

Operator Care – Abnormality Reporting

“TOOL BOX TRAINING”

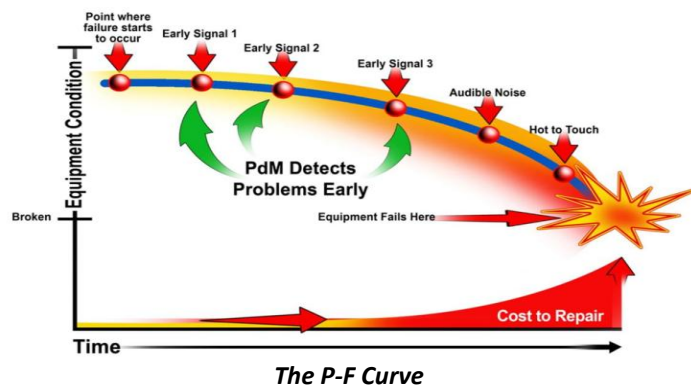


Abnormalities are represented by the defects that enter our assets (point P on the P-F curve) and that will eventually lead to a loss of function from that asset – what we consider a failure (point F on the P-F curve).

The True Purpose

The purpose of regularly scheduled proactive inspection activities, such as those performed by operators, is to discover and report these abnormalities as early as possible (to the left hand side of P-F curve) such that the organization can react with the maximum possible lead time.

If we do not report the abnormalities as soon as they are detected, we are robbing the organization of the time they need to react appropriately to the abnormality.



It is of significant importance to note that with the types of inspections performed by operators (generally using the 5-senses) abnormalities are generally detected well to the right-hand side of the P-F curve (very close to failure point), making the formal reporting and response process even more critical.

Formal Reporting vs. Informal Reporting

The question here is the nature of the reporting of the abnormality – with some methods being more effective than others. More often than we care to admit, small problems grow in to catastrophic problems due to the organization’s failure to respond properly. Emails, telephone calls, and verbal discussions on the shop floor

or in the lunch room are all examples of informal methods of reporting abnormalities.

In order to ensure that the organization can respond in a timely manner, it is critical that abnormalities are reported in a formal manner – one that is universally recognized and reacted to by the organization.

Work Requests – The primary method of reporting abnormalities in many organizations is the work request – generally maintained in a database known as the EAM or CMMS. This database allows all member of organization to view and focus on the same list of reported abnormalities. The work request must be the first choice leveraged when reporting abnormalities.

Abnormality Tags – In many organizations, a segment of the personnel lack the training or database access necessary to formally report problems. When this Situation occurs; those personnel must revert to one of the informal methods of reporting abnormalities – leading to lost opportunities and unnecessary failures. As the personnel in this category are generally operators, the abnormality tags used as part of the Operator Care program provide a formal method to formally report an abnormality. In addition, the bright colored tags used in the process provide a visual clue to the existence and location of the abnormality in the workplace.

The Tagging Process – The tags we generally recommend for use consists of a two-part tag; a front section printed on bright colored paper, a back section printed on an oil and water resistant material such as Tyvek, with carbon paper in between.

When the operator notices an abnormality, they will fill out the top section of the tag, with the information being transferred to the back of the tag via the carbon paper. The element resistant section of the tag (back half) is attached to the equipment near the location of the abnormality, and the top half placed in a centrally

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located location that is accessible to all operations, maintenance, and supervisory personnel.

In those situations where the operators do not have access to the database, we recommend that the supervisor directly responsible for supporting the Operator Care process in each area be tasked with taking the new abnormality tags and creating a corresponding work request in the computer database. This task must be performed on a shift by shift basis.

With the bright color of the tags being used, the visual management aspect of the abnormality reporting process is accentuated. Maintenance personnel are deployed to respond to problems via the established work management process, while operators can oversee and monitor the response to the abnormalities reported by monitoring the tags they have created on their operator care board.

The image shows a yellow rectangular form titled "OPERATOR CARE PROBLEM TAG". It contains several fields: "Date:" and "Area:" at the top; "Asset Number and Description:" below; "Reported by:" below that; a large "Problem Description:" field; "Work Order Number:" below; and "Corrected (Date, Initials, Comment):" at the bottom. A small "Tag No: 12345" is printed at the very bottom left of the form.

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