

Reclamation Manual

Policy

Subject:	Safety and Occupational Health Program
Purpose:	Establish Bureau of Reclamation Policy for the implementation and administration of an effective Safety and Occupational Health (SOH) Program. The benefits of this Policy are: reinforcement of Reclamation's commitment to the safety and health of its employees, contractors, and others working in or visiting Reclamation lands and/or facilities, compliance with Federal Occupational Safety and Health regulations, and effective implementation of the Department of the Interior's SOH Program.
Authority:	Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (Pub. L. 91-596;84 Stat. 1590; 29 USC 651 et seq.); 29 CFR 1960, Basic Program Elements for Federal Employee Occupational Safety and Health Programs and Related Matters; Executive Order 12196, Occupational Safety and Health Programs for Federal Employees; and Department of the Interior Departmental Manual (DM) 485 DM, Safety and Occupational Health Program.
Approving Official:	Commissioner
Contact:	Mission Assurance and Protection Organization (MAPO), Preparedness Division, Safety and Occupational Health Office (84-52300)

1. Introduction.

Reclamation is committed to creating an organization where employee safety is a fundamental core value incorporating leadership engagement, empowering employees and integrating safety into all facets of the mission. Reclamation strives to maintain a strong safety culture by implementing effective training programs, identifying and mitigating risk and hazardous work conditions before they result in negative outcomes, and learning from mistakes through a robust lessons-learned program. Reclamation's goal is to foster a culture that results in a safe environment for all employees, contractors, visitors, and the public. The operation of Reclamation dams, powerplants, pumping plants, facilities, property, and the management of project-related lands and water bodies, involve inherent hazards that are mitigated, to the extent possible, for Reclamation employees, contractors, and others working in or visiting Reclamation projects.

2. Applicability.

This Policy applies to all Reclamation employees. Reclamation is required to establish and maintain a SOH Program that provides a safe and healthy environment for all employees and visitors to Reclamation lands and facilities.

3. Policy.

The safety of Reclamation's employees and contractors and the public is integral to every task performed to accomplish Reclamation's mission. Safety is paramount and shall not be

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compromised for meeting work schedules, due dates, timelines, or any other perceived deadlines associated with the work undertaken by Reclamation employees and contractors. Reclamation is committed to establishing safe and healthy workplaces that are built upon a strong culture, mutual trust between employees and management, an organization willing to learn from incidents, all while managing risk. Reclamation will accomplish this by incorporating the following four principles:

- A. Management and leadership engagement,
- B. employee empowerment, engagement, and involvement,
- C. commitment towards organizational learning, and
- D. risk identification and mitigation.

4. Requirements and Responsibilities.

- A. All Reclamation employees will adhere to applicable Federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards, Department of the Interior policies, and Reclamation Safety and Health Standards (RSHS), which are incorporated by this reference as Reclamation Manual requirements. [Safety | Bureau of Reclamation \(usbr.gov\)](https://www.usbr.gov/safety/)
- B. The Commissioner and the Deputy Commissioner for Policy, Administration, and Budget, who serves as the Reclamation Designated Agency Safety and Health Official (DASHO), will provide executive-level SOH Program direction and guidance.
- C. The Chief Preparedness Officer will oversee the development of the Reclamation SOH Program, and ensure that:
 - (1) SOH Program Reclamation Manual Directives and Standards are developed, managed, and updated periodically,
 - (2) continuous improvement of the Reclamation SOH Program is accomplished by collaborating with customers and stakeholders, using tools such as program assessments, learning reviews, employee listening sessions,
 - (3) guides, templates, and supplemental training materials are developed where necessary, and
 - (4) an appropriate system of internal controls is established and implemented for the SOH Program.

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- D. The Reclamation Leadership Team (RLT), both as a group and through its individual members, will provide leadership throughout the Bureau by instilling safety as a core Reclamation value. To accomplish this, they must:
- (1) provide budget and staff resources to effectively develop, implement, and maintain SOH programs,
 - (2) ensure SOH professionals (SOH specialists, managers, and industrial hygienists) at regional and area office levels report directly to a safety and health manager or to their respective regional director, deputy regional director, area manager, or deputy area manager,
 - (3) ensure SOH positions are accurately classified to represent the appropriate safety and health occupational series (e.g., 0018, 0690) and grade, which provides consistency across the Bureau and ensures SOH personnel are provided adequate training to perform their duties successfully,
 - (4) ensure safety committees or councils are established, where reasonable, at the appropriate levels within their organizations,
 - (5) conduct regular (e.g., monthly, quarterly) site visits to engage employees where work is being performed,
 - (6) ensure managers and supervisors have a performance element that accurately measures active engagement, participation, and support of the Reclamation SOH Program,
 - (7) ensure systems are implemented to track and mitigate hazardous work conditions and practices within their respective units,
 - (8) ensure employees are provided the necessary training, materials, equipment, controls (e.g., engineering, administrative), medical monitoring, and personal protective equipment to be successful and to ensure Reclamation employees are able to conduct work in a safe manner,
 - (9) ensure managers and supervisors attend Reclamation Safety for Supervisors training to understand their safety and occupational health responsibilities (see RSHS 1.02),
 - (10) encourage and promote employee participation in their local SOH Programs and participation in various SOH subject matter expert teams and workgroups by addressing any foreseen barriers and obstacles, and
 - (11) incorporate a proactive approach to employee safety that ensures lessons learned and near misses are shared in accordance with RSHS 1.22

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requirements widely in order that similar incidents can be avoided in the future.

- E. Every Reclamation employee must embrace safety as a core value in their work practices and be aware that they are responsible and accountable for their own safety as well as the safety of those around them, including peers, subordinates, supervisors, contractors, visitors, and the public.
- F. The Reclamation SOH Program will be implemented by all levels of management, SOH personnel, and employees using the four principles as outlined in Paragraph 3, “Policy.” Additionally, Reclamation will demonstrate and implement a SOH Program with the following key components to ensure Reclamation recognizes, understands, and addresses the hazards and exposures inherent in the construction, operation, and maintenance of Reclamation dams, powerplants, pumping plants, and all other facilities and supporting activities:
 - (1) Engaging employees, supervisors, bargaining unit representatives, and RLT members to foster a robust safety culture, which includes identifying and understanding hazards and exposures along with identifying and implementing actions to mitigate these risks.
 - (2) Planning safety at all activity levels including programmatic, budget, design, and implementation to ensure objectives are well understood and all work activities and facilities are planned with attention to safety and health considerations.
 - (3) Implementing operational practices to further establish expectations associated with the SOH Program that will aid in identifying, assessing, and mitigating risks to the extent possible and that will ensure SOH is incorporated into all Reclamation processes.
 - (4) Evaluating and assessing key metrics to identify both areas of best practices and areas where improvement efforts are required.
 - (5) Conducting management reviews, such as safety and health program evaluations, to ensure Reclamation leadership is regularly assessing the effectiveness of the SOH Program in achieving safety and occupational health objectives.
- G. Training will be provided and coordinated by supervisors for employees, contractors, and visitors within their area of responsibility. Training is intended to develop employee skills and ability to recognize and mitigate hazards, provide uniform knowledge, and provide the proper equipment required to perform tasks safely. SOH personnel will provide guidance for training as necessary.

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- H. Management must conduct and coordinate program workplace assessments or equivalent processes to recognize compliance with SOH requirements and the proper corrective action to mitigate risk (to the extent possible) and track and resolve SOH deficiencies in a manner appropriate for sharing across Reclamation (without names or other personally identifiable information). Employee participation must be part of this process to reinforce SOH training and adherence with regulatory standards. SOH personnel will provide guidance and oversight to facilitate compliance with regulatory and organizational SOH policies and directives.
- I. All employees must report accidents and incidents. Management must conduct or assist with accident investigations, in accordance with RSHS 1.22, to identify causal factors and corrective actions and must ensure corrective actions are implemented to prevent recurrence of similar future accidents. Employees must be given the option to participate in accident and incident investigations. SOH personnel will analyze injury and illness reports and data to ensure appropriate countermeasures are developed to prevent future injuries.
- J. Reclamation will employ Stop Work procedures as described in Reclamation Safety and Health Standard 1.02.
- K. Bargaining units, represented by a union, may have bargaining and other labor obligations that include union notice, negotiation, employee representation, or union input. Contact the local or regional Labor Relations Officer for consultation.

5. Definitions.

For the purposes of this Policy, the terms are defined as follows:

- A. **Accident.**
An unplanned event that results in injury, illness, death, property damage, or other loss that has a negative effect on the mission (485 DM 29).
- B. **Continuous Improvement.**
Continuous improvement is the ongoing process of analyzing performance, identifying opportunities, and making incremental changes to processes, procedures, policies, training, and equipment.
- C. **Incident.**
For reporting purposes, an unplanned work event involving people, equipment, or the work environment that could have resulted in an injury, illness, or loss, but did not (485 DM 29). Also referred to as a “near miss” or “close call.”
- D. **Management.**
People in charge of administering the organization and coordinating the efforts of the employees.

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- E. **Near Miss.**
See definition for 'Incident'.
 - F. **RLT.**
Reclamation's Senior Executive and Senior Level positions (see membership listing on the RLT Intranet site).
 - G. **Safety Committees or Councils.**
Entities composed of nonsupervisory and supervisory staff intended to assist local organizations with maintaining an open channel of communication between employees and management concerning safety and health matters in the workplace. Safety committees or councils provide employees the opportunity to use their knowledge of workplace operations to assist local management to improve policies, conditions, and practices.
 - H. **SOH Program.**
A set of interrelated activities that establish and support SOH policy, objectives, and mechanisms to continually improve Reclamation's SOH practices regarding the operation and management of its lands and facilities.
 - I. **Supervisor.**
A Reclamation employee that has one or more direct reports.
6. **Review Period.**
The originating office will review this release every four years.