

PRODUCT SAFETY PROFESSIONALS

CODE OF ETHICS AND PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

BACKGROUND

In its simplest terms, safety is defined as freedom from unacceptable or unreasonable risk. Every product or system presents some level of risk; there is no such thing as being absolutely safe from all risks. Safety is achieved and measured in terms of controlling risks to levels that are at or below what is culturally acceptable, whether set by law, by custom, by contract or other user or consumer expectations, or by an organization's internal standards.

Because consumers, workers, and other users of products, including consumer services, are the persons exposed to product risks, it is their health and safety that is directly impacted by efforts to reduce risks to acceptable levels. The commitment to achieving this goal by designers, producers, distributors, and sellers is a fundamental and core principle of a safe and fair marketplace. Product Safety Professionals have a unique and essential responsibility for helping achieve this result.

THE CODE OF ETHICS

1. Product safety professionals hold a deep conviction of the importance of providing consumers and their companies with their best efforts at supporting the design, production, and distribution of products that are safe for consumer use, and when warranted, the prompt and vigorous recall of products that are later deemed defective. They seek to possess and implement knowledge and experience that enables them to make a unique contribution to public health and safety. To this end, product safety professionals recognize they have an ongoing obligation to acquire, apply, and share knowledge that will help advance the mission of designing and producing safe products.
2. Product safety professionals have a continuing obligation to develop and improve their knowledge and skills in competently managing those systems and processes that contribute to the design and production of safe products. They accept the obligation to exercise critical self-discipline and judgment in using, extending, and transmitting knowledge. They practice intellectual integrity.
3. As teachers, product safety professionals recognize an obligation to help inform others about the importance of reducing risks in products and services, and some of the principles of the field that can help broaden understanding. They recognize and embrace the need to help educate co-workers in their business organizations and related associates outside of their companies about the role and importance of product safety. Advancing the goals of consumer product safety as organizational values within the supply chain has tremendous value.
4. Product safety professionals know that their companies will be well served if product safety knowledge and requirements are understood by senior management in the company. They recognize their ongoing responsibility to keep the organization, and, in

particular, senior management informed about product safety issues and trends, directly or through their immediate superiors. They understand they are advocates for consumers and their safety, and vigorously argue for safety, even when such a position is not supported by others in their organization.

5. Product safety professionals recognize an obligation to hold high standards and a commitment to ethical behavior in their discipline. They hold respect for others in the field and adhere to their proper roles as professionals with knowledge and understanding that are important to share with business, consumer, and regulatory organizations.
6. They respect the confidential nature of the relationship between business professionals, and those with whom they may have contact. They recognize the nature of risk that may exist in a product safety issue, and the obligation to inform their superiors of this situation as fully professionally, and as promptly, as possible.
7. As colleagues, product safety professionals have obligations that derive from common membership in the community of product safety professionals. They do not discriminate against or harass colleagues. They respect and defend the free inquiry of associates, even when it leads to findings and conclusions that differ from their own. They acknowledge the experience of others and strive to be objective in their professional judgment of the views of colleagues. They accept their share of responsibility for contributing to the culture of their company or organization insofar as product safety and quality is integrated into that culture.

Product safety professionals recognize the obligation to give back to their community. They do this through participation in SPSP, other professional safety and community organizations, participating in various education and professional development programs, and advancing the overall field of product safety.

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