

Member of the Linde Gas Group

ISAGA is a natural gas producing company employing 34 permanent staff (23 men and 11 women). Over a third are specialists in their field, but still receive on-going training. This company is the only one of its kind in Iceland, it therefore controls the entire market. The enterprise works in close co-operation with the Occupational Health and Safety Administration, and their representatives inspect conditions, machinery and safety equipment regularly

About the company

When the company changed hands, a number of developments were made because the new owners were very concerned with safety issues. It is company policy not to cut costs at the expense of health and safety and the environment. In fact, the new managing director's first priority was to hire a manager to oversee safety and environmental issues and to look at quality matters.

The management firmly believes that creating a good and secure work environment creates better employees. A great deal of money has been spent on improving working conditions and work procedures so that employees are less likely to suffer from physical problems. An environmental project to make the company more ecologically sound has also been completed.

Maintaining high morale

Each employee has a personal interview with his manager once a year to discuss the situation at work. Those who feel their work-

load is too heavy get help, anyone who feels under employed can have extra projects to work on. At times when the workload is at a peak, extra manpower is provided.

The company also rewards staff by organising annual parties and a variety of entertainment. Employees also make payments to an 'art fund' for buying paintings to hang in the workplace. These are exhibited for 6 months, then employees enter a draw and the lucky ones get to keep the paintings.

Health and safety in the workplace

The company uses an electronic database to catalogue its health and safety and environmental activities. Employees are informed of new developments via e-mail. If the employees are concerned about anything, they can easily inform the safety committee (employees are obliged to take action). The company employs a safety manager and runs a safety committee, even though this is not required by law. The company is now planning to establish a quality management system too.



Contact:
Dr. Guðbjörg Linda Rafnsdóttir
**Administration of Occupational
Safety and Health**
Bildshöfða 16
ICE -112 Reykjavík
Phone: +354 550 4658
E-Mail: linda@ver.is

Employees' access to healthcare and safety services

A doctor looks after employee healthcare. Employees have access to hearing tests, influenza vaccinations if they want them, blood pressure checks and cholesterol level tests plus consultations on these and other health matters. The company works closely with the Occupational Health and Safety Administration and there is a company safety committee on site that employees can turn to.

There is a canteen on site too. The entire workplace is also smoke free, and the company encourages staff to quit smoking by paying for products such as patches that will help them give up.

Special welfare projects

- n End of employment agreements have been made with employees.
- n Employees have been given financial assistance and helped to return to work after illness.
- n The company made provisions for an employee who had to leave his job permanently because of health problems.

The company also supports people in the community e.g. by giving donations to help with the education of high school students (the company plans to set up a permanent grant fund) and runs an innovation competition for young people.

Employee satisfaction

The employees are working in a high risk environment and it gives them a feeling of security to know that safety is taken seriously. The company focuses largely on safety matters, unfortunately health promotion hasn't been accorded such enthusiasm to date. However, employees are generally quite satisfied and there is little illness.

A successful enterprise

The business has grown. The owners feel that a caring image reflects well on the company and has a positive influence on its customers. Safety measures that affect the customer directly have also been given priority, which has further enhanced the company's image. Through the efforts of the company, staff have become more health conscious.

Plans for the future

The organisation wants to carry on developing its health and safety policies and to continue with staff training so that their skills can be updated regularly. The enterprise is well aware that its success is dependent on good staff and that employees are its most valuable resource.

Tips for other enterprises

Involve the employees because they have the knowledge and the experience to come up with effective solutions to problems.