

Refreshed Committee Reflects Shift in Safety Culture at Fort Hills

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NORTHAMPTON, May 23, 2023 - The Fort Hills Cares Committee, a group made up of frontline workers and management representatives at our Fort Hills operations, has led a renewed focus on health and safety priorities across the site. Click this link to learn more about their efforts.

"We struggled with attendance at the Fort Hills Joint Worksite Health and Safety committee - a lot of it was down to meeting fatigue from the pandemic and other challenges," says Jason Wyman, who took over as the management co-chair for the committee in mid-2021. "The committee is structured to focus on health and safety priorities across the site. Its work is important enough that every worksite in Alberta is legislated to have one with representatives from management and the frontline workforce." Instead of accepting the status quo, the committee took a new focus and a unique name - the Fort Hills Cares Committee - with some fresh faces around the table of six management and 10 worker representatives from each business area and shift.

It was one of those regular meetings on the calendar where participants didn't always see the point of attending, let alone participating.

"We struggled with attendance at the Fort Hills Joint Worksite Health and Safety committee - a lot of it was down to meeting fatigue from the pandemic and other challenges," says Jason Wyman, who took over as the management co-chair for the committee in mid-2021. "The committee is structured to focus on health and safety priorities across the site. Its work is important enough that every worksite in Alberta is legislated to have one with representatives from management and the frontline workforce."

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"We wanted to reset the team and bring in different ideas and energy," says Jason, Director of Tailings Operations at Fort Hills. "We knew we needed a cultural change and saw the committee as a great opportunity to strengthen Human and Organizational Performance principles, which are being introduced across the company to help build a stronger safety mindset, within Suncor's business. We wanted feedback from our frontline workers and to create a venue to put chronic health and safety issues on the table and jointly solution them."

The Fort Hills Cares Committee went out of its way to meet with frontline workers and share its mission.

"And we were very intentional in getting in front of workers at toolbox talks and area safety meetings to seek their input," he says. "We made presentations at the lodges where Fort Hills workers stay while on their shift to encourage them to raise their concerns with their representatives on the committee. The committee's employee co-chair JM Bilodeau started excellent outreach work and it has continued with Steven Rodger, who replaced him as co-chair in 2022."

Speaking directly with the workforce highlighted some safety opportunities for the refreshed committee to address along with some solutions.

"We received feedback to establish a new emergency meeting point for the fuel depot at Fort Hills. We also widened mine roads in response to feedback about the sightlines at some mine intersections," says Steven, a boilermaker who works in Extraction. "Addressing those concerns has helped the committee in its goal to

improve the safety culture at Fort Hills."

That work has extended to recognizing clever ideas put forward by the workforce.

"We created a championship belt similar to what you see worn by boxers or wrestlers and present it to somebody every month who have put forward a great idea to improve safety," says Steven. "It's all a part of bringing together front-line workers who are most familiar with the work with leadership, who can remove obstacles. That's how you drive positive change."

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