

SAFETY AND HEALTH PROGRAM

1. PURPOSE

This Directive sets forth the policy, authorities, and responsibilities for administering a comprehensive Safety and Health Program (SHP) for the Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA).

2. REPLACEMENT HIGHLIGHTS

This Directive replaces GIPSA Directive 4790.1, Safety and Health Program, dated 11/16/01.

3. POLICY

- a. It is GIPSA policy to develop and implement a comprehensive SHP that identifies and strives to eliminate employee exposure to existing and potentially hazardous working conditions and/or situations.
- b. This SHP is applicable to all GIPSA operations and activities. It specifically addresses the safety and health of GIPSA personnel. (**NOTE:** GIPSA is not responsible for the safety and health of non-Federal inspection and weighing personnel; therefore, those personnel are not required to comply with GIPSA safety and health procedures. Further, GIPSA does not have the authority to enforce safety and health matters for employees of nongovernment-owned facilities even where Department of Agriculture (USDA) employees work.

4. STANDARDS AND PROGRAM ELEMENTS

- a. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has primary responsibility for developing and promulgating regulations and standards which ensure the safe working conditions of American workers in plants, grain handling facilities, packing houses, stockyards, and other work sites.
- b. GIPSA is responsible for developing safety standards and procedures for situations and problems that are unique to the Agency.
- c. The purpose of the USDA and GIPSA safety and health program is to minimize losses incurred by the Department, its employees, and the general public as a result of work-related accidents, which cause injuries, illnesses, and property damage.

- d. The U.S. Department of Labor's occupational safety and health standards and program elements, promulgated under Sections 6, 19, and 24 of the Occupational Safety and Health Act (Public Law 91-596), are adopted as the USDA and the GIPSA basic occupational safety and health standards and program elements.

5. AUTHORITIES

The GIPSA safety and health program is established pursuant to the following authorities:

- a. Public Law 91-596, Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970.
- b. Executive Order 12196, Occupational Safety and Health Programs for Federal Employees.
- c. Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 1960, Basic Program Elements for Federal Employee Occupational Safety and Health Programs.

6. RESPONSIBILITIES

- a. The Administrator is responsible for formulating GIPSA occupational safety and health policies. The Administrator is also responsible for:
 - (1) Furnishing each employee with a place of employment which is free from recognized hazards that are causing or likely to cause death or serious physical harm.
 - (2) The development, implementation, and evaluation of an occupational safety and health program that complies with Executive Order 12196.
 - (3) Acquiring, maintaining, and requiring the use of approved personal protective equipment, approved safety equipment, and other devices necessary to protect employees.
 - (4) Ensuring that the Agency budget submission includes appropriate financial and other resources to effectively implement and administer the Agency's occupational safety and health program budget.
 - (5) Appointing one of the Deputy Administrators as the Designated Agency Safety and Health Official. (The Deputy Administrator (FGIS) is currently serving as the Designated Agency Safety and Health Official.)
- b. Deputy Administrators share with the Administrator responsibility for all activities listed under the Administrator. They will hold subordinate personnel responsible for their duties as listed in this Directive.

- c. The Designated Agency Safety and Health Official (DASHO) will:
- (1) Provide executive leadership in the development, promulgation, and implementation of occupational safety and health policies and procedures; and ensure that adequate staff and resources are available to implement the SHP at all operational levels consistent with Agency priorities.
 - (2) Exercise final authority in all safety and health matters that involve more than one Division.
 - (3) Establish, in collaboration with the other Deputy Administrator, general occupational safety and health program guidance which will include the scope and duties of the Safety and Health Staff (SHS).
 - (4) Designate a Safety and Health Manager who meets the qualification standards established by the USDA Office of Personnel.
 - (5) Ensure that the Safety and Health Manager is provided staff, training, funds, and equipment commensurate with Agency policies and goals.
 - (6) Ensure that subordinate supervisors are held accountable for their SHP duties.
 - (7) Ensure that all purchases of chemicals used are coordinated through the SHS.
 - (8) Ensure that all requests for initial procurement of electrical powered equipment used are coordinated with the SHS to ensure that they meet current safety and health criteria.
 - (9) Ensure that all directives and publications are evaluated for safety and health implications by the SHS prior to publication.
 - (10) Monitor reports of job-related injuries, illnesses, and property damage involving subordinates; and take corrective action when necessary to abate hazards.
 - (11) Ensure that all GIPSA activities which impact on safety and health technical and policy matters are coordinated with the SHS.
- d. The Safety and Health Staff will:
- (1) Be responsible for managing the daily operations of the SHP under the leadership of the Director, Management Support Staff and the DASHO.

- (2) Establish objectives, goals, and procedural reviews for reducing or eliminating job-related injuries, illnesses, and property damage caused by accidents.
- (3) Develop safety and health directives for GIPSA operations.
- (4) Inspect GIPSA-controlled facilities and evaluate work conditions at nongovernment-owned facilities to ensure a safe and healthful work environment for GIPSA employees.
- (5) Evaluate the effectiveness of the SHP annually.
- (6) Assist managers and supervisors in attaining the timely abatement of unsafe or unhealthful working conditions at any facility where GIPSA personnel are assigned.
- (7) Coordinate all purchases of chemicals that have not been previously evaluated to ensure that proper use and storage safeguards are taken.
- (8) Coordinate disposal of hazardous waste in accordance with Departmental and Environmental Protection Agency directives.
- (9) Coordinate SHP activities with the Department, GIPSA management, trade groups, etc., as needed.
- (10) Represent GIPSA at the Field Federal Safety and Health Council and similar professional groups.
- (11) Provide oversight of all GIPSA activities to ensure full compliance with all safety and health rules and regulations.
- (12) Collect and disseminate data to the Administrator and organizational units pertaining to the accidents, injuries, and health problems affecting personnel.
- (13) Participate in the development of safety and health training courses for supervisors and managers.
- (14) Manage the Workers' Compensation Program.
- (15) Manage the Employee Assistance Program.
- (16) Manage the Drug Free Workplace and Drug Testing Program.
- (17) Manage the Physical Security Program.

(18) Manage the Environmental Protection Program.

e. Division Directors will:

- (1) Implement an effective SHP for all Division activities.
- (2) Hold subordinate supervisors accountable for SHP duties.
- (3) Ensure that a Collateral Duty Safety and Health Officer (CDSHO) is appointed, in writing, at each GIPSA regional or field office where five or more GIPSA employees work.
- (4) Ensure that all test procedures are reviewed by the SHS to ascertain that all needed safety and health precautions are included.
- (5) Ensure that all initial purchases of electrical equipment for Division use are coordinated through the SHS to ensure they meet current safety and health criteria.
- (6) Ensure that all initial purchases of chemicals for Division use are coordinated through the SHS to ensure that proper safeguards are taken for their use and storage.
- (7) Ensure that all offices, inspection laboratories, and chemical laboratories are evaluated for hazards prior to and during GIPSA's occupancy.
- (8) Monitor reports of job-related injuries, illnesses, and property damage involving subordinates, and implement corrective action where needed to abate hazards.
- (9) Ensure that all disposals of hazardous waste are in compliance with current Departmental and Environmental Protection Agency directives.
- (10) Ensure that all GIPSA activities which impact on safety and health technical and policy matters are coordinated with the SHS.

f. Regional Supervisors and Field Office Managers will:

- (1) Designate a CDSHO, in writing, and provide this person with appropriate training and equipment to assist in implementing the SHP. (Forward a copy of the letter of designation, through channels, to SHS.)

- (2) Investigate, report, and document all job-related accidents, injuries, or illnesses on the appropriate forms; and transmit these forms to the office having jurisdiction over the case. Ensure that these reports are complete and accurate. Direct questions concerning Office of Workers' Compensation Program (OWCP) jurisdiction to the SHS.
- (3) Ensure that the proper personal protective equipment is available, employees are trained in its use; it is maintained in good working order, and it is utilized when necessary.
- (4) Counsel and train employees on the SHP policies and procedures and enforce such policies and procedures. When necessary, refer to the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Human Resources Division for appropriate disciplinary action when an employee is found to be violating established policy.
- (5) Prepare an emergency preparedness plan for each location where GIPSA employees work. The plan is to be reviewed annually or when facility changes occur. Ensure specific provisions are made to assist any handicapped employees.
- (6) Provide a bulletin board at each location where GIPSA employees normally report for duty, and ensure that the bulletin board displays all mandated posters, emergency preparedness plans, etc., as directed by the SHS.
- (7) Provide an approved first-aid kit at each inspection laboratory and a first-aid kit in each Government-owned or leased vehicle. Ensure that the kits are maintained properly with no missing components. (Substitute first-aid kits may be used if the contents are the same as those provided in the approved kits.)
- (8) Ensure that employees who would like to be trained in first aid and cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) receive such training and that at least one worker at each job location is trained in first aid and CPR.
- (9) Ensure that the CDSHO conducts a safety and health inspection at each GIPSA-controlled facility (i.e., owned or leased) at least once a year).
- (10) Ensure that the CDSHO evaluates the safety and health conditions at each non-government-controlled facility (e.g., on-site inspection laboratories) where GIPSA employees work at least every 3 months.
- (11) Report all explosions, fires, evacuations, and serious accidents occurring at grain-handling facilities in their assigned area to the SHS.

- (12) Act as chairperson of the Safety and Health Committee (if required). See Title 29 Code of Federal Regulations, Part 1960.36, for details.
- (13) Establish an Employee Assistance Program for their employees.
- (14) Ensure that employees are not exposed to imminent danger hazard. Ensure that all serious hazards are corrected within 30 days and that all *de minimus* hazards (technical violations of OSHA standards that do not cause a risk of injury or illness to employees) are corrected, as funds become available.
- (15) Ensure that onsite safety and health training is provided to GIPSA employees.
- (16) Conduct safety and health briefings or presentations for employees.
- (17) Ensure that a management representative investigates safety and health complaints made by GIPSA employees.
- (18) Give occupational safety and health orientation training to all new employees (full or part-time). The person who will be the new employee's immediate supervisor should give this training. Give refresher training annually or when work assignments change.
- (19) Ensure GIPSA participation in Field Federal Safety and Health Council activities.
- (20) Participate in private-sector safety and health committee training, emergency drills, etc.
- (21) Invite management of private-sector facilities where GIPSA employees work to use GIPSA safety and health educational and training materials.
- (22) Ensure that all GIPSA workplaces have adequate restroom facilities consistent with the requirements of Title 29 Code of Federal Regulations, Part 1910.141. Allow employees who work with extremely dirty or potentially toxic materials adequate time during working hours to wash before meals and at the end of the shift.
- (23) Ensure that employees who work alone at remote locations are provided a means of communication such as a two-way radio, a telephone, or alarm system, or arrange for a supervisor, security guard, or some other person to check on their welfare periodically.

- (24) Prohibit GIPSA employees from entering any enclosed space in which toxic or flammable vapors are known to exist at a level above that permitted by current OSHA standards or where oxygen-deficient atmosphere may exist.
- (25) Prohibit GIPSA employees from entering any space where the use of a chemical respirator or self-contained breathing apparatus is required to protect the employees from an imminent danger.
- (26) Ensure that GISA employees board and disembark ships only by means specifically authorized by current OSHA standards.
- (27) Ensure that all employees who work with toxic chemicals or substances are briefed on the hazards involved.
- (28) Ensure that all toxic, corrosive, or otherwise hazardous chemicals are stored, handled, and disposed of in accordance with USDA, GIPSA, OSHA, Environmental Protection Agency, and local codes.
- (29) Ensure that personnel selected to operate Government-owned or -leased vehicles have a valid State driver's license and attend a defensive driving course.
- (30) Prohibit smoking in grain elevators, flour mills, feed mills, rice mills, or grain handling facilities where the possibility of dust explosions exist. Any employee violating this prohibition will be recommended for removal from GIPSA employment.
- (31) Prohibit smoking in any location where flammable or explosive chemicals are stored, handled, or used. Any employee violating this prohibition shall be recommended for removal from GIPSA employment.

Smoking is not allowed in USDA/GIPSA-owned or -leased vehicles. (This includes all tobacco products.) Any employee violating this smoking policy shall be recommended for disciplinary action.

g. Collateral Duty Safety and Health Officials (CDSHO) will:

- (1) Conduct safety and health inspections of GIPSA-owned or -leased facilities. Evaluate the conditions in private-sector workplaces and report all deficiencies to management. Document these inspections and maintain records for 5 years.
- (2) Establish and maintain a safety and health reference library.

- (3) Maintain a working knowledge of GIPSA and OSHA safety and health rules and regulations.
- (4) Prepare safety and health inspection checklists for all worksites within the offices' area of responsibility.
- (5) Inspect Government-owned or leased vehicles to ensure that they are safe to operate. Monitor the use of seat belts/shoulder harnesses by drivers and passengers.

h. Branch Chiefs and Staff Heads will:

- (1) Investigate, report, and document all job-related accidents, injuries, or illnesses on the appropriate forms and send these forms to the SHS.
- (2) Counsel and train employees on SHP policies and procedures and enforce such policies. When necessary, refer to APHIS Human Resources Division for appropriate disciplinary actions when an employee is found to be violating established policy.
- (3) Conduct and document walkthroughs of their work area to ensure that employees are not exposed to imminent danger hazards that all serious hazards are corrected within 30 days, and that *de minimus* hazards are corrected, as funds become available.
- (4) Conduct routine safety and health briefings or presentations for employees.
- (5) Give occupational safety and health orientation training to all new employees (full-or part-time). The person who will be the new employee's immediate supervisor should provide this training. Give refresher training annually or when job assignments change.
- (6) Implement procedures to assist any handicapped employees in case of emergency evacuation of the facility.
- (7) Report all safety and health complaints made by GIPSA employees to the SHS for evaluation.

i. Immediate Supervisors will:

- (1) Perform and document routine walkthrough safety and health evaluations of their work areas, and initiate action to correct any conditions that expose GIPSA employees to hazards. (Handwritten notes kept in a notebook are acceptable. Records must be kept for 1 year.)

- (2) Arrange for emergency medical care for GIPSA employees who become injured on duty.
- (3) Report all job-related accidents, illnesses, and injuries that occur; and prepare necessary accident reports and OWCP forms.
- (4) Brief all employees on safety and health rules applicable to the worksite.
- (5) Enforce all safety and health rules as they affect GIPSA employees.

j. GIPSA employees will:

- (1) Read and comply with all safety and health directives issued by GIPSA; and, when working in a private-sector workplace, comply with the company's safety and health policies, whenever practicable.
- (2) Report to his/her immediate supervisor all job-related accidents, illnesses, or injuries in which he/she are involved. This must be done as soon as possible after the mishap.
- (3) Report job-related hazardous conditions to their immediate supervisor.
- (4) Wear required personal protective equipment.

7. **INQUIRIES**

This Directive is available on the Internet at

<http://www.aphis.usda.gov/library/gipsa/GIPSA.shtml>

/s/

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Administrator