



Manufactured Home Communities: Case Study

PROBLEM

In the year before initiating pre-hire/post-offer Physical Abilities Testing, the Director of Human resources for a large organization that owns and operates manufactured home communities noticed more than a 10-fold increase in strains and sprains and slips, trips, and falls – especially among newly hired employees!

The injuries occurred primarily among groundskeepers, maintenance technicians, and housekeepers. Their groundskeepers have to lift heavy furniture that has been discarded outdoors and may be waterlogged from rain. Service techs are lifting, moving, and installing appliances, water heaters, and toilets. Housekeepers are doing deep cleaning of rental units between tenants. Many of the units are furnished, so a deep clean means moving furniture and getting into awkward positions to clean hard-to-reach spots.

The majority of their injuries were musculoskeletal strains and sprains (especially for the shoulder, elbows, ankles, and low back) or slips, trips, and falls. These injuries and the related lost and restricted duty days were affecting productivity, employee morale, and customer satisfaction. When maintenance personnel are absent from work due to injury, resulting maintenance delays increase, and customer satisfaction decreases.

SOLUTION

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RESULTS

Over a period of seven years, ErgoScience tested over 3900 job applicants company-wide. The fail rate averaged 10%. The turn-around time (from request to results) averaged 2.4 days.

Initially, the company performed only pre-hire testing. But they quickly realized that serious injuries were occurring after an employee sustained a minor injury and attempted to return to work. So, a few years into the testing program, they added return-to-work/fitness-for-duty testing.

Being such a geographically dispersed organization, this company had difficulty ensuring that all of their recruiting staff implemented the testing consistently. So, some applicants were hired who “slipped through the crack” of that inconsistency and were not tested. When we compared the cost per injury of those who were not tested, it was over 250% higher than the cost per injury of those who were! This shows that not only the incidence of injury is reduced with testing, but the severity of injuries is also greatly reduced.

OVER 7 YEARS OF TESTING:

THE AVERAGE ANNUAL
INCURRED COST PER
100
EMPLOYEES DECREASED
BY 69%!

THE AVERAGE NUMBER OF
INJURIES OF 100 EMPLOYEES

DECREASED BY 50%

THE COMPANY REALIZED A
7:1
RETURN ON THEIR INVESTMENT

CONCLUSION

Overall, this organization was extremely pleased with the results of its pre-hire and fit-for-duty testing program. Since this outcome analysis, they have implemented processes and procedures to make sure the testing is applied consistently throughout all their locations to all applicants. This company also embraces this testing program because the testing supports its corporate safety culture and the value they place on all employees.