

Avoid Incidents with an Effective Safety Management System

Employees at an elementary school in Memphis, Tennessee helped thwart a mass shooting this summer. When a gunman entered the lobby of Margolin Hebrew Academy, [locked doors](#) prevented him from accessing the building. “Thankfully, that school had a great safety procedure in place and avoided anyone being harmed or injured at that scene,” the Assistant Chief for the Memphis Police Department said.

Locked doors may seem routine but compare the Memphis incident to the school shooting in [Uvalde, Texas](#) last year. There, a gunman entered Robb Elementary School through a door that only locked from the outside with a key. The teacher who closed the door thought it locked automatically. The shooter then opened a classroom door with a broken lock, a problem that had been reported but not repaired.

These incidents are extreme, but is your organization more like the school in Tennessee or the one in Texas? Do you have safety procedures in place and, just as importantly, do employees understand and adhere to them? If there’s any doubt in your mind, you owe it to yourself, your employees, and your organization to find out what it takes to build an effective safety management system (SMS).

“A proactive approach to safety requires management commitment and employee involvement in creating a safety culture. Leaders are recognizing the importance of safety and utilizing experts to create and implement policies and procedures that their organizations then follow.” – Jim Testo, EHS Risk Management, LLC

Plenty of organizations say they have a safety plan, but a plan isn’t as comprehensive as a system. Plus, many plans are aimed at regulatory compliance rather than risk management, and at lagging rather than leading indicators. OSHA sets requirements, but leaders understand the need for identifying and mitigating risks – and for ensuring that employees follow through.

An effective SMS has several key components.

- Policy (stating management commitment)
- Procedures (hazard recognition and control)
- Roles, Responsibilities, and Accountability
- Employee Involvement
- Training and Communication
- Today’s Technology (program implementation)

Information is the lifeblood of this system, but that information needs to be accessible, actionable, available in real-time, and specific to the hazards that your employees face. Software alone is not the answer. Instead, your business needs safety expertise combined with today’s technology in the form of cloud-based applications that employees can use on their cell phones or laptop computers.

“Controlling your EHS risks requires the right combination of technology and domain expertise. EHS Risk Management’s approach to assessing risk and developing technology-enhanced management strategies strengthens ReadyKey’s EHS app building capabilities.” – Jacob Zollinger, [ReadyKey](#)

EHS Risk Management, LLC and its network partners can help you to build and implement a comprehensive SMS so that you can recognize hazards and avoid incidents. You can also strengthen the bottom line by reducing the risk of fines, penalties, lawsuits, and higher insurance rates. By using our technology-enabled services to manage your risks, you'll drive business value. To get started, [contact us](#).

The [EHS Portal](#) provides a real-time process for managing and implementing your company's policies and procedures. The [EHS Risk Manager](#) is a business value proposition that reduces costs and supports your company's performance. To learn more, email Jim Testo at jimt@ehs-riskmanagement.com.

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