



The City of Live Oak had noticed a rise in the number of workers' compensation claims and injuries due to work-related accidents. The Safety Committee introduced a program called the Safety Spot to promote safety awareness. The program detailed that any time there were three or more employees meeting together, one would volunteer a safety tip to help those in the meeting prevent work related accidents. The topics covered began as somewhat of a joke with anecdotes that happened in their personal lives, but rapidly caught on.

The topics became more work-related, to include backing of city vehicles, lifting heavy objects, and preventing storage and clutter that lead to tripping hazards. The program became even more important as the COVID-19 pandemic expanded. Safety Spots quickly turned from wearing safety gear for public works to appropriate

methods of taking off rubber gloves and using sanitation materials effectively. Much attention was even given to the way employees wash their hands during the workday.

The year prior to August 2019, the City had logged 21 safety-related accidents and 14 workers' compensation claims, making the monthly average of 1.75 safety reports. Since the inception of the program, the number of incidents has been reduced to a 1.16 monthly average, a 33.7% reduction. The program has impacted everyone. It has made everyone aware that safety is important to the City and all employees should join in the commitment to ensure everyone goes home safely and injury-free. Employees now see it as a badge of honor to be selected to provide the safety topic when called.

The Texas Municipal League (TML) recognized the importance of the program and awarded the City of Live Oak the 2020 Municipal Excellence Award for "Management Innovations under 25,000 Population" during the annual TML Conference in October 2020. Mayor Mary M. Dennis, council, administrators, and staff proudly accepted the honor during the virtual event. The Safety Spot program has proven to be a program of well-being and helped employees to go home at night injury free.