

WORKSAFE! FACT SHEET**WHAT CAN YOU DO? A UNION ACTIVIST'S ROLE
SAFETY COMMITTEES**

You should work through your union and also stand up for your rights on the job. First, encourage **your union** to establish an active union safety and health committee. The committee can do a lot to improve worker safety and health. Second, always **protect yourself** on the job. See the WORKSAFE! Fact Sheet on A Union Activist's Role on page 40 of the BA Guide. See also the Cal/OSHA Fact Sheet on You Have a Right to Refuse Unsafe Work on page 41 of the BA Guide. **Remember you don't go to work to die! You go to work.**

JOINT LABOR-MANAGEMENT or UNION COMMITTEE? They're different, but both are important to worker protection.

JOINT LABOR-MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE. A joint committee is established by negotiation with an employer. Additionally, if the committee meets certain requirements, an employer's injury and illness prevention program will be considered in compliance with communication aspects of 8 CCR 3203. See the WORKSAFE! Fact Sheet on IIPP - 8 CCR 3203 at page 36 of the BA Guide. Sample language is available on page 38 of the BA Guide.

UNION COMMITTEE. By contrast, the local union safety and health committee is established by the union. It can carry out tasks, such as those listed below.

ROLE OF UNION SAFETY & HEALTH COMMITTEES

- (1) Participate on the labor side of a joint labor-management committee.
- (2) Participate in and mobilize for Legislative hearings.
- (3) Help make and keep work sites safe. Assist elected officials and stewards with filing Cal/OSHA complaints, participate in any walkaround inspection, any appeal, and any follow up to the Cal/OSHA inspection.
- (4) Participate in and mobilize for hearings before the Occupational Safety and Health Standards Board when regulations that affect you are being heard. Participate in any standards advisory committees on those regulations. See the Cal/OSHA Fact Sheet on Standards Advisory Committees on page 7 of the BA Guide. See also the Cal/OSHA article on Standards Development on page 8 of the BA Guide.
- (5) Educate yourselves - use WORKSAFE!, LOHP or LOSH for member training programs.
- (6) Publish a newsletter or a column in your union newsletter to keep membership updated on safety and health issues.
- (7) Provide assistance to members who have safety and health problems (filing Cal/OSHA complaints, handling safety and health grievances, referrals for medical or legal help, etc.)
- (8) Work with union officials who may bargain to obtain strong safety and health language.