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Security and Safety

The question was raised in Forum about Security being an FM function. It can be, if one looks at the methods of securing an operation usually involve some sort of “facility”; a building, fence, lock, camera, etc. At many smaller colleges, the security force is part of FM, but I believe that in most industrial applications it is a separate operation. If it is separate, you can bet the two work closely together.

Since Safety is everybody’s business, where does it belong in the organization? Often Safety is part of the broader Risk Management operation. This makes it essentially a third-party function so as not to be under the direct control of the production supervisor. Sometimes, the Safety officer/department becomes more of an auditing function to the direct production’s safety program. But it is usually more efficient to have a centralized department for such things as Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS), monitoring Lock-Out/Tag-Out, and keeping up with OSHA regulations (and/or other applicable laws and codes) and inspections, and accident reporting/investigations.

Telecommunications

Telecommunications used to be simply telephones and paging systems, which were usually handled by an electrician or telephone company guy or gal. Now, with the immeasurable amounts of computers and electronics, telecom has grown to be a fairly good sized operation being responsible for miles of twisted-pair, coaxial and fiber optic cable. Oh yeah, they still do telephones, too. They are probably involved in the installation of surveillance/security cameras and various alarm systems (see Security, above.) Telecom may also get involved with audio/visual, CATV and ITV equipment. These telecom functions may be handled as part of Maintenance, or may be a separate section.

Food & Beverage Services

“What, vending machines? Plant cafeteria? Doesn’t sound like an FM function to me.” Yeah, you’re probably right, but often these operations are contracted services, and who has more experience dealing with contracts than FM? So, depending on the size and type of the operation, it may be part of FM, but probably more so in a non-manufacturing environment.