

QUOIN's Contractors TAKE THE LEAD in construction safety

By Dorothy Shaw
Executive Vice President
of Member Services



For the past few months, a revolutionary new service has been taking root at QUOIN. Thirty-one contractors are participating in a pilot safety program or phase one of a planned Chapter-wide rollout scheduled for 2004. This new service promises to raise the bar in construction safety and according to members, is already helping them find new ways of going from “good to great.”

In keeping with QUOIN's vision of “building the best contractor community in the world,” efforts have been under way for some time to bring new value to members in the area of safety. After several years of

PROACTIVE APPROACH

The opportunity presented itself when we met Barry Nelson, President of DBO2. His California-based firm had developed a methodology for tracking the “leading indicators” for both “safe” and “unsafe” practices. This is in sharp contrast to the “lagging indicator” approach historically used by our industry. For example, a lagging indicator identifies someone cutting his or her hand and then filing an incident report. A leading indicator of an “unsafe” practice identifies someone who has neglected to wear gloves that would have prevented them from cutting

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listening to what our members said they were doing well in safety and where they were falling short, we believed there were some needs the Chapter could fulfill if we just had the right opportunity.

their hand. Or a leading indicator of a “safe” practice is to observe the actual number of workers in the field wearing gloves. In other words, the use of leading indicators is a proactive approach to safety.

John Mavros, with DBO2 provides one-on-one training to QUOIN member and new SafetyNet users.



Ron Henderson, with DBO2, introduces new SafetyNet users to the palm pilot, crucial for this new documentation tool.



QUOIN members listen attentively as John Mavros explains how SafetyNet works and the benefits of the program to both the users and their companies.

QUOIN's Safety Resource Group (see page 7) recognized the value of this new approach and, in July, made a recommendation to the Chapter's Board to pursue a partnership with DBO2. Since that time, QUOIN and DBO2 have

been working together to support the successful start-up of this new venture that incorporates many best-in-class practices. Our Resource Group continues to play an important leadership role in the transition to this new methodology. This group's efforts have been strengthened with the recent addition of OSHA personnel as well as environmental representatives

who are helping QUOIN and DBO2 customize a new environmental checklist to use during inspections.

Primarily, the new service called SafetyNet is providing QUOIN contractors with a comprehensive and consistent method of collecting, documenting and analyzing jobsite safety information, without having to rely on extensive typing or writing. Users from multiple

project locations within the same company record "safety facts" into handheld palm pilots using "point and click" menus that have been developed from a standard safety checklist. Information is downloaded into user-friendly reports that provide immediate visibility of inspection results helping to predict or prevent injuries or accidents before they

happen. In addition to pinpointing safety trouble spots, this new methodology produces trending information, identifies short and long-term training needs, holds people more accountable, and creates more accurate company baselines on safety performance.

QUOIN's safety staff is also applying the new methodology to their jobsite visits for members. By the end of October, the Chapter's staff will have documented 20,000 "safe and unsafe observations" toward a goal of achieving 100,000 observations by July 2004. At this time, we will have concluded our first year of offering this service and have a broader benchmark of the pilot available. Contractors participating in the pilot will be able to use this benchmark to compare their results to others in the pilot database or to the Chapter's database.

With an extensive background in construction, Barry Nelson and his team share QUOIN's passion for wanting to improve the industry. "It is what QUOIN has brought to the table that has enhanced the service devel-

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Current users of the new safety documentation tool, SafetyNet, gather during a monthly forum with SafetyNet providers DBO2, to discuss new updates and to allow users the opportunity to offer feedback regarding the program.

oped by our firm to a level far greater than what we ever dreamed possible," Barry said. "Within a month, contractors selected for the pilot were up and running in using this new service. QUOIN provided them with a unique venue to get together on a regular basis in a Users Forum to talk about safety and learn from each other in new and more in-depth ways than has ever been done before. The insights and discoveries coming out of these conversations between QUOIN's contractors is what we believe is leading to the missing pieces that will take all contractors from 'good to great' in safety and bring about cultural change."

Safety leaders representing QUOIN's contractor members who are participating in the pilot agree this approach to safety is the difference for them between thinking and knowing. They say the typical way of operating in safety is to think we know where our next accident or injury is going to come from. In actuality, however, we have not had the facts to know for certain. The two Co-Chairs of QUOIN's Safety Resource Group, who are also participating in the pilot, say it best:

"We are learning first-hand that the collection of safety facts improves



the quality and credibility of our information. This in turn leads to improved decision-making, more effective communication, better training, and stronger preventative planning, providing a real opportunity for all of us to achieve zero incidents.”

JIM FENTRESS, SAFETY DIRECTOR
ROGERS-O'BRIEN CONSTRUCTION

“In less than two full months, we have completed 120 inspections with 12,216 observations of which 98.9% are safe. This helped us pinpoint exactly where we need to improve and I was able to glean all of this from the two minutes it took to print out a report and three minutes to go over the three charts. At first we all felt this new system was making us take way too long to inspect each job. However, in a few weeks we discovered we were inspecting the same number or more jobsites and doing them so much better.”


JIM DUNN, SAFETY DIRECTOR
BAKER DRYWALL

As a result of this pilot and the fact that our initial group of contractor members were so willing to participate, it is now clear we can accomplish in safety much more than what any of us anticipated. Raleigh Roussell sums it up this way, “Our members tried the service and it is

Thanks to these individuals for their leadership and service on QUOIN's Safety Resource Group:

- Jim Fentress, Rogers O'Brien
Co-Chair
- Jim Dunn, Baker Drywall
Co-Chair
- Manny Rodriguez, TAS Concrete
- Grace Fox, TAS Concrete
- Ken Dupree, LASCO Acoustics
Drywall
- Jessy Cole, Austin Commercial
- Tim Adams, MEDCO Construction
- John Lunardon, Charter Builders
- Larry MacDonald,
Hill & Wilkinson, Inc.
- Liz Kellems, Steel-Lite Roofing
- Steve Gray, Manhattan
Construction Co.
- Kathy Delaney, OSHA Director,
Dallas
- Michael Rivera, OSHA Director,
Fort Worth
- Ron Leach, Steele-Freeman, Inc.
- James Tabor, Venture Mechanical
- Hank Mouser, Centex Construction
- Jorge Vargas, Warnick Construction
- Mike Smith, QUOIN
- Trey Lopez, QUOIN
- Christian Pieschel, QUOIN
- Dorothy Shaw, QUOIN

exceeding their expectations. A lot of people deploy technology and it hasn't worked—here it is working. We are excited about what this can do for our industry.”

And as the saying goes, if you want to find a way for something to fail, it will. Or, when you want to find a victory, then it will be found! 

To learn more about SafetyNet and sign up for this new safety service, contractor members are encouraged to contact Dorothy Shaw or Raleigh Roussell at 972-647-0697.

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