

**While many may equate safety measures with saving money due to accident-related medical expenditures, did you know that having a good plan in place can also lower a variety of insurance premiums?**

**S**afety as a profit center? Is it true that a company that practices good safety procedures can actually have a higher profit margin than one that only gives short shrift to safety procedures and practices? I am happy to report that the answer is a resounding yes! How can this be? Well, a company with a good complete safety plan in operation is eligible for lower insurance premiums. By this I mean health and life insurance, as well as workman's compensation and product liability insurance costs. And don't forget property and vehicle insurance. If you have a good safety plan in place, it just might pay to contact your various insurance carriers and ask about any discounts that may be available as a result. You can believe that the insurance industry, as a whole, will not volunteer this information unless you request it.

There are myriad other savings you receive as soon as you implement a good safety plan. Obviously there will be fewer production hours lost, and the related medical costs to be paid due to injuries, but you will also realize happier, more satisfied employees, which will result in increased production. You will lower your product liability exposure, which can actually mean the difference between your company remaining in business or not. You will also experience the benefit of your equipment being better maintained, resulting in less down time and fewer costs resulting from repairs after accidents. In addition, you will

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have satisfied customers due to your ability to produce consistently on schedule and to provide a quality product. And you will have the ability to increase your production without having to increase manpower or hours of operation, thereby giving you the possibility of increasing your business.

All of these items result in savings that directly affect your bottom line, but one of the biggest advantages to a truly well thought out safety plan is the peace of mind that you'll get as a manager. When a safety plan is in place in your company, you will be surprised by how much better you can sleep at night—and how much more fun it is to go to work.

This month's issue of *Gear Solutions* has articles relating to heat treating. Many of us, in an attempt to keep work in-house, are now doing some heat treating of our products rather than farming it out. This is a whole new set of safety issues that we

must confront. Of course, there are the obvious heat related dangers that must be dealt with, but there are also hazards dealing with the chemicals used for quench and cleaning of heat-treated parts. You must be sure that you are in possession of the proper Material Safety Data Sheets, and that all of your employees are properly trained not only in the use of these chemicals, but also in the inherent dangers associated with them. Another hazard that can be easily overlooked involves the visitors that come into your facility. Often, in an attempt to promote our capabilities, we offer tours to prospective customers without giving them an idea of the hazards that exist. Most of the plants I have visited do a good job of providing eye and hearing protection to visitors, but they seldom have any other mandatory warnings or information. Keep in mind that your visitors do not know that the parts kept in a particular spot in your facility may be hot or not cleaned of hazardous chemicals, even though you may have done a good job of informing your employees. At the very least there must be proper signage in place to inform your visitors of these hazards.

Last month's issue of the magazine had a very good article dealing with safety in lubricants, so make sure that your safety personnel—as well as your other employees—have the opportunity to familiarize themselves with that feature. 

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

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