

SafetyUpdate

Angled Light Curtain

Tapeswitch Corp., Woodinville, WA, has announced the latest member to its Guardstar B series safety light curtain family. The new Angle Guardstar B series has all the same features as the original B series, and can be manufactured to meet specific requirements and to eliminate the need for multiple units, cables and special controllers. Designed and third-party BG-approved EN 61496 Type 4, its tough one-piece aluminum extruded body measures only 1% by 1% in. and allows for an integrated appearance on the equipment.

B series unit consists of an emitter and receiver that make up a self-contained system capable of safety functions without additional equipment. The interface configuration can be used with a variety of readily available safety relay units, fail-safe PLCs and a range of control units.

The Right Safety Program Can Increase Profits

Nearly 50 American workers are injured every minute of the 40-hour workweek and almost 17 die each day, according to OSHA.

"I am shocked by the number of manufacturing companies that waste thousands of dollars of profit because they won't spend enough time and money on safety programs," says Ron Pitcher, president of Pitcher Insurance Agency, Palatine, IL, and member of the Precision Metalforming Association Safety Committee. "Cutting those expenses will cost manufacturers more than they can ever save."

While implementing hundreds of insurance programs for manufacturers over the past 22 years, Pitcher recalls many manufacturers believing that insurance will cover every accident-related cost.

But while insurance covers most

hard-dollar property and casualty losses, manufacturers often overlook uninsured indirect costs such as loss of employee productivity resulting from slowdowns due to injured or apprehensive workers. And, explains Pitcher, don't forget the time and expense in responding to a workplace injury, paperwork to fill out and the need to hire and train replacement workers. Of course, insurance claims may mean increased deductibles, co-insurance outlays and, possibly, OSHA fines. In the end, the indirect cost of an insurance claim becomes three to four times that of the insurance-claim payment.

OSHA, recognizing safety as a good investment, states on its website that "establishing a safety and health program to prevent occupational injuries and illnesses is not only the right thing to do, it's the profitable thing to do. Studies have shown a \$4 to \$6 return for every dollar invested in safety and health."

It seems obvious, from financial-return and employee-benevolence perspectives, that every company should have a detailed, formal safety program, says Pitcher. He offers tips on setting one up.

Essential safety-program elements include: top management's commitment and involvement; establishment and operation of safety committees; provisions for safety and health training; first-aid procedures; accident investigations and post-loss recommendations; injury record-keeping; and workplace safety rules, policies and procedures.

Top management's commitment should be spelled out in a policy statement such as this, found on Florida Department of Labor's website:

"The management of this organization is committed to providing employees with a safe and healthful workplace. It is the policy of this organization that employees report unsafe conditions and do not perform work tasks if the work is considered unsafe. Employees must report all accidents, injuries and unsafe conditions to supervisors. Management will give top priority to, and provide financial resources for, the correction of unsafe conditions. Management will

take disciplinary action against an employee who willfully or repeatedly violates workplace safety rules. This action may include verbal or written reprimands and ultimately may result in termination of employment."

Armed with corporate support, the safety committee should:

- Develop and implement a company-specific safety program;
- Meet on a regular basis;
- Discuss accident-prevention techniques;
- Review previous accidents and injuries and make suggestions to avoid them;
- Recommend changes to safety procedures and policies;
- Conduct frequent plant safety inspections; and
- Develop short- and long-term goals.

Pitcher adds that while he puts together comprehensive insurance programs for manufacturers, such programs are never complete without a superior safety program.

"Even the best insurance policy," he says, "can't replace an eye that was injured because the employee's company didn't enforce the use of safety glasses."

For a free Insurance & Safety Evaluation call Ron Pitcher at (847) 705-5560 or email: pitcher@pitcherinsurance.com

Micro Air Clean Air Booth Brochure

A brochure describes the new Clean Air Booth from Micro Air Clean Air Systems, Wichita, KS. Photos show how booths can be used to help protect workers from harmful smoke, fumes and other pollutants. It also contains

detailed specifications to help determine the correct configuration for applications including welding, grinding, painting, sanding, cutting and finishing.

