

:60 SECONDS for SAFETY

by Rick Swartz, President and CEO, MYR Group

TOPIC OF THE WEEK: SPOTLIGHT ON VPP WHAT IT MEANS, WHY IT MATTERS

Whether you are new to the Company or have been around for a while, you've probably heard the term, "VPP." VPP stands for Voluntary Protection Programs, and is an Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) initiative that encourages companies and federal agencies to prevent workplace injuries and illnesses through hazard prevention and control, worksite analysis, training, and cooperation between management and workers. VPP enlists worker involvement to achieve injury and illness rates that are below national Bureau of Labor Statistics averages for their respective industries.



To promote the VPP initiative, OSHA has established a set of performance-based criteria for safety and health management systems and programs. They invite companies and agencies to apply for the VPP program and then assess applicants against this criteria. If criteria is met or exceeded, STAR or Merit certification is awarded. STAR is the highest

level awarded, and recognizes employers and employees for developing and implementing continuous improvement workplace safety and health management programs that results in injury/illness rates below the national averages for their industries. Merit is for employers and employees that have implemented good programs but require additional improvements.



A crew from L.E. Myers' Chattanooga, TN district proudly displays their VPP STAR banner in front of long-time client Tennessee Valley Authority's (TVA) Sequoia Sentinel Nuclear Power Plant



EXCELLENCE IN VPP - CONGRATS!!!!

Sturgeon Electric Company, Inc. (Henderson, CO) and The L.E. Myers Co. (Chattanooga, TN) applied for the VPP program in 2008, and both were certified at STAR status, which they have consecutively

maintained year-over-year to date. Both district locations recently underwent formal OSHA VPP audits (which occur every three years), and were once again certified at STAR status in the program for 2018.

The L.E. Myers Co. Decatur, IL district is currently in the process of applying for VPP Program certification. Their first formal OSHA VPP audit will take place later this summer or in early fall, and we wish them well in this endeavor!

WHY DOES VPP CERTIFICATION MATTER?

Maintaining STAR certification in the VPP Program not only signals to our clients, prospects and employees that the safety and health of employees is our number one priority. Through our actions, behaviors and commitments to achieving excellent safety performance, it also signifies that we are among the best in the industry. This provides peace of mind and instills confidence in our clients, prospects, and employees that we constantly aim to keep our people and worksites as safe as possible.



Sturgeon Electric's Henderson, CO district was recognized at the Voluntary Protection Program's Participants' Association (VPPPA) Annual Conference in May for achieving and maintaining VPP STAR status for 10 years in a row. L to R: Regional Safety Manager (C&I) Zach Valdez, Regional Vice President (T&D) Mark Sterkel, OSHA VPP Region 8 Coordinator Brad Baptiste,, District Manager (T&D) Mark Hoffman, and Regional Safety Manager (T&D) Mike McClure.



Mike McClure also received the 2018 Bervin Award for Outstanding Safety Leadership at the VPPPA Conference.