

Insight Onsite

CITCO Water adopted the NACD Responsible Distribution® program in 2015, with Rick Parks taking on the role of code coordinator

CITCO WATER



Jane Gibson London

For CITCO Water, Responsible Distribution has not only helped to improve its bottom line but also ensures that employees stay safe.

"On a day-to-day basis I am the Responsible Distribution police of our program," says Rick Parks, director of safety & compliance at CITCO Water. "But I can't be everywhere at one time, so I have to make sure our managers are all up to date and trained. This involves talking about Responsible Distribution at our management meetings when we review the day. You have to dig in and make sure you are doing what you say you are doing."

Parks says the program has provided a safety and quality framework that the company did not have previously.

"Before Responsible Distribution, we had 12-15 Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) recordable incidents each year. Now our average is less than one. Lost time incidents are where it hits the bottom line. We have made significant savings," he says. "We are protecting our employees and sending them home safe each day and it is also a commendation of improved quality. It helps business going forward."

KEEP IT SIMPLE

Parks is responsible for the internal audits within four different locations. He advises not to overthink Responsible Distribution or make it more complicated than it needs to be – and suggests reaching out for NACD staff support and asking lots of questions.

"We didn't know anything about the program before we started. Our VP of operations presented it to me as a project and over the next 12 months we developed the program with help from the manual and NACD support."

The company has used the NACD U resources available to help pass verification.

"Don't be afraid to contact other companies and do some benchmarking. When I came on board, I met with other code coordinators. Make a commitment to attend the events, whether they are virtual or in-person."

Preparing for verification was not too difficult for Parks, given his previous experience with programs such as International Organization for Standardization (ISO), which provided him with a framework to build on.

CITCO Water uses a digital program to help complete verification. "We developed a system to help us manage Responsible Distribution and other related systems in one spot. For example, we have web forms including a daily forklift checklist."

The company uses the digital code coordinator system and has seen a huge efficiency improvement by flagging any missing information from an internal audit.

"I have built the Responsible Distribution codes into our system. If there are any non-conformances found, then it generates a corrective action document for us. Make the internal audit as simple as possible and then once you have found an issue, think about how you correct it."

Regarding the individual codes, Parks finds that Code VIII, Community Outreach, has become more difficult to achieve during the pandemic in terms of getting legislators to visit.

On Code VII, Emergency Response and Public Preparedness, the company has had more success in some areas than others in building relationships with first responders.

To comply with Code XIII, cybersecurity has become an increasing focal point. Employees have weekly training on different topics such as phishing and scamming. This is an ever-changing

landscape that the company has to mitigate as much as possible, says Parks.

Keeping up with changes to codes each cycle can be a challenge, as can employee buy-in – although this is essential to the success of the program.

SENSE CHECKS

CITCO Water carries out a significant amount of internal training. This fiscal year, it created training for each code which employees must participate in. They all take a quiz so that the company can gauge their understanding of the program.

"This has been really successful for us. We don't have much staff turnover and so employees have come along for the ride and helped to develop the program."

"You can't just force feed Responsible Distribution to people, you need to get them involved. To change policies and procedures, employees need to be trained. Sometimes we get kickback, and they ask how things can be done differently. We must be nimble enough to take their suggestions. If they are reasonable, we will then update the procedure."

With the right approach and the support of everyone from warehouse staff through to senior management, the program has a hugely positive effect and drives continuous improvement. ■

NACD often highlights the efforts of its members and their positive contribution to the industry – and this is your chance to share your achievements, thoughts, and experiences. Each issue, this will be your forum. We want to hear about your experiences as a Code Coordinator. If you or one of your colleagues would like to be featured in the next edition of *Chemical Distributor*, please email **Aileen Smith** at asmith@nacd.com