

NEW MANUFACTURING ALLIANCE'S

SAFETY TASK FORCE

August 18, 2026 | 8:30 AM

Microsoft Teams

Minutes

ATTENDEES: Ann Franz, NEWMA; Stanley Rittner, BCI Burke; **Stephanie Lee**, USI Insurance Services; Josh Iserloth, N.E.W. Plastics Corp.; Steve Andrastek, Axiom, Inc; Buckley Kain, Cruisers Yachts; Alison Kostreva, Graetz Mfg., Inc.; Stephanie Reidy, Cherry Optical Lab; Derek Johnson, TTX; Renée Durocher, ARCpoint Labs of Green Bay; Erica Malzahn, BayCare Clinic; Nicole Fritz, Marion Body Works; Charlotte Kacsor, ErgoFactor; Jenny Brown, Services Plus; Corey Evenson, Eck Industries; Tony Warpinski, ErgoFactor; Lucas Dulmes, Lakeshore College; Vicente Marchan, Horseshoe Beverage Company; Paul Chervenka, Packer Fastener; Peter Nickel, Keynecta; Alma Lopez, W.E. Hoban Company; Ken Kurtis, Fosber; Sarah Putbress, NEWMA

Topic 1: Building a Risk Culture That Moves the Needle presented by Stephanie Lee with USI

- **Definition:** How people think and act when unsupervised; a proactive approach to risk management.
- **Components:** Strong leadership, employee engagement, accountability, and continuous improvement.
- Heat Safety as a Case Study:
 - Heat Stress: A direct safety issue.
 - Heat Fatigue: A performance issue impacting concentration, reaction time, and physical output.
- Hidden Costs of Heat Fatigue:
 - Productivity slowdowns, quality defects, and rework.
 - Increased near misses, absenteeism, and employee turnover.
 - Financial Impact of Heat-Related Claims:
- **Heat Exhaustion:** Medical-only claim; often treated same-day; lower cost.
- **Heat Stroke:** Indemnity claim (lost wages); guaranteed hospital stay; higher cost.
 - Cost Range: ~\$27k (minimum) to >\$60k (common).
 - Impact: Indemnity claims are weighted more heavily in the experience modifier, increasing future insurance premiums.
- **ROI Justification:**
 - Use OSHA's "Safety Pays Program" to quantify injury costs.
 - Example ROI Calculation (Apex Cooling Labs "Narwhal"):
 - **Investment:** 10 devices @ ~\$4k.
 - **Assumptions:** Production line value of \$8k/hr; recovers 1 hour/month of lost productivity over 3 summer months.
 - **Result:** 500% ROI.
- Innovative Heat Safety Solutions
 - Apex Cooling Labs "Narwhal": A palm-cooling device for rapid recovery during breaks.
 - Mechanism: Dissipates body heat through highly vascular hand areas.
 - Performance: 1–3 mins reduces heart rate; 10 mins reduces core body temp by half.
 - Optimal Temp: 50–60°F to prevent vasoconstriction, which would hinder blood flow.
 - Wearable Conditioners: Small, portable fans.
 - Feedback: A portable waist fan only blew warm air in a warm environment.
 - Dry Evaporative Cooling Vests (e.g., Chillitz):
 - Mechanism: Water is poured into the vest and freezes.

- Feedback: A similar vest left employees feeling wet and uncomfortable, leading to disuse.
- Sub-committee for creating a heat safety toolbox has been established
 - Contact Ann if you'd like to join.

Topic 2: Computer vision technology, and its impact on ergonomics. The session will dive into the hierarchy of controls and its various tiers when improving safety outcomes presented by Shane Larson with Inseer

- **MSDs:** The #1 Workplace Injury
 - Cause: Cumulative injury from repetition, awkward posture, and force (e.g., lifting, pushing).
 - Cost: ~\$73k average all-in cost.
- **Computer Vision Process:**
 - **Capture:** Record a video of the task (e.g., with an iPhone).
 - **Analyze:** AI converts body movement to math (posture, speed, force).
 - **Evaluate:** Apply academic models (e.g., NIOSH) to generate risk scores and root-cause analysis.
- **Data-Driven Solutions:**
 - **Example:** A lift's Recommended Weight Limit was 17 lbs, but the employee was lifting 42 lbs.
 - **Root Cause:** A long horizontal reach.
 - **Solution:** Raising the workstation height reduced the reach, increasing the RWL to 43 lbs and making the job safe.
 - ROI Analysis for Interventions:
 - Vacuum Lifts: 70% injury reduction; \$92k annual savings vs. \$70k cost.
 - Pallet Lifts: 40% injury reduction; \$5.5k cost; higher ROI due to lower investment.
- Employee Engagement:
 - Share analytics and before/after videos to build trust and overcome resistance.
 - Involve frontline staff in identifying issues and developing solutions.

Topic 3: Open Forum

- First sub-committee meeting for the heat safety toolbox will likely be in late September or early October

Topic 4: Next meeting on September 15 at 8:30 a.m. at Cherry Optical at 1640 Fire Lane Dr., Green Bay

- Agenda:
 - Safety glasses presentation
 - Respirator fit/testing, pulmonary function testing, audiometric testing – mainly around OSHA testing guidelines
 - Facility tour