



Frequently Asked Questions

NAEM, the Premier Association for EHS Management

WHO IS NAEM?

NAEM is a professional association that empowers corporate leaders to advance environmental stewardship, create safe and healthy workplaces and promote global sustainability. As the largest community for Environmental, Health and Safety (EHS), and Sustainability decision-makers, NAEM provides peer-led educational conferences and an active network for sharing solutions to today's corporate EHS and Sustainability management challenges.

WHAT DOES NAEM DO?

For more than 20 years, NAEM has been dedicated to advancing the best practices in corporate EHS and Sustainability management. Through its research, benchmarking and decision-making tools, NAEM continues to empower EHS and Sustainability professionals to promote progressive policies, drive business value and fulfill a corporation's responsibility to society.

HOW DID NAEM START?

Twenty years ago, NAEM was founded by a small group of environmental management professionals who were looking for a place to exchange ideas and learn from one another. At the time, few people were thinking about the impact of business and industry on the environment. Organic foods were a rarified commodity, water scarcity was unheard of, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions was not a priority for the average shareholder.

But behind the scenes in many of the nation's largest companies, these EHS managers were progressively solving tough engineering challenges related to resource management, regulatory compliance and workplace safety. Every year, they would gather together to share their stories from the trenches and hear the best practices for preventing pollution, complying with environmental regulations and advocating for change from within. Over the years, what started as a small group grew into the largest professional community of corporate EHS and Sustainability decision-makers.

WHO ARE NAEM'S MEMBERS?

NAEM is the largest professional community of corporate EHS and Sustainability decision-makers. Association membership is composed of senior environmental management leaders – Vice Presidents, Directors, Managers – from more than 800 companies, including representation from the majority of the Fortune 500.

HOW MANY MEMBERS DOES NAEM HAVE?

NAEM has about 1,500 total members from more than 800 companies and more than 70 corporate members.

Why does NAEM limit its membership to EHS and Sustainability practitioners?

At NAEM, the participation of consultants is limited to ensure that members will interact with corporate practitioners who have thoughtfully gone through the process in a real-world context. The consultants and service providers who do belong to the NAEM community have been vetted by corporate members as relevant experts in the field.

WHAT MAKES NAEM'S CONFERENCES DIFFERENT FROM OTHER EVENTS ABOUT EHS OR SUSTAINABILITY?

First, NAEM is the largest community for EHS and Sustainability decision-makers. Additionally, it uses a peer-driven approach to professional development. NAEM's programs are developed by members in collaboration with NAEM staff, capitalizing on the best practices from across all industries. This approach keeps the organization in tune with emerging issues, opportunities and challenges. It also ensures that it is providing members with timely and relevant information that will give them the information needed to take EHS and Sustainability programs to the next level.

DOES NAEM LOBBY ON BEHALF OF ITS MEMBERS?

NAEM does not lobby, but acts as a voice for the business community around the issues practitioners face in solving today's corporate EHS and Sustainability management challenges. Through its community outreach, Green Tie blog and decision-making tools, NAEM helps create a bridge between the pragmatism that drives the boardroom and the progressive change our society expects from businesses today.

WHAT HAPPENS AT NAEM'S ANNUAL EHS MANAGEMENT FORUM?

The NAEM Annual EHS Management Forum is the largest annual gathering of EHS and Sustainability decision-makers, drawing more than 500 Managers, Directors and Vice Presidents from leading companies. With three days of interactive, peer-led sessions and keynote presentations, the Forum is the top opportunity for professional networking, benchmarking and best practice sharing available to EHS and Sustainability practitioners today.

WHAT IS ENVIRONMENTAL, HEALTH AND SAFETY (EHS) MANAGEMENT?

Companies that aspire to be better environmental stewards invest in strong Environmental Health and Safety management, otherwise known as EHS. From an environmental standpoint, this involves creating a systematic approach for managing waste, complying with U. S. Environmental Protection Agency regulations and implementing sustainability initiatives. Strong EHS programs also include measures to address ergonomics, air quality and other aspects of the work environment that could affect the health and well-being of employees.

WHAT IS SUSTAINABILITY? HOW DOES IT RELATE TO EHS?

With the advent of sustainability, EHS leaders are increasingly responsible for designing and implementing strategies to take companies beyond compliance. These initiatives involve tasks such as developing a formal sustainability program, measuring a product's carbon footprint, engaging stakeholders and publicly reporting EHS and sustainability performance.

WHAT IS THE HISTORY OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PROFESSION?

The corporate environmental management profession began in the 1970s, following the creation of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. In the beginning, companies needed engineering solutions to reduce pollution and manage waste from manufacturing processes. As the profession matured, however, environmental managers evolved into advocates for longer-term strategic thinking about how a company can remain profitable while minimizing its environmental impacts.

Today, these managers are the environmental leaders of the corporate world, marrying technical expertise with the management skills they need to translate policies like sustainability into systems that drive business value. Indeed, a survey of NAEM members in 2009 found that the majority of corporate sustainability initiatives – such as water conservation and reducing greenhouse gas emissions – were either being led by, or conducted with cooperation from, the EHS manager.

CONTACT

Elizabeth Ryan,
Manager of Interactive Media and Communications
(202) 986-6616 x109

