

Celebrating Excellence – Superior Linen Service Receives OSHA SHARP Award

By

Russell Holt, Chief Compliance Officer, Superior Linen Service

On December 9, 2024, Superior Linen Service achieved a remarkable milestone by earning the prestigious OSHA SHARP (Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program) award. This honor has been awarded to only a select group of businesses nationwide. Superior Linen Service is now one of only 14 Oklahoma businesses with OSHA SHARP certification. The OSHA SHARP Certification highlights the company's exceptional commitment to workplace safety and health.

At a ceremony held at their Tulsa plant on 534 South Rockford Avenue. Leslie Osborn, Oklahoma Commissioner of Labor, presented the award, praising Superior Linen Service's dedication to creating a safe, efficient, and productive work environment to Laura Waldman, fourth generation owner, and industrial engineer.

During the award presentation, Oklahoma Department of Labor Commissioner Leslie Osborn praised the company's leadership and collaborative safety practices. "Superior Linen Service has set a high standard by empowering its employees to take an active role in their own safety and well-being. Their exemplary management and unwavering dedication to workplace safety serve as a model for the industry," Osborn remarked.

Jason Hudson, Director of OSHA's Consultation Division, underscored the significance of Superior Linen Service's SHARP certification by highlighting the critical components that led to

their success. “Earning SHARP certification is no easy feat,” Hudson remarked. “It starts with management’s unwavering commitment to safety, which sets the tone for the entire organization. Superior Linen Service has clearly demonstrated that leadership, coupled with active employee involvement, forms the foundation of an exceptional safety and health program.” He added that OSHA looks forward to continued collaboration with the company, encouraging them to “keep up the good work” as they build on their already strong safety culture.

“I am incredibly proud of all the Superior employees that worked towards attaining SHARP Certification.” Laura Waldman stated, “This whole effort is led by employees at all levels, and is not possible without employee buy in. Receiving SHARP Certification is an honor for our company, and a recognition of our employees who work together to take care of their peers, and to continuously improve Superior Linen Service.”

This achievement not only reflects the company’s leadership within the commercial laundry and textile rental industry but also underscores its role as a standard-bearer for safety excellence in Oklahoma and beyond.

Dedication to a Safer Workplace

Earning the OSHA SHARP award is a distinguished achievement, signifying the company’s commitment to exceeding industry safety and health standards. This coveted designation is reserved for employers who maintain exemplary safety programs that go well beyond regulatory compliance. For Superior Linen Service, attaining SHARP certification reflects years of dedicated effort to cultivate a culture where safety transcends being merely a priority—it has become a core value seamlessly woven into the fabric of the company’s daily operations. This

milestone underscores the company's ongoing mission to ensure a safe, productive environment for all employees.

The journey began with a company-wide commitment to improving safety practices and fostering an environment of continuous improvement. Many years ago, Superior Linen Service partnered closely with OSHA consultants to identify areas for improvement, conducting detailed evaluations of Superior Linen Service's operations. These assessments covered everything from machinery safeguards to ergonomics, chemical handling, and personal protective equipment (PPE) usage. Superior Linen Service implemented tailored safety solutions, and launched robust employee training programs to ensure every team member was equipped with the knowledge and skills to maintain a safe workspace.

One of the cornerstones of Superior Linen Service's success was its proactive approach to hazard prevention. By empowering employees to actively identify and address potential risks, the company established a dynamic feedback loop between management and staff through its behavior-based safety program. This collaborative effort ensured that safety improvements were not just policy-driven but also deeply integrated into the day-to-day operations.

Moreover, achieving SHARP recognition required a demonstration of consistent excellence. OSHA consultants worked with Superior Linen Service over several years to verify that their safety protocols were not just effective but sustainable. Regular audits, inspections, and employee engagement initiatives kept safety at the forefront, resulting in significant reductions in workplace incidents and increased overall operational efficiency.

Through hard work, dedication, and an unwavering focus on the well-being of its employees, Superior Linen Service rose to meet OSHA's high standards. The SHARP award serves as a testament to the company's leadership and innovation in workplace safety.

A Team Effort in Achieving Excellence

Behind every safety milestone is a team of dedicated individuals, and Superior Linen Service's achievement of the OSHA SHARP award is no exception. At the heart of this recognition lies the unwavering commitment of the company's employees, whose active involvement and adherence to safety protocols have been instrumental in fostering a safe and efficient workplace.

From the very beginning of their SHARP journey, Superior Linen Service emphasized that safety is not just a top-down mandate—it's a shared responsibility. The company's leadership worked diligently to involve employees at every level, creating a culture where safety was viewed as an integral part of daily operations rather than an afterthought.

Rusty Thomas, safety manager, created regular training sessions and interactive toolbox talks that equipped team members with the knowledge and skills needed to identify and mitigate workplace hazards. He oversaw and worked to improve the behavior-based safety program, and created an employee driven safety committee; all these efforts improved Superior's employee engagement, which has helped the company realize a substantial reduction in claims.

Superior Linen Service's success story demonstrates that workplace safety is not achieved in isolation—it's a collaborative endeavor that thrives on the active participation of every employee. The SHARP award serves as a powerful reminder that when individuals come together with a shared purpose, they can create meaningful, lasting change.

Setting the Bar for the Textile Rental Industry

Superior Linen Service's OSHA SHARP recognition places the company among an elite group of businesses that lead the way in workplace safety and health. In an industry where operational efficiency and employee well-being must go hand in hand, this award underscores the company's ability to balance the demands of a fast-paced commercial laundry operation with a steadfast commitment to its workforce.

The textile rental and commercial laundry industry is uniquely challenging, with hazards ranging from heavy machinery to chemical handling and ergonomic strain. By achieving SHARP certification, Superior Linen Service has proven that safety is not just achievable—it's essential for long-term success, showing how proactive safety measures can enhance productivity, improve employee morale, and reduce workplace incidents.

The benefits of the SHARP designation extend beyond accolades. Superior Linen Service's safety-first approach has resulted in tangible improvements, such as decreased downtime due to injuries, lower insurance costs, and higher employee retention. These outcomes have positioned the company as a model for others in the industry, demonstrating that investing in safety is not just a regulatory requirement but a strategic advantage.

As Superior Linen Service looks to the future, the company remains committed to maintaining its SHARP status and further strengthening its safety culture. This means continuing to invest in employee training, upgrading equipment with the latest safety features, and staying ahead of regulatory requirements. Additionally, the company plans to share its best practices with other

organizations in the textile rental industry, fostering a culture of collaboration and continuous improvement.

“For us, the SHARP award is not the finish line—it’s a starting point,” said Russell Holt, Chief Compliance Officer. “Our goal is to not only sustain our high standards but to push the boundaries of what safety and operational excellence can look like in this industry. We want to lead by example and show that a commitment to safety benefits everyone—employees, customers, and the community.”

A Proud Moment for Superior Linen Service

From the dedication of its employees to the leadership’s vision for a safer workplace, this achievement reflects the company’s values and its pivotal role in the commercial laundry and textile rental industry.

For the employees, the SHARP recognition is a source of pride, validating their hard work and shared responsibility in creating a culture of safety. For the company, it is a milestone that underscores its leadership in a highly competitive field. And for the industry as a whole, it is a testament to what is possible when safety and operational excellence go hand in hand.

The SHARP award is a badge of honor, but for Superior Linen Service, it is also a call to action—a reminder that excellence is not a destination but a journey. With their eyes on the future and safety at the core of their mission, they are poised to remain a leader in their industry, setting the bar for others to strive toward.

Russell Holt, Chief Compliance Officer

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