

Industry involved in local injury prevention

Årdal is a community of 6,000 inhabitants and is situated along the inner Sognefjord on the west coast of Norway. This community was designated as a "Safe Community" on the 18th of September 2000. The driving force behind this development has been the largest employer in the municipality, Hydro Aluminium Årdal, an aluminium smelter. Hydro is one of the largest industrial enterprises in Norway, with some 35,000 employees world-wide. Back in 1985, a movement towards a safer and healthier environment started at Hydro Aluminium Årdal. Through small investments, but with conscious emphasis on changing attitudes and behaviours, considerable results were obtained in the form of better environment, less pollution, less disorder, better cleaning, less injuries, and fewer sick leave days.

Hydro Aluminium Årdal wished to extend this activity to embrace the local community as well to increase safety consciousness in the population as a whole. School children were especially targeted, and the motive was indeed self-serving: today's pupils are tomorrow's employees. By focusing on round-the-clock safety consciousness, a positive impact on the sick rate was also expected as was a drop in the overall absence from work, resulting from fewer injuries among both the employee and his or her family members.

This work was launched in 1988. As project leader, a previous safety inspector in the industrial plant with a good overview over the municipality was engaged. Over the years, multi-faceted injury prevention measures have been adopted, including:

- continuing injury registration, both in the occupational and in the municipality health service
- information to and safety education in the schools
- distribution of check-lists for safety at home to schoolchildren, engaging parents in safety discussions, installing safety equipment, and modifying the environment
- information about the injury pattern and causes conveyed to the population via meetings
- traffic safety information distributed at public gatherings
- information to all voluntary organisations and



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<http://www.phs.ki.se/csp/safecom/ardal.htm>

- associations with ideas on how to work with injury prevention
- distribution of written material to all households during the project
- media contacts were used to focus on different injury types and prevention activities
- injury prevention periodically promoted throughout the political system
- identification of risky spots in the environment (via involvement by the population)
- risk identification rounds in the entire municipality, 1-2 times per year
- money for injury prevention is included in the municipal budget
- awarding of bicycle helmets to all employees (1,200) at Hydro Aluminium
- life jackets provided to boat associations
- safety as periodic item on the agenda at meetings of the Hydro Aluminium management.

The "Årdal, Think Safety"-project has resulted in a stronger focus on prevention activities in the local community. Different plans and measures are made in many organisations, municipal departments and so on. The organisation of the project is now incorporated in and run by the municipal administration as part of its regular activities. The industry has succeeded in transferring its safety knowledge and methods to the local community. Further, it has together with municipal authorities, voluntary organisations, and the general population increased the safety level in the community. The project has succeeded in becoming an integral part of daily life in Årdal. Johan Lund

Dataentry module for Safe Community Projects

Dr. Jens M.Lauritsen has created an updated data-entry module which works in the same manner as the well known EpiInfo version 6 programme. The programme called EpiData is freeware. Manuals and introductory notes are available as pdf files for local download and printout. See <http://www.epidata.dk>. Test the programme and give comments to Jens M.Lauritsen, Funen County, Denmark, Oerbaekvej 100, DK-5220 Odense Soe, Phone: +45 65561241; Fax +45 6556 1205; E-mail: JM.Lauritsen@dadlnet.dk

The 1st Seminar on "Safe Communities" in Lithuania

The rate of injuries and accidents is very high in Lithuania. There were 5,269 people killed because of the injuries (142/100 000 population), in 1999, and 65,000 children up to 14 years were injured. So it is important for us to activate injury prevention and safety promotion work at the local and national level.

In October, 2000 the first seminar in Lithuania on "Safe Communities" was organized by Klaipeda Medical College. For the first time during this seminar, named "Injury Prevention and Safe Communities Concept", such a concept was officially introduced.

Guest from Karolinska Institutet, Department of Public Health Sciences and WHO Collaboration Centre (CC) on Community Safety Promotion, Professor Leif Svanström, participated, was leading the seminar and presented the lectures in this field. He explained in more detail the "Safe Community" model. It includes all ages, all environments, all situations – all working together.

Work can be started from creating groups where each group is responsible for a different injury type. The importance of working in cross-sectorial groups responsible for injury prevention was accentuated.

Evidence-based experiences in Safe Community programmes has showed effectiveness of such a model. Injury rate can be decreased up to 30% using this model. Examples of Safe Communities in different parts of the world were mentioned.

During the seminar definitions of modern day terminology were described and commented on. Use of the words "injury" and "accident", "intentional" and "unintentional" injury, etc., were clarified.

We hope to continue Safe Community activities in the future in collaboration with WHO CC on Community Safety Promotion at the Karolinska Institutet in Stockholm. Birute Strukcinskiene

Conferences

SafeComm-10

21-23 May 2001

Anchorage, Alaska, USA

On line registration <http://www.alaska-ipc.org>

SafeComm Nord-4

21-24 August 2001

Munkebjerg, Denmark

Theme: Building Bridges

Abstract form and on line news:

<http://www.safecomm.dk>

Abstract deadline:

Title - 1 February

Text - 15 May

For information: Fax: +45 6556 1205

1st Safe Community Conference on Cost Calculation and Cost-effectiveness in Injury Prevention and Safety Promotion

30 September – 3 October 2001

Viborg County, Denmark

Abstract deadline: 30 April 2001

<http://www.vibamt.dk/conference2001>

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