

INTELEX

CASE STUDY



Smart Technology and Employee Engagement Raise Safety Culture and Reduce Injuries at SUEZ North America

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Restricted or Transferred
(DART) rate down by

24%

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A thoughtful and focused use of software and smart technology has transformed incident reporting, enhanced employee engagement, and ultimately, reduced injuries at SUEZ North America.

Since adopting the use of Intelex's EHS Incident Reporting and Management software in 2015, SUEZ North America has transformed incident reporting, enhanced employee engagement, improved its safety culture, and ultimately, reduced injuries. SUEZ' use of Intelex has been a major contributor to the company bringing its Days Away Restricted or Transferred (DART) rate down by 24 percent in the past four years, from 2.14 in 2014 to 1.63 in 2018, and its Workers' Compensation Experience Modification Rate (EMR) down by 41 percent since 2009 (1.05 to 0.62).

The 2,900 employees of SUEZ North America are responsible for treating 560 million gallons of water and over 440 million gallons of wastewater each day. They operate water utilities and provide water and wastewater services to municipalities in the United States and Canada.

The company also provides long-term rehabilitation and maintenance services to over 4,000 municipal and industrial customers including elevated and grounded water storage tanks. As a result, employees spend more than 1 million work hours a year working at elevations of 100 feet or higher, and so the New Jersey based company must take a serious proactive approach to employee safety.

SUEZ North America contracts with numerous clients to operate their water and wastewater plants. This requires managing facilities of different ages and stages in building and equipment maintenance, supervising and engaging employees who have not received comparable training, and aligning often varied safety missions and cultures. Accurate incident reporting and data management is key to improving health and safety for workers and satisfying maintenance and operations demands at the many facilities SUEZ manages.

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Employees spend more than 1 million work hours a year working at elevations of 100 feet or higher, so the Paramus, N.J.-based company must take employee safety seriously.



Initially, the company used spreadsheets to capture, report, analyze, and correct hazards. As its client list grew and new software and technology became available, SUEZ realized a paper-based approach to incident management had become cumbersome and ineffective.

“We couldn’t keep track of the paperwork. We had five different versions of everything,” says Kanwer Khan, Vice President, Environmental Compliance, Health, Security and Safety for SUEZ North America.

Everyone agreed: changes had to be made. A vision, mission, and goals development workshop with the company’s EHS and Operations teams identified three goals for its safety excellence strategy, which then were refined and reviewed with executive management and integrated with the vision and goals for the entire organization. Those three goals for the company’s safety excellence strategy are:

- Be a leader in the use of technology for safety
- Increase focus on Human Performance and Just Culture
- Take a risk based approach for prevention of severe potential injuries.

In 2015, SUEZ launched an effort to achieve its goals and chose Intelix’s software as the platform to make that happen. “Intelix has been a life saver for us,” says Khan. “I don’t know what we’d do without it.”



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#1 – Be a Leader in the Use of Technology for Safety

SUEZ utilizes Intelix’s EHS Incident Reporting and Management software for capturing, reporting, analyzing, and correcting hazards. Every employee has access to the software and most of the workforce has smart devices through which they can report hazards.

Employees access the software and collect data primarily on tablets, and the ease of use has made it attractive even to older workers who often resist using technology to perform tasks they previously recorded by hand on paper forms. A single sign-on feature allows employees to access Intelix and other applications by entering just one set of credentials. As more employees have realized how much easier it is to enter incidents, usage has grown steadily from only a “handful of sites” when it was first deployed to over 120 sites today, according to Khan.

Employee engagement in the incident management system continues to grow. In the first year, 400 incidents were recorded, a figure that rose to 1,800 in the second year. By the fourth year of using incident management software, 4,000 incidents were reported, a figure that has now stabilized.

A key advantage of using Intalex for SUEZ is the visibility it gives managers into events of high severity, such as a report of an employee working on an energized piece of equipment that hasn't been turned off. Such occurrences would be categorized as Potential Severe Injury or Fatality (severity of five on SUEZ' incident scale, which ranges from one for something like a paper cut to the highest grade of six for a fatality, something the company has not experienced in North America in five years). The software facilitates the distribution of emails to appropriate sets of people within the organization based on the incident's severity grade. This straightforward reporting feature makes it easy for SUEZ employees to report incidents using Intalex and for managers and other stakeholders to receive notifications and follow up.



Increased
Employee
Engagement:
10x
increase in incidents
reported by
employees.



#2 – Increase Focus on Human Performance and Just Culture

SUEZ found that as the safety culture matured and improved, the corporate culture followed suit. “Safety starts at the top of our organization,” said Khan. “To support this, the incentives for executives are tied to safety performance. Each meeting starts with a strong safety message. Safety is a component of our hiring and promotion criteria. Each business leader and executive has safety-related activities, including safety site visits and ownership of one Life-Saving Rule.”

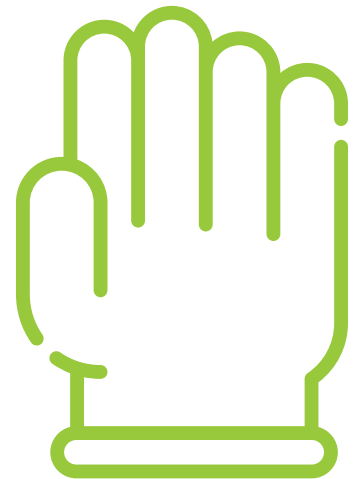
The company has 10 Life-Saving Rules and they apply to all activities. All workers who may be exposed to major risks at SUEZ are regularly trained in the 10 rules which, if properly applied, can save lives. The goal is to develop individual and collective awareness of the largest risks employees face, including those involving subcontractors and customers, to change behavior in order to work safely and prevent serious or fatal accidents.

SUEZ management understands that providing a high-quality, stress-free and organized workplace is the foundation of a good safety culture. “We continue to invest in improving the working conditions and our safety results continue to follow,” Khan said. “This approach differentiates us from other organizations, by using safety improvements as a means of improving the overall organization.”

Safety engagement is in each supervisor’s performance evaluation. Each manager is expected to evaluate their supervisors for the safety performance of their group and it has a direct bearing on their annual assessments and rewards.

“We use all modes of communication for spreading our positive safety message, which include President messages, formal training on safety policies, sharing positive practices and unsafe conditions across the organization, and presenting the company’s mission, vision, and values at town hall meetings and employee gatherings,” Khan noted.

For example, SUEZ sends semi-monthly emails to all employees. The first email of the month reviews the ‘Top 5 Positive Safety-related Actions’ that have happened in the last month. It is an opportunity to celebrate success and reward positive actions. The second email of the month outlines policy updates, safety alerts, and warnings for hazardous conditions. These emails are always reviewed at team tailgate meetings, and are very popular, according to Khan.



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**SUEZ boasts
a Total Recordable
Injury Rate one-third lower
than its industry average and
an injury frequency rate
that is less than half the
industry average.**

#3 – Take Risk-Based Approach for Prevention of Severe Potential Injuries

A key advantage of using the Intalex software platform to manage incident reporting is the visibility it gives managers into events of high severity by “grading” each incident. The system then facilitates the sending of emails to appropriate sets of people within the organization based on the incident’s severity grade. This straightforward reporting feature makes it easy for employees to report events.

After events are reported, different levels of root cause analysis are completed based on severity. This provides the management team with a robust set of data to review. Corrective and preventive actions are put into the system, where they are tracked until completion. “Having access to such relevant and timely data allows managers to make decisions quickly and allocate resources exactly where they’re most needed,” said Khan.

For analytics, SUEZ uses a combination of leading and lagging indicators.

Leading indicators include:

- 1) Training compliance
- 2) Number of safety visits by management
- 3) Overdue safety action items
- 4) Hazards reported
- 5) Positive safety message shared

Lagging indicators include:

- 1) Severe potential injuries and fatalities
- 2) NOVs
- 3) Environmental events
- 4) Frequency rate
- 5) Severity rate

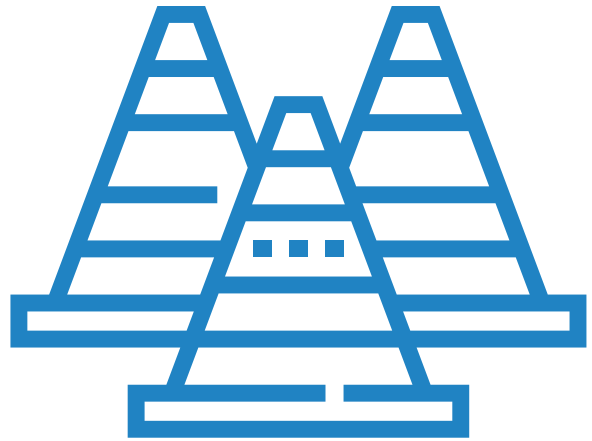
Employees participate in formal residual risk assessments for the sites where they work. They participate in HAZOPS and design reviews and provide input to management of change (MOC) and pre-startup safety reviews. Employees lead daily risk assessments, conduct safety meetings, participate in safety trainings, attend wellness events, and provide input on hazards and unsafe conditions.

“Our workforce reports approximately 4,500 to 5,000 hazards and incidents each year. Out of these 5,000 incidents, we typically have around 70 recordable injuries, while the rest are mostly hazards or potential incidents,” Khan revealed. “Based on the severity, different levels of root-causes analysis are conducted and reviewed by the management team. Corrective and preventive actions are put into the Intelex system, which are tracked until completion. This system provides us a great data set for our risk and hazards and helps us prioritize our resources.”

Clearly, Intelex is helping SUEZ be a leader in its industry when it comes to health and safety. The company’s Total Recordable Injury Rate (TRIR) is consistently lower than the industry average. Within two years of adopting Intelex, SUEZ boasted a TRIR of 2.08 while the industry average was 3.00. Similarly, its frequency rate was 0.61 compared to the 1.40 industry average. The investment in technology, emphasis on employee training and engagement, and encouragement of buy-in at all levels has paid off. The company has experienced a continuous reduction in the frequency rate of incidents (50 percent reduction from 10 years ago) and a significant decrease in the severity of incidents.

The dedication to worker safety and health and the ongoing emphasis on improving the safety culture at SUEZ North America is not lost on employees. Khan is proud of the results of a recent employee engagement survey: “Eighty-two percent of our employees agree that the company is committed to safety and their welfare and is investing in keeping them safe. Three years ago, it was 57 percent.”

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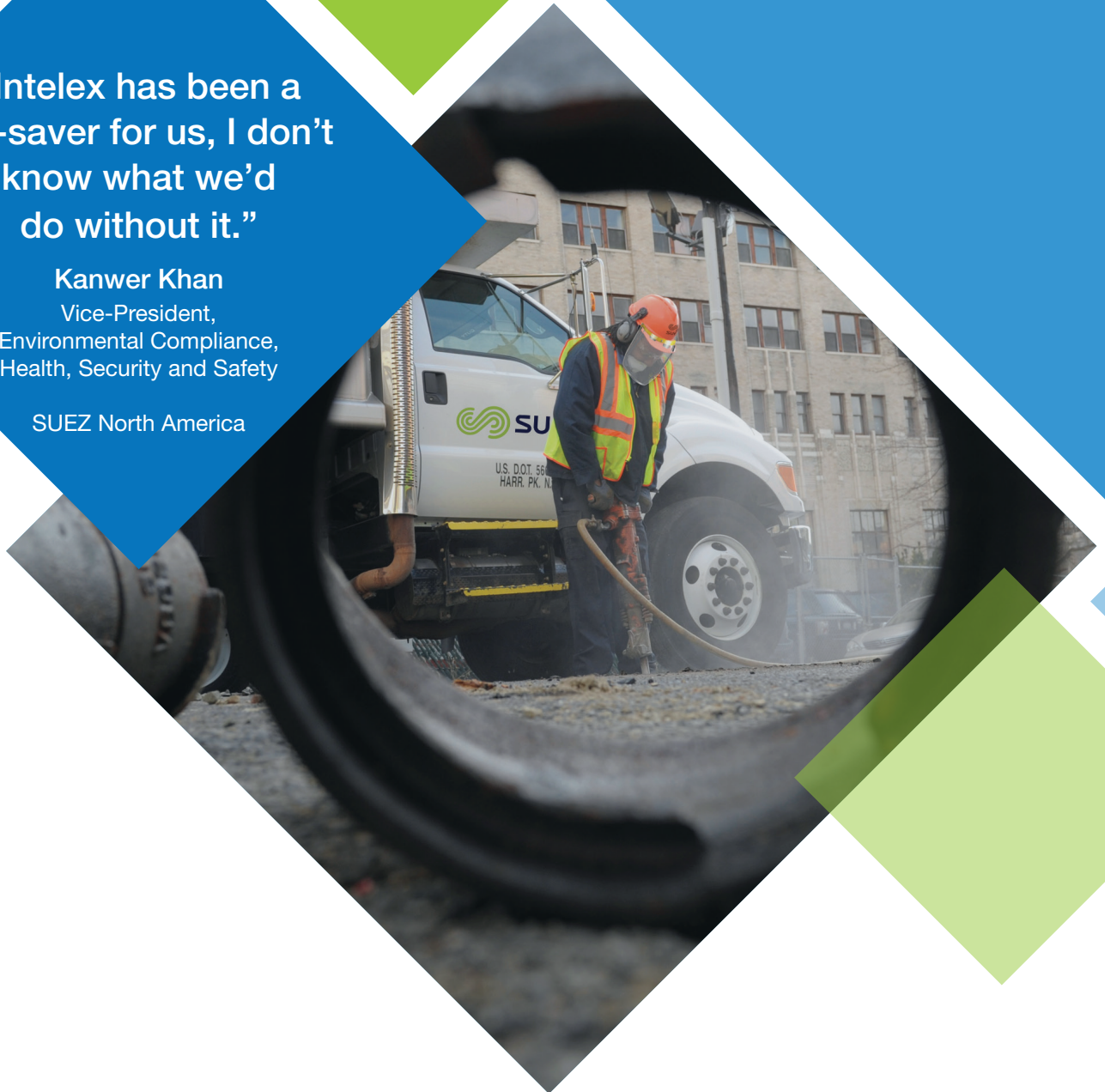
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Vice-President,
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SUEZ North America



Learn how @Intelex #software opened the floodgates to employee engagement, helped reduce recordable and time away injuries, and shaped safety culture @SUEZ.

Since 1992, Intelex Technologies ULC has been recognized as a global leader in environment, health & safety and quality (EHSQ) management solutions. Its innovative SaaS platform has helped clients around the globe improve operational performance, mitigate organization-wide risk, and ensure compliance.

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