



Alan A. Madsen
City Administrator

City of Maple Grove, Minnesota Fit for Life Wellness Program

Company Overview

- City Government
- Maple Grove, Minnesota
- Number of employees: 245

Program Components

- Annual onsite health screening with health educators.
- Physical activity and nutrition events throughout the year.
- Tobacco cessation and weight management programs.
- Effective personal safety habits promoted.
- Partnership with local health club for discounts.
- Onsite group wellness activities and health education sessions.
- Onsite flu vaccination program.

Program Success Story

- Lower annual medical and workers' compensation premiums compared to the national average.
- Incentive-based wellness program providing up to two paid wellness days off.
- Employee survey results showed that the wellness program had a positive impact on their health, improved workplace morale, influenced family members to seek healthier lifestyles, increased awareness of their at-risk health behaviors and taught how to address them, and was a benefit that helped to reduce their overall health care costs.
- A nine time award-winning program recognized nationally, regionally, and locally as innovative and creative in providing worksite wellness benefits.

Administrator's Statement

"Clearly our wellness program has had a tremendous positive impact on our employees' mental and physical well-being. It continues to educate our employees on the great benefits of proper health. It also brings fun to the workplace—and happier, healthier employees are more loyal and more productive, and ultimately provide the best service to our citizens. I am very proud to strongly endorse the program and the efforts put forth by our employees."

Focus on Safety On and Off the Job

Regardless of size, safety at the worksite is crucial for maintaining a healthy and productive workforce. Employers have the obligation to provide a safe work environment free of recognized hazards. For example, the indirect costs of injuries (e.g., accident investigation, low morale, production delays, repairs) may be 20 times the direct costs.⁴⁸ In a study of large employers, workers' compensation costs accounted for three percent of total health- and productivity-related costs.⁴⁹

For small/medium-sized companies, employee disability due to an injury can be detrimental to manpower levels and the fulfillment of business obligations/schedules. Injury prevention and proactive return-to-work programs are key elements of a focused approach for reducing the impact of on-the-job injuries.

Ideas for Small/Medium-Sized Employers

- **Management commitment.** Management/supervisors must truly be committed to job safety, take steps to prevent injuries and illness, actively investigate and address safety problems, and provide support and follow-up in an expedient manner.
- **Active participation by workers.** Employees are responsible for adhering to safety rules and should get involved in developing the safety program so they gain ownership. Seek input and suggestions about existing work hazards. Be sensitive to literacy issues (e.g., reading and language barriers).
- **Effective incentives.** Recognize individuals and teams that demonstrate safe behaviors (instead of just rewarding a lack of lost-time injuries). This helps to improve safety performance and reinforces the organization's emphasis on safety.
- **Equipped employees.** Ensure that all workers have appropriate personal protective equipment, the right tools, necessary training and education for the job, clearly documented safety procedures and work rules, methods for assessing safety performance or knowledge, and opportunities for offering input.
- **Safety analysis.** Assess the root causes of any incidents. In addition, analyze job hazards to identify potential accidents, institute necessary controls, and evaluate program effectiveness.
- **Transfer skills to the home.** Reinforce that job safety practices (e.g., ladder safety, slips and falls) can be applied to the home.