



Powering Strong Communities

**APPA  
Safety Awards of  
Excellence**

**Application Guidebook for  
the 2024 Award Year**

**Updated: December 12, 2024**

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## Overview

In June of 2024, the APPA Board of Directors established a new Safety Committee comprised of APPA members who are leaders in the public power safety community. The purpose of the committee is to align, and provide strategic direction for, the Association's various safety programs, conferences, events, and projects, including the publication of the APPA Safety Manual.

**Based on feedback from the Safety Committee, APPA revised the Safety Awards of Excellence program for calendar year 2024.** The objective of the revision process was to:

- Ensure member input in the process of developing the safety awards application,
- Develop an awards application that accurately reflects the effectiveness of a utility's safety program, and
- Ensure that the awards application will allow smaller utilities, with fewer resources, to qualify for an award.

The updated application for the safety awards is included as an attachment to this guide. This will allow members to review the application, which includes new questions and revised scoring criteria, before it is posted online for responses in January. Points awarded for each question are also noted in the application. Once completed, member utilities will be able to tally the points in the application to determine their final score before submitting to APPA for review.

APPA will conduct a webinar on **Wednesday, January 8, 2025 at 10:00 – 11:00 AM EST** to discuss the new application and address any questions from members. Details about the Safety Awards of Excellence and registration for the upcoming webinar will be available on the [Safety Awards website](#).

# I. Award Requirements and Eligibility

## Awards Eligibility

All regular APPA utility, joint action agency, and state/regional association members are eligible for awards in this program upon timely submission of the APPA Safety Awards application and application fee. *Note:* Previously, the awards program required applications for three consecutive years to qualify for an award. This requirement has been removed for the 2024 award year.

## Reporting Worker-Hours

Each utility must include in their applications the worker-hours covering employees and supervisors on all shifts including operating, production, maintenance, clerical, office, and all other departments of the electric utility.

## Grouping of Contestants

Contestants will be grouped according to the number of worker-hours reported by the utility as follows:

Group	Worker-Hours of Exposure
A	Less than 15,000
B	15,000 to 29,999
C	30,000 to 59,999
D	60,000 to 109,999
E	110,000 to 249,999
F	250,000 to 999,999
G	1,000,000 to 3,999,999
H	more than 3,999,999

## Application Fee

In 2024, APPA introduced an application fee for each utility submitting an award application. This non-refundable fee covers the costs associated with reviewing the application and purchasing the plaques to award winners. The fee is due upon submission of the award entry form. The pricing per group is listed below:

Utility Size	Fee
Tier 1: Groups A-C	\$50
Tier 2: Groups D-F	\$175
Tier 3: Groups G-H	\$225

## Award Year

Each year's Awards data collection period shall start January 1 and terminate December 31 of the same year.

## II. Awards Application Overview

The safety awards application includes the following three sections:

### Section 1: Lagging Indicators

Lagging indicators measure the occurrence and frequency of past events, such as the number or rate of injuries, illnesses, and fatalities. They assess an organization's historical safety performance and are traditionally used to identify deviations from established safety goals.

In this section, utilities are asked to provide their Total Recordable Incident Rate (TRIR) and their Days Away, Restricted & Transferred (DART) Rate based to the hundredth decimal place (0.00) using the following formulas:

**Total Recordable Incident Rate (TRIR)** = (Total Number of Recordable Cases \* 200,000) ÷ Number of Worker-Hours

**Days Away, Restricted & Transferred (DART) Rate** = (Total Number of DART Cases \* 200,000) ÷ Number of Worker-Hours

Utilities are also asked to provide the total number of reportable cases, the total number of DART cases, and the total number of fatalities in four groups (Generation, Transmission, Distribution, and Services) with subgroups based on activities within those groups.

A "reportable injury or illness" is defined as any injury or illness arising out of and in the course of employment which results in death, days away from work, restricted work activity, or medical treatment. Types of injury or illness used in reporting are limited to the following:

- **Fatality:** "Fatality" includes any death resulting from an occupational injury or illness regardless of the length of time which elapses between the injury date or illness diagnostic date and death.
- **Days Away from Work:** "Days away from work" cases involve cases where the employee would have worked but could not because of job related injury or illness.
- **Restricted Work Activity:** Workdays (consecutive or not) which, because of injury or illness, the employee:
  - Was assigned to another job on a temporary basis; or
  - Worked at a permanent job less than full time; or
  - Worked at a permanently assigned job but could not perform all duties normally connected with it.
- **Medical Treatment:** Treatment (other than first aid) administered by physician or registered professional personnel under the standing orders of a physician. Medical treatment does not include first aid treatment even though it is provided by physician or registered professional personnel.

For further clarification please refer to:

- Detailed Guidance for OSHA’s Injury and Illness Recordkeeping Rule:

<https://www.osha.gov/recordkeeping/entryfaq.html>

- OSHA’s Injury & Illness Recordkeeping Forms – 300, 300A, 301

<https://www.osha.gov/recordkeeping/RKforms.html>

The Lagging Indicators section also includes five questions on how a utility investigates incidents to help improve safe working practices.

## Section 2: Leading Indicators

Leading Indicators are proactive measures that a utility takes to promote safe working practices. These measures play a vital role in preventing worker fatalities, injuries, and illnesses, as well as strengthening safety programs and continuous safety improvement at your utility.

This section contains eight questions, divided into two groups:

- **Safety Culture:** How a utility identifies and communicates safe working practices.
- **Inspections:** How a utility ensures that safe working practices are maintained and followed.

Question 20 in the Leading Indicators section asks if utilities track safety metrics. Example of metrics may include but not be limited to: Near miss frequency rate (NMFR), Injury frequency rate (IFR), Lost time injury frequency rate (LTIFR), Injury severity rate (ISR), Total recordable incident rate (TRIR), Days away restricted or transferred (DART), and Safety compliance rate.

## Section 3: Essay Questions (Not Graded)

The final section includes two questions that ask a utility to: 1) Describe how safety your program has improved over the past year; and 2) Identify ideas and activities that could be used to improve public power safety programs.

*Responses in this section are optional and not graded.* However, APPA and the Safety Committee will use them to inform initiatives aimed at strengthening safety programs within the public power community.

### III. Scoring and Awards Criteria

Awards are determined by the overall numerical score that each utility receives based on their responses to the application.

#### Scoring Criteria

The method for awarding points for reportable cases has been revised for the 2024 award year. A weighted scoring system has been introduced to ensure that smaller utilities with fewer worker hours are not disproportionately affected by the number of incidents reported in the award year. For example, a single incident at a utility with 15,000 worker hours would result in a higher incident rate compared to a utility with 1,000,000 worker hours for the same incident.

Below are the weighted scoring criteria for each group based on the number of worker hours reported by utilities.

Groups A/B/C	
Section	Points
<b>Lagging Indicators</b> 60 Total Points	<b>Reportable Cases:</b> 30 Points based incident rates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incident rate of <b>0 to 10 percent:</b> 30 points</li> <li>Incident rate of <b>11 to 20 percent:</b> 20 points</li> <li>Incident rate of <b>21 to 30 percent:</b> 10 points</li> <li>Incident rate of <b>31 percent or higher:</b> 0 points</li> </ul>
	<b>Investigation Questions:</b> 30 Points (5 questions at 6 points per question)
<b>Leading Indicators</b> 40 Total Points	<b>Safety Culture Questions:</b> 30 Points (6 questions at 5 points per question)
	<b>Inspections Questions:</b> 10 Points (2 questions at 5 points per questions)

Groups D/E/F	
Section	Points
<b>Lagging Indicators</b> 60 Total Points	<b>Reportable Cases:</b> 30 Points based incident rates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incident rate of <b>0 to 5 percent:</b> 30 points</li> <li>Incident rate of <b>6 to 9 percent:</b> 20 points</li> <li>Incident rate of <b>10 to 12 percent:</b> 10 points</li> <li>Incident rate of <b>13 percent or higher:</b> 0 points</li> </ul>
	<b>Investigation Questions:</b> 30 Points (5 questions at 6 points per question)
<b>Leading Indicators</b> 40 Total Points	<b>Safety Culture Questions:</b> 30 Points (6 questions at 5 points per question)
	<b>Inspections Questions:</b> 10 Points (2 questions at 5 points per questions)

Groups G/H	
Section	Points
<b>Lagging Indicators</b> 60 Total Points	<b>Reportable Cases:</b> 30 Points based incident rates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incident rate of <b>0 to 3 percent:</b> 30 points</li> <li>• Incident rate of <b>4 to 6 percent:</b> 20 points</li> <li>• Incident rate of <b>7 to 8 percent:</b> 10 points</li> <li>• Incident rate of <b>9 percent or higher:</b> 0 points</li> </ul>
	<b>Investigation Questions:</b> 30 Points (5 questions at 6 points per question)
<b>Leading Indicators</b> 40 Total Points	<b>Safety Culture Questions:</b> 30 Points (6 questions at 5 points per question)
	<b>Inspections Questions:</b> 10 Points (2 questions at 5 points per questions)

### Award Criteria

Awards are classified into three categories according to the total score a utility receives based on their application responses.

Total Points	Award
90 points or greater	Diamond Certificate
80 – 89 points	Platinum Certificate
70 – 79 points	Gold Certificate
69 points or below	No award



## IV. Awards Rules and Disclaimers

### Report Form

All definitions pertaining to exposure, employees, etc., printed on the Awards report form shall be considered a part of these rules.

### Reporting Procedure

A link to the Awards Entry Form will launch live in January 2025 under the Safety Awards section of APPA's [Safety webpage](#).

The award entry form must be submitted by **January 31, 2025**. If you have any questions, please contact [safety@publicpower.org](mailto:safety@publicpower.org).

### Report Confidentiality

All award report forms submitted to APPA will be treated as confidential. Contestant records will be identified by code (in bulletins issued by APPA), EXCEPT FOR UTILITIES RANKING DIAMOND, PLATINUM, OR GOLD, WHO WILL BE RECOGNIZED BY NAME.

### Questions

All general questions relating to the awards shall be sent via e-mail to [safety@publicpower.org](mailto:safety@publicpower.org)

Detailed inquiries will be handled by APPA Staff, whose answer/decision will be final.

## Appendix A: Sample Award Application

Below is a sample application for the 2024 APPA Safety Awards. The application will be live on the APPA website by Friday, January 3, 2025.

### Entrant Information

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#### 1. Utility Information \*

Organization Name

Mailing/Street Address (No PO Box please)

City

State

Zip

#### 2. Organization Type \*

- Electric Utility
- Joint Action Agency
- State Association/Agency
- Federal Agency
- Other

#### 3. Employment Information \*

A. Total Electrical Worker-Hours of Exposure for Year 2024

B. Total Number of Electrical Employees

**Lagging Indicators: Incident Reporting**

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4. Please reference the following definitions below to fill out case fields.

-Recordable Illness/Injury Cases- Any Case that resulted in employee(s) needing medical attention beyond first aid measures.

-DART- Cases where the employee missed day(s) away from work, had restricted job duties and/or transferred to another job as a results of the injury.

\*

A. Total Number of Recordable Cases

B. Out of those Recordable Cases, how many fall under the DART category?

5. DART Time Charges (Calendar Work Days Only) \*

Total Number of Day(s) Missed from Work, Days Restricted and Days on Transferred Job

6. Generation \*

	Total number of recordable cases	Total number of DART cases*	Total number of fatalities
Construction	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Operations & Maintenance	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Emergency Response Activities	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Support Services	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Other	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

7. Distribution \*

	Total number of recordable cases	Total number of DART cases*	Total number of fatalities
Overhead - New Construction, Maintenance, and Replacement	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Underground - New Construction, Maintenance, and Replacement	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Substation Operations and Maintenance	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Tree Trimming	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Emergency Response Activities	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Meter Services	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Support Services	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Other	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

8. Transmission \*

	Total number of recordable cases	Total number of DART cases*	Total number of fatalities
Overhead - New Construction, Maintenance, and Replacement	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Substation Operations and Maintenance	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Tree Trimming	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Emergency Response Activities	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Support Services	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Other	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

### 9. Services \*

	Total number of recordable cases	Total number of DART cases*	Total number of fatalities
Administration	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Custodial	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Warehousing	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Other	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

### Lagging Indicators: Investigation Questions

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10. Does the utility have reporting and investigation processes for incidents which include: (6 points awarded for responding "yes" to a minimum of three of the following types of reporting categories) \*

	Yes	No
Near Miss / Near Hit	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unsafe Conditions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
First Aid Injuries	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recordable Injuries	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fatalities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

11. Does the utility have a defined process for addressing unsafe conditions/behaviors and changing its safety practices/rules once an issue has been identified and/or investigated? (6 points) \*

- Yes
- No

12. Do employees have the authority to stop working in unsafe conditions? (6 points)\*

- Yes
- No

13. Does the utility have a written and followed procedure for injury investigation to find root cause(s) with a focus on utility improvements instead of unsafe employee behaviors? (6 points) \*

- Yes
- No

14. Does your utility have a disciplinary process that is followed when safety violations occur? (6 points) \*

- Yes
- No

#### **Leading Indicators: Safety Culture Questions**

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15. Does your utility follow a documented Safety Manual? (5 points)

If so, does your utility use the APPA Safety Manual? *(Please note that this question will not affect the utility's scores, the purpose is for APPA to gauge on whether utilities are utilizing the APPA Safety Manual)* \*

- Yes, we follow a Safety Manual
- Yes, we utilize the APPA Safety Manual
- No

16. Does your utility require documented daily job safety briefings and confirm their completion? (5 points) \*

- Yes
- No

17. Does your utility require regular safety meetings? (5 points)\*

- Weekly
- Monthly
- Quarterly
- Annually
- No

18. Does your utility have an employee, consultant, or committee, that fulfills the responsibility of a safety officer? (5 points) \*

- Yes
- No

19. Does your utility have an annual training plan with safety topics? (5 points)\*

- Yes
- No

20. Does your utility track safety metrics? (5 points)\*

- Yes
- No

**Leading Indicators: Inspection Questions**

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21. Does your utility require pre-use vehicle inspections? (5 points)\*

- Yes
- No

22. Does the utility require supervisors and/or managers to conduct periodic crew inspections and site audits? (5 points) \*

- Weekly
- Monthly
- Quarterly
- No

**Leading Indicators: Essay Questions**

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23. Do you believe your safety program has improved over the past year?

Please explain. Please explain why you feel your safety program has improved, declined or remained the same. \*

24. What are the greatest needs in public power safety programs?

Please provide a narrative of ideas and activities which could be used to improve public power safety programs. \*



## Respondent Information

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25. Submitted by: \*

First Name

Last Name

Title

Phone

Email

## Appendix B: Award Application FAQs

The following provides definitions and guidelines to assist the contestant in completing the application form.

### Award Eligibility

Please remember all regular APPA utility, joint action agency, and state/regional association members are eligible for awards in this program upon timely submission of the APPA Safety Awards application and application fee. APPA reserves the right to reject applications without the submission of the fee.

### Hours of Exposure

The worker-hours of exposure are the total worker hours worked by all electric employees, including departments such as production, maintenance, transportation, clerical, office, and sales. The total worker hours are preferably calculated from the time clock, foreman's card, or payroll records.

If such records are not available, the number is estimated from the average number of employees. The estimated number of worker hours is obtained by multiplying the average number of employees by the average number of hours worked per week and then multiplying that product by the number of working weeks in a year.

$$(Avg. \# \text{ of Employees}) \times (Avg. \text{ Hours per Week}) \times (Avg. \text{ Weeks per Year}) = \text{Worker-Hours of Exposure}$$

*Working Example:* If 100 is the average number of employees and the number of working hours is 40 per week for 50 weeks per year, the total worker-hours of exposure for the year would be 100 times 40 times 50, which equals 200,000.

$$(100) \times (40) \times (50) = 200,000$$

### Average Number of Electric Utility Employees

Based on utility size, there are various methods of calculating the average number of employees.

*Working Example:* For Utility X, the average number of people on hourly and salary payrolls at work during 2001 is reached by an average of employees per month.

Month	Number of Employees on Payroll
January	50
February	51
March	50
April	53
May	48
June	52

Month	Number of Employees on Payroll
July	50
August	49
September	51
October	50
November	48
December	51
<i>Total Months: 12</i>	<i>Sum of Employees on Payroll for Year: 603</i>

The yearly aggregate employee average calculated from monthly averages for Utility X is 50.

$$\frac{603 \text{ (total employees Jan-Dec)}}{12 \text{ (working months in a year)}} = 50.25 \text{ (round to nearest whole number)} = 50$$

### Number of Injuries/Illnesses

All disabilities arising out of and during employment, whether accidental injuries or occupational disease, and conforming to the following four types should be counted. The number of injuries and NOT the number of accidents is reported. If, for example, ten employees were killed in an explosion, ten injuries should be counted.

*Working Example:* An employee receives medical treatment other than basic first aid. He returns to work but soon finds that his injury is limiting his job performance. His doctor places him on restricted work activity. In this example, a medical treatment case becomes a restricted work activity case. This case would initially be recorded under medical treatment; however, it would then be deleted and placed in the restricted work activity column. Ultimately, the incident would be counted as one case for one employee, because it results from the same incident. If the employee had suffered an unrelated injury that resulted in restricted work activity, you would then have two different cases, one in medical treatment and one in restricted work activity.

### Outstanding Cases

Annual incidence rates include all reportable fatalities, injuries, and illnesses occurring within the calendar year. If the outcome of a case is not definitely known at the Deadline for Entry, the probable disability should be estimated on the basic medical opinion.

### Reportable Injury/Illness Case Definitions

Cases are reportable if they result in any one of the following:

- Fatality: Regardless of time between injury and death or length of illness.
- Days Away from Work: A case in which injury/illness causes absence from work beyond the day of injury. Time spent obtaining medical treatment is not defined as lost time.

- **Restricted or Light Duty:** An injury/illness case resulting in written restrictions or limitations by a physician which affects the employee's ability to perform any task that would have been a part of his/her normal duties.
- **Medical Treatment:** An injury/illness case which requires treatment beyond first aid involving special medical skills and knowledge usually associated with a physician, registered nurse, therapist, paramedic, etc. No light duty or lost time is involved.
- **Administration:** Includes all injury/illness cases attributable to administrative functions such as management, engineering, accounting, etc. Not included in the generation, distribution, and transmission categories.

*Note:* Reportable Status: Reportable injury/illness cases may change status during the year due to changes in the employee's medical condition or treatment. Such cases, nevertheless, are to be reported only once under the case definition with the greatest severity. For example, a "medical treatment" case which eventually results in restricted workdays would be reported as a "restricted/light duty" case. If the employee later misses work, the case would instead be reported as a "days away from work" case.

### **Further Clarification**

For further clarification please refer to:

- Detailed Guidance for OSHA's Injury and Illness Recordkeeping Rule

<https://www.osha.gov/recordkeeping/entryfaq.html>

- OSHA's Injury & Illness Recordkeeping Forms – 300, 300A, 301

<https://www.osha.gov/recordkeeping/RKforms.html>

If you have questions about including a specific case, please email [safety@publicpower.org](mailto:safety@publicpower.org)