



INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ADVANCES IN CLEANER PRODUCTION

"KEY ELEMENTS FOR A SUSTAINABLE WORLD: ENERGY, WATER AND CLIMATE CHANGE"

Sustainable Production: An Approach of Occupational Health and Safety in the Auto Parts Industry in Hermosillo, Mexico

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Abstract

The Mexican Association of the Auto Industry (AMIA), together with the Secretariat of Economy of Mexico, has proposed the goal of duplicating the productive capacity for the auto parts industry by 2010. This implies that every place where an auto assembly plant exists become a manufacturing center for this productive sector within the country. As a consequence, the large amount of the implicit work in this industry includes processes, operations and materials that, in a major or minor extent, create risks for the workers health as well as the neighboring communities and the environment. In particular, occupational risks may result on ergonomic problems, or occupational diseases and accidents; besides of diminishing employees' health, this can affect the productivity of the companies in a negative way or can prevent the generation of desirable healthy conditions for the surrounding communities.

This paper aims at presenting the preliminary outcomes of a case study carried out into six auto parts facilities in the city of Hermosillo, Mexico, which include the following elements: a characterization of the auto parts industry; an evaluation of the health and safety programs in each of the studied companies through the US OSHA's Program Evaluation Profile (PEP); an identification of cleaner production and pollution prevention practices implemented; and the workers' perspectives about the occupational health and safety conditions through a questionnaire applied in their workplaces.

Finally, a preliminary proposal is included about implementing sustainable production strategies, with emphasis in occupational health and safety issues, to improve the working conditions within the auto parts sector.

Keywords: Sustainable Production, Occupational health and safety, Auto parts industry
