



SAFETY CULTURE

Policy Statement

Wisconsin Radiation Protection Section (WI RPS)

“Protect the public and occupational workers from unnecessary exposure to sources of radiation.”

Definition of Safety Culture

Safety culture is the core values and behaviors resulting from a collective commitment by leaders and individuals to emphasize safety over competing goals to ensure protection of people and the environment.

Importance for Regulated Entities

Industry experience has shown the value of establishing and maintaining a positive safety culture. It is important to remember that individuals and organizations performing regulated activities bear the primary responsibility for safety. The WI RPS monitors the performance of licensees and registrants to determine compliance with regulatory requirements and commitments. This information may serve as an indicator of possible problem areas in an organization’s safety culture. The policy statement is not a regulation; therefore, it is the organization’s responsibility, as part of their radiation safety programs, to consider how to apply this policy statement to regulated activities.

Positive Safety Culture

Experience has shown that certain personal and organizational core values are present in a positive safety culture.

The following are common core values of a positive safety culture:

1. Leadership Safety Values and Actions

Leaders demonstrate a commitment to safety in their decisions and behaviors.

2. Problem Identification and Resolution

Issues potentially impacting safety are promptly identified, fully evaluated, and promptly addressed and corrected commensurate with their significance.

3. Personal Accountability

All individuals take personal responsibility for safety.

4. Work Processes

The process of planning and controlling work activities is implemented so that safety is maintained.

5. Continuous Learning

Opportunities to learn about ways to ensure safety are sought out and implemented.

6. Environment for Raising Concerns

A safety-conscious work environment is maintained where personnel feel free to raise safety concerns without fear of retaliation, intimidation, harassment, or discrimination.

7. Effective Safety Communication

Communications maintain a focus on safety.

8. Respectful Work Environment

Trust and respect permeate the organization.

9. Questioning Attitude

Individuals avoid complacency and continuously challenge existing conditions and activities in order to identify discrepancies that might result in error or inappropriate action.

WI RPS Safety Culture Policy Statement

The Wisconsin Radiation Protection Section expects individuals and organizations performing regulated activities to establish and maintain a positive safety culture sufficient to ensure compliance with the provisions of Chapter DHS 157. Licensee and registrants are required to implement a radiation protection program under DHS 157.21(1). Since a radiation protection program is the foundation on which compliance is achieved, a strong safety culture is critical.

Moving Forward

The WI RPS will seek feedback on the ability of the regulated community to incorporate safety culture in their activities, as well as to determine whether there are areas where changes may be appropriate. If you have questions, comments, or suggestions regarding safety culture, contact the WI RPS at the following:

Wisconsin Department of Health Services
Division of Public Health
Radiation Protection Section
201 E. Washington Ave.
Madison, WI 53703
www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/radiation/
Phone (608) 267-4797

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