



SUDGAZ is an energy distribution company supplying natural gas. The regional municipalities, 15 in total, are shareholders in the company. A staff of 62 all have long-term contracts.

SUDGAZ runs a training initiative aimed at introducing young people to the workplace. The students work on site. The manager is well aware that bringing students to the workplace is a time-consuming process, but feels that this is good practice and is of considerable benefit to the young people in the area.

respected they are more motivated and productive. He encourages staff to participate in leisure activities such as bike rides, football, tennis and table tennis. Enjoying social events together helps staff to bond. Some staff members also take part in the European bicycle ride organised by the International Gas Congress, and held every three years. This also contributes to the social cohesion of the workforce.

A valued workforce

The director is keen to make employees feel that they are an integral part of the company. To improve communications and establish strong personal relationships, he tours the site on a daily basis. Workers are encouraged to make suggestions, these are approved by management and implemented swiftly.

There are times when work can become stressful. If staff are under extreme pressure, work is carried out by subcontractors.

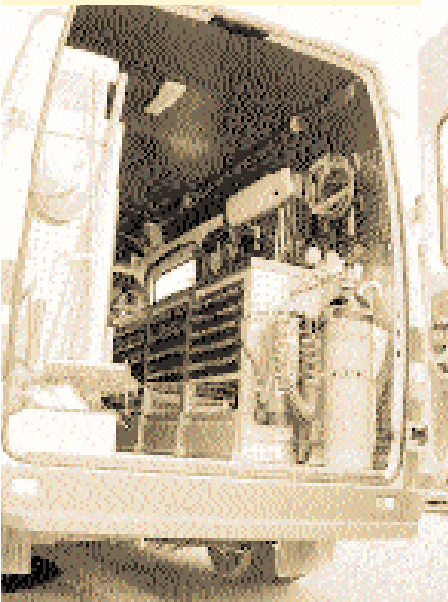
Creating a positive work environment

The director is well aware that a positive working atmosphere is a vital part of a successful business. When staff feel appreciated and

Achieving better working conditions and improving safety

Since safety issues have been under the spotlight, the accident rate has dropped dramatically. A number of measures have been introduced to improve workers' daily lives. These include: purchase of a special device similar to a lifting-beam for moving gas-pipes; provision of wet weather gear with integrated fire-protection and fluorescent stripes for all staff, along with the provision of safety helmets.

The company's "task-force engines" have been improved, one vehicle operates like an on-site office and carries comprehensive diagrams indicating the location of pipelines. Safety measures relating to gas leak detection have been



SUDGAZ

Mr. Jo Simon, Director
B.P. 383
L - 4004 Esch-sur-Alzette
Phone: +352 55 66 55-22 (secretary)
E-mail: contact@sudgaz.lu

upgraded. Gas leak detection devices are no longer carried by the operator but transported on a secure two-wheel system. All old gas meters are being replaced and a policy of renewing meters every ten years has been brought in.

Preventive training and first aid instruction relating to gas leaks is given to all subcontractors and to all excavator operators employed by the construction companies. Upon completion of training each individual is given a certificate and an identity card carrying important phone numbers i.e. emergency services; a special sticker is also attached to the operator's excavator. This means that legitimate, fully-trained operators can be recognised at a glance during routine site checks.

Office based staff enjoy the benefits of a modern, spacious working environment. Employees are encouraged to personalise their work space with posters, radios etc.

Responsibility for OHS matters

The company meets the required occupational health and safety standards. A staff member has been appointed to oversee health and safety measures at the plant and on construction sites. The sites where licensed excavator operators work are inspected regularly. Due to the expansion of the city, the plant is now located in a busy area.

A clear delineation between the working unit and the pavement has been established to prevent accidents.

Dealing with health and safety related behaviour patterns

All employees are certified as non-smokers – a fact vouched for in their employment contracts. The company operates a policy for reintegrating the long-term sick into the workplace. This policy was implemented both for compassionate reasons and to keep skilled workers within the company. The costs of rehabilitating staff are less than those involved in training new people. Valued members of staff also make a contribution that cannot be assessed in direct financial terms.

A satisfied and healthy workforce

It is important to make workers feel as though they matter to the company. Personalised offices give staff a sense of belonging and help them feel as though their individuality counts. Team logos on delivery vans serve a similar purpose. Company activities involving all workers help create better team work. Employees are satisfied at SUDGAZ, a fact reflected in the low staff turnover.

Compared to the other three similar companies operating in the

country, SUDGAZ employees are in particularly good health.

Keeping the customer happy

The company is committed to providing a high standard of customer care. Very few complaints are received, indicating that this policy is paying off.

Making plans for the future

The company plans to repeat the first-aid training programme carried out in 1998 in order to refresh participants' memories and update skills. The fire brigades in all the municipalities involved in the regional gas-supply-net will receive further training too.