



## Corning Customer Success Story

# Overcoming Challenges to Achieve Best Safety Record Ever—Using Ergonomics



**Tony Salvadore**

Corporate Director of Safety, Corning

## Corning—Shaping Industries and the World We Share

Headquartered in Corning, NY, Corning Incorporated is one of the world's leading innovators in material science. For over 170 years, Corning has applied its unparalleled expertise in glass science, ceramic science, and optical physics to develop products that transform industries and enhance people's lives. Some of their innovations include the first glass bulb for Thomas Edison's electric light, cellular substrates that enable catalytic converters, and the first damage resistant cover glass for mobile devices.

Corning operates worldwide with 10 R&D centers and over 75 manufacturing facilities across North America, Europe and Asia, with ~51,000 employees. At Corning's core is its people and the [vision](#) to deliver an injury-free workplace for every employee, contractor, and visitor.

Wendell P. Weeks, Chairman and CEO of Corning, [states](#), "Corning's values form the foundation of our corporate strategy and inform every aspect of our operations. Our focus on valuing the individual means an unwavering commitment to safety and health, which is essential for Corning to achieve world-class performance."

Tony Salvadore, Corporate Director of Safety, came to Corning with a pretty good idea of what it would take to deliver on Corning's commitment to safety and health. Tony and his team took a three-step approach through employee respect and engagement, visual management, and a leadership-supported strategy for safety and health. This approach led Corning to achieve its best-ever safety record in 2022. Tony said, "I have a brilliant team, and this could not have been accomplished without everyone involved."

## Identifying How to Improve Safety

When Tony came to Corning in 2017, he understood how to help standardize its safety program and elevate it to an enterprise level, versus each facility doing its own thing. "You need to build safety standards into the system, and these standards need to be measurable. One of the best ways to do this is through deploying a management system for ergonomics," he explained.

At the time, there wasn't a standardized ergonomics program at Corning. Tony continued, "I was already familiar with VelocityEHS Industrial Ergonomics, with its AI and motion capture technology, and knew the power of this software. However, at Corning our intellectual property is heavily guarded, and we couldn't just go around taking video assessments without solid data privacy and security assurances, due to what could be in the background. Fortunately, we were able to work with Velocity and get the backgrounds blurred so we could capture the necessary assessment videos and get the data we needed to start reducing risk."

A comprehensive ergonomics program is a robust approach to establishing a successful safety program. This is because many workplace injuries are caused by musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) that develop over time from repetitive activities. Ergonomics fits the job to the person and helps lessen muscle fatigue for workers, enhances product quality, increases manufacturing productivity, and reduces the number and severity of work-related MSDs.



Tony said, "Most the injuries were strains and sprains, so the best way to reduce these types of injuries is through full adoption of ergonomics assessments and targeted corrective actions. And with the VelocityEHS Industrial Ergonomics software, we have the resources we need to identify, quantify, and prioritize issues, and more importantly, address and reduce these types of injuries. We methodically incorporated this approach and software into our standards and, after three years, these injuries were cut in half."

## Seeing Every Improvement as a Win

Tony's approach to safety management is what he calls management for daily improvements (MDI). He explains, "This is not rocket science. We simply need to ask ourselves at the end of the day 'Did we win?' Meaning, did we accomplish the four or five things that needed to get done? If yes, we're in the green and we win; if no, we're in the red and we have the opportunity to evaluate and take actionable steps to do it differently, so that eight hours from now we'll have a win."

He continues, "We use visual MDI boards to create site risk matrices that are color coded green, yellow, and red, just like the risk indicators in the software. I'm huge on visual management and love that I can walk into a site and see where they're winning and where they're having losses and need improvements. Plus, because these standards are built around the software, it makes it easy for me to print out these risk matrices and take them to leadership and say, 'Here is where we need more help.' The MDI boards are a simplistic way of thinking, but they're incredibly powerful."

Tony further explains, "Our strategy is based around doing our assessments using this software. Then we do our calculations based on the assessments. Finally, we build our action plans based on this data. It was very easy for the operations leadership team to get their heads wrapped around it, build their rhythms, and see the winning stories. It didn't take long before we noticed a shift, and holy smokes, our MSDs started to vanish."

## Greatness Begets Greatness

Building a new safety process begins with leadership. Leadership drives change through influence, passion, and action. As the saying goes, safety is everyone's responsibility, and everyone should be involved.

Tony added, "I'm very fortunate. Not only do I have an amazing team, but also great leadership. They really care about every person and are willing to do what's necessary to improve safety standards. You can't bolt on quality after the widget is already built. You have to put quality into the way you build the thing, and safety is no different." As of February 2023, Corning's injury rate was measuring at 0.335, which is world class. This is based off the United States Occupational Health and Safety Administration standard measuring injuries per 100 people.

Tony continued, "Leadership drives conditions that influence behaviors, but there's the human behavioral component that needs to be added to the equation. It's human nature to make mistakes, and that's okay; mistakes happen. It's our responsibility to put great engineering controls in place, such as proper workstations that eliminate MSD risks. When leadership shows they're willing to engineer risk out of the workplace, employees start to believe they're really cared about and become more productive because they are shown safety is a value, not just a priority."

Improving safety is a journey, and the journey continues as Tony and his team evolve the process through identifying stressors, improving work environments, and looking for each daily win. It's through employee respect and engagement, visual management, and an effective approach to safety and health starting with leadership that Corning shows commitment to living its values.



**Call Us Today**

**Toll Free:** 1.866.919.7922

**Or visit us online at:** [www.EHS.com](http://www.EHS.com)

