



RIP & SHARE SAFETY HANDOUT

The Safety Pledge: Revitalized and Even More Relevant

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An oath of allegiance is an oath whereby a subject or citizen acknowledges his duty of allegiance and swears loyalty (figuratively, not literally) to his monarch or country. In many modern oaths of allegiance, allegiance is sworn to a constitution. In particular, in the U.S., presidents, judges and military personnel are under an oath to the Constitution.

A pledge is an oath. One familiar pledge used in the U.S. is the Pledge of Allegiance. A pledge may also refer to a warrant or assurance.

The verb “to pledge” is to make a solemn promise to do something or to deposit something as security. “Pledge,” when used as a noun, is a solemn promise to do something as in “a promise to have safe production results in an aggregate operation.”

Originally signed in February 2003 and renewed in 2006, the U.S. Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) and NSSGA embarked on a ground-breaking alliance agreement that *pledged* to work together to reduce injuries in aggregates operations. The first initiative of the alliance was to develop a

management commitment safety pledge. This was the first step in response to member companies’ experiences within the industry that had made a similar commitment by the CEO or owner to achieve a reduction in injuries.

Approximately 86 percent of the NSSGA producer member companies inked the original safety pledge in 2003, which committed those member companies to help reduce the injury incident rate in aggregates by 50 percent by the end of 2007.

How have the MSHA statistics fared over these last few years? Industry statistics as supplied by MSHA reveal the following:

Total Injury Rate:

2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
3.58	3.54	3.47	3.41	3.12	2.86

Number of Fatalities (per 100,000 employees):

2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
20	17	15	22	13	11

Source: Mine Safety and Health Administration,
US Department of Labor, 2007, www.msha.gov.



NSSGA Safety Pledge for Member Companies

As an aggregates producer or supplier to the industry, our company is committed to a culture that promotes our employees as our most valuable resource.

We believe that safety and health are core values. Our goal is to work with our miners to ensure they know how to recognize and prevent injuries and exposure to harmful substances in order to return home safely at the end of every shift.

To accomplish this, we will improve employee safety and health practices, ensure the amount and quality of formal employee training is appropriate, and advocate greater employee participation in the safety and health process.

We will continually enhance management’s direct participation through personal example and leadership in all aspects of safety and health, specifically that of senior management, production and plant managers, field superintendents and supervisors.

By voluntarily signing this agreement, we demonstrate our commitment to a work environment designed to eliminate injury incidents, which will ultimately result in zero fatalities. With continuous improvement, our next milestone in this process will be work to reduce the MSHA injury incidence rate **10 percent every year**.

Name _____

Company _____

NATIONAL STONE, SAND & GRAVEL ASSOCIATION



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While a 50 percent reduction in five years was a high bar to reach, the good news lies in the continuing trend downward.

One of the paradoxes in the management world and identified by former Secretary of Labor Robert Reich is, “Change doesn’t happen top down; change happens from wherever you are.” The safety pledge, when signed, shared, displayed and reinforced at the ground level, is where the return on capitol (human and financial) will allow us to reap what we sow.

Committing to the new 2008 safety pledge can help reduce injuries and illnesses, impact workers’ compensation costs, affect miner morale and enhance safe production at the mine site. The sum of the whole is greater than its part. Each aggregate producer impacts the MSHA statistics. Your renewal of the safety pledge will be to reduce the MSHA injury incidence rate 10 percent every year. The pledge implies the promise by member companies to have continuous improvement thereafter. Now, well into 2008, the safety pledge has been revamped and is ready for signature.

Larry L. Hansen, author and principal of L2H Speaking of Safety, Inc., has identified that loss-producing behavior is driven by—and consequently best controlled by—addressing four key strategies on a safety excellence continuum: culture (values); leadership (actions); organization (structure) and process (management systems and practices).

Industry organizations, including NSSGA, have identified key safety principles, metrics and processes that help drive continuous improvement. It is all about what works best for the culture within each member company.

There is one key phrase in the MSHA/NSSGA Alliance Agreement that truly sums up this strategic alliance and the importance of the Safety Pledge: “We need a *culture of prevention*.”

As aggregate producers, we each share in the responsibility to our employees of a “culture” of prevention. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure—in this case, pledging, uniformity of purpose and a shared vision and commitment to the safe production within our industry.

To paraphrase Smokey the Bear, “Remember, only you can prevent injury in the workplace. Be careful in pre-job planning and pre-shift examinations. Respect your equipment and talk to your team. Protect our workplace. My friends (our employees) depend on me.”

Sign the pledge today. For further information on the NSSGA/MSHA Alliance, visit www.nssga.org/safety-health/alliance_agreement.cfm or contact NSSGA at (800) 342-1415.

The safety pledge was a cooperative effort from many people from NSSGA member companies and from MSHA these past few years. The combined hard work of all people at individual companies who worked to reduce injuries, illnesses and fatalities contributed to the dramatic decreases in our industry. Company signatures on the safety pledge have contributed significantly to the continual reduction in injuries over the last several years.

In particular, the following people from NSSGA member companies dedicated their time and resources to develop and implement the pledge:

Ward Nye, co-chairman, Martin Marietta Materials
Dana Gortney, member, APAC, Mid-South, Inc.
Anne Kelhart, member, Martin Stone Quarries, Inc.
Nancy Moorhouse, member, Teichert Aggregates
Dick Seago, member, Vulcan Materials
Cheryl Suzio, member, York Hill Trap
Rock Quarry Co.

Peter Ward, member, Lehigh Hanson
Don Williamson, past CEO and Chairman of the
MSHA-NSSGA Alliance, Rogers Group
Ed Elliott, past participant, Rogers Group
Steve Benton, past participant, Oldcastle, Inc.,
Materials Group

From MSHA:

Robert Friend, co-chairman
Kevin Burns, member
Mike Hancher, member

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