCWD.

safety should be the priority of every person here! but dont go overboard so that it starts taking away jobs from us and only have contractors do the work, there are some forms of risk with every job.

our managers are glowing examples of leadership