

# Case Study on the Impact of Work Environment Measurement (WEM)

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## **Case Study on the Impact of Work Environment Measurement (WEM) Abstract**

Work Environment Measurement (WEM) is a form of technical service rendered by the Occupational Safety and Health Center (OSHC) through the Environment Control Division (ECD) to different industries, as well as, government and non-government institutions. WEM is aimed to evaluate levels of exposures to different physical and chemical hazards and to recommend the appropriate control measures for the improvement of the working environment.

From 1988-1997, there were seven hundred thirty-seven (737) WEM services conducted by ECD in 203 companies. To determine the effectiveness of WEM in promoting improvements in the work environment, this case study was conducted. All the technical reports in these 203 companies were reviewed and among them, twenty-eight (28) companies were selected randomly as respondents. A structured questionnaire was administered and WEM was repeated based on the parameters previously requested. The results of measurements were compared to previous data to determine any improvements as a result of the WEM intervention.

All the respondents gave positive feedback on the importance of WEM. The findings are used as baseline data in maintaining a healthful work environment. The other contributions of WEM were identified as follows:

- Increased awareness to safety and health;
- Prevented and reduced cases of work-related illnesses;
- Improved morale and attitude towards work; and
- Increased productivity.

Based on the results of the current measurements, the exposure levels to the different hazards have lessened with the implementation of the recommended engineering and administrative controls, as well as the used of the suitable personal protective equipment (PPEs).

All the companies implemented most, if not all, the recommendations given in the WEM reports. Based on the corrective actions carried out by these companies, improvements to hot, noisy, dusty, areas with inadequate lighting and ventilation and exposures to metal fumes, solvents, toxic gases and mists were summarized.

Policies should be created to increase the pool of technical experts who will accommodate the increasing demand for WEM. The OSH standards should be reviewed to cope with the changing work environment as a result of introduction of new processes and technologies.