

Status Quo

Change is the law of life and growth. Yet, many people have tremendous resistance to change. Someone commented to a 90-year-old man on his birthday that he must have seen a lot of changes in his lifetime. “Yes,” he said, “and I’ve been against them all.”

There are people like this—people who get terribly upset when a new idea is proposed, who are always negative, and who can always tell you why something can’t work. They like the rocking-chair kind of life. They don’t want their pattern of life to change. They like the status quo. The status quo is a deadly enemy to safety on our campus, because if you’re not going forward management is having a real struggle to keep from going backward in our safety program. Change is necessary.

The constructive changes in safety in our industry have been brought about by the positive, not the negative thinkers, by those who were unwilling to put up with conditions and acts that could be changed for the better. Remember the Occupational Safety and Health and Safety Act came into being, back in 1970, because far too many working people were being maimed and killed as the result of accidental injuries. The Act was written for **our** benefit.

It has been said that accidents don’t “just happen”; they are usually caused by human ignorance or carelessness. It has also been said that man has conquered almost everything dangerous in nature, except human nature.

If any of you have been carrying an improper safety attitude for years—just like the old man in the rocking chair who is against all changes—then the time has come to re-evaluate your attitude. The law says the employer must provide each of you with a safe healthful place to work. It also points out **your** responsibility to comply with safety and health regulations. If this means changing old, unsafe habits, unsafe shortcuts, and unsafe attitudes, then we had all better “get with it”. No longer can we use the old com-outs such as: “I’ve always done it this way,” or “This Safety Equipment is uncomfortable,” etc. These excuses just won’t work.

The law and OSHA regulations were written to protect **us**. Let’s be thankful we live in a country that’s concerned about our safety and health. Let’s do our part by watching out for our own safety and that of our co-workers. Remember---If things are to get better, **There will have to be change.**