

WVMEP HELPS COMPANY IMPROVE OPERATIONS THROUGH
WORK INSTRUCTION DEVELOPMENT

ABOUT SAL CHEMICAL COMPANY, INC. SAL Chemical has been a family owned regional commodity and specialty chemical distributor serving many diverse industries from its inception in 1965. Located in Weirton, West Virginia, with 35 employees and a complete repackaging service as well as trans-loading and adling. SAL Chemical services include repackaging products received in bulk quantities, and a managed/consignment inventory program. In addition to material handling and transportation, SAL Chemical also manufactures Soda Ash Briquettes and SmartPhos.

THE CHALLENGE. As a result of an ISO 9001:2015 recertification audit, SAL Chemical leadership discovered the company needed to review and revise their work instructions. Revision levels were inconsistent and the format varied by department, leading to possible inaccuracies in the instructions. Sal Chemical needed an external and expert review of the work instructions to ensure that their instructions reflected actual practice, included all technical aspects of the work, and were complete.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. The West Virginia Manufacturing Extension Partnership (WVMEP), part of the MEP National Network™, identified a continuous improvement project focused on workforce as the best way to meet SAL's goals. WVMEP worked with SAL to identify the work instructions needing review. Evaluation of each process included on-site job shadowing of front-line experts to understand and document each process as they complete it daily. In addition to understanding each process from an operational standpoint, the WVMEP also addressed the safety aspect of each task by identifying potential hazards and documenting personal protective equipment required. WVMEP drafted 21 work instructions and conducted a document review with SAL Chemical leadership and front-line experts to review each instruction for accuracy which include walking the process to ensure the instructions properly captured the task, included operational details of the task, and addressed questions about personal protective equipment. Once the revised work instructions were complete and vetted by the SAL Chemical team, safety training was conducted. The WVMEP reviewed all personal protective equipment addressed in the instruction with the SAL Chemical team to educate the team on the importance of this personal protective equipment and the potential risk of misuse.

"We are extremely pleased with the services provided by WVMEP. Their willingness to work directly with our front-line people speaks volume about their dedication to their mission. Not only did they work on-shift with our team, they listened to our team, understood the importance of that input, provided unmatched training, and delivered a set of documents that we would have spent weeks if not months trying to create on our own. We look forward to continuing our relationship with the WVMEP as time and time again, they prove to be an invaluable resource to the continued success of SAL Chemical. "

-Randy L. Kowalczyk, Operations Supervisor

RESULTS



33% reduction in time spent onboarding new hires through use of the revised instructions.



10% reduction in processing waste



17% increase in first pass quality



Estimated **\$5,000** in savings from labor cost

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