

In the zone

Work zones on U.S. highways are dangerous places. Drivers should be alert and approach them with caution; however, those who drive through work zones every day can become complacent about posted warnings — particularly if the warnings don't reflect current hazards. Traffic controls for work zones should be removed when work is no longer in progress, when workers are no longer at the site, or when hazards have been controlled.

- Give motorists adequate warning about upcoming work zones.
- Inform motorists with signs and media broadcasts. Provide estimated delay and road closure times so that they can take an alternate route.
- Keep warnings short and easy to read.
- Cover or take down warning signs when workers aren't at the site.
- Remove channelizing devices when they are no longer needed at the site.



OR-OSHA requires that work zone traffic controls — including protective barriers, flaggers, signals, and warning garments — meet specific requirements in the “Millennium Edition of the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices” (MUTCD), December 2000. Find out what you need to know about these requirements in the Oregon Department of Transportation's user-friendly “Short Term Traffic Control Handbook.” The complete MUTCD is available on the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration Web site: www.fhwa.dot.gov. OR-OSHA's traffic control requirement covering flaggers, signals, and warning garments — 437-003-0420 — is in Subdivision 3/G of its workplace safety and health standards.

Have a nice day: outdoor awareness for the summer



Sun

You know that sunlight contains ultraviolet (UV) radiation that causes premature aging of the skin, wrinkles, cataracts, and skin cancer. What are you doing to protect yourself? Four reminders:

- Wear sunglasses that have 99-100 percent UV protection; inexpensive sunglasses that provide 99-100 percent UVA and UVB protection are just as effective as expensive ones.
- Use a full spectrum (UVA and UVB protection) sunscreen. If you're fair-skinned, use sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 20. Apply it generously.
- Check the sunscreen's expiration date. Shelf life is one to three years depending where it's stored. Avoid



storing sunscreen where extreme temperatures will shorten its shelf life.

- Cover up. Don't work outdoors without a shirt. The best protection: a wide brimmed hat and loose-fitting lightweight clothing that you can't see through.
- Limit your exposure. UV rays are most intense between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.

Heat

Summer heat and humidity can be a serious health threat and a safety risk. Start drinking fluids before you get thirsty. Cool water is best. Avoid caffeine or alcohol — both are dehydrating. If possible, give your body time to acclimate to higher temperatures. Wear loose-fitting lightweight clothing and eat light meals before you do strenuous



work. If you take medications for a health condition, check with your health-care provider to make sure that you're able to work in higher temperatures.

Take frequent rest breaks when you work in the heat. Prolonged work makes it harder to concentrate on what you're doing, which can increase the risk of an accident.

Poison oak

In Oregon, poison oak grows primarily in the western part of the state along roadsides, in uncultivated fields, in wood lots, and in recreation areas. The plant can be a shrub from three to 10 feet high or a woody vine that clings to trees and other shrubs. The leaves look like oak leaves in groups of three on a common stem.

Poison oak emits urushiol, a poisonous, oily irritant. The oil chemically



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locks on to skin proteins within 20 minutes after exposure to any part of the plant — stem, roots, branches, or leaves. Contaminated clothes, pets, and tools can also transfer the oil to humans. The result? Rash; itching; swelling; reddish, inflamed, tiny pimples; and blisters that, left untreated, can last up to five weeks.

As soon as you know you're exposed, thoroughly wash the exposed skin with soap and lots of cold water, followed by rubbing alcohol or a solution of water and alcohol in equal proportions to remove unabsorbed urushiol. Don't bathe to remove urushiol because you'll contaminate more of your body. Wash contaminated clothing separately. Never burn poison oak; burning transports the oil on smoke particles, which cause severe reparatory irritation.

There are over-the-counter treatments for poison oak. Zanafel Poison Ivy Wash is an effective topical solution; \$39.95 for a one-ounce tube. Also available: Tecnu Oak-N-Ivy Cleanser; \$6.95 for a four-ounce bottle.

Bees and wasps

Unless you really annoy bees or wasps, they probably won't sting you. If you don't want their company, avoid wearing perfume, cologne, or brightly colored or patterned



clothing. If you see bees flying to and from a particular place, stay away! If you disturb their nest, they'll defend it vigorously. You can also irritate yellowjackets when you try to swat them away from food; in the late summer and fall they become particularly aggressive as their food sources become scarce.

If you're stung, you'll feel an immediate sharp pain for a few minutes that becomes a dull ache.

Your body responds by liberating fluid from the blood to flush the venom, which causes redness and swelling. Look for a stinger. Honey bees have barbed stingers and if one stings you, the stinger usually stays in the wound. Remove it quickly to reduce the severity of the sting; technique is not that important. Use a cold compress to reduce the pain of a sting.

A small percentage of the population is allergic to bee or wasp stings. Life-threatening reactions include symptoms such as dizziness, shortness of breath and wheezing, which may begin immediately or up to 30 minutes after a sting. Severe allergic reactions require immediate medical treatment.



Workplace safety and health conferences

OR-OSHA co-sponsors statewide educational conferences that provide opportunities for workers and employers to share ideas about occupational safety and health with local experts and nationally recognized professionals.

Central Oregon Occupational Safety and Health Conference

Eagle Crest Resort, Redmond, Oregon September 21-24, 2004

Southern Oregon Occupational Safety and Health Conference

Smullin Center, Medford, Oregon October 20 and 21, 2004

Oregon Governor's Occupational Safety and Health Conference

Oregon Convention Center Portland, Oregon February 28 - March 3, 2005

**For more information,
contact the OR-OSHA Conference Section: (503) 378-3272.
Toll-free in Oregon: (888) 292-5247, option 1.
Send e-mail inquiries to oregon.conferences@state.or.us**

Construction fatalities aren't always work-related

We hear a lot about work-related fatalities in the construction industry but, as shown in the first seven rows of the table below, construction industry employees are dying on the job from conditions that aren't always job related. More Oregonians die each year from conditions affecting the heart and blood vessels than from all forms of cancer, AIDS, suicides, and injuries combined.

Most common: heart attack and stroke. However, just as we can reduce the risk of workplace injuries by changing the way we work, we can reduce the risk of heart attack and stroke by changing our lifestyles. Maintaining a healthy weight, getting regular aerobic exercise, and quitting smoking are healthful lifestyle changes. By adopting healthier lifestyles, we can reduce suffering caused by cardiovascular disease.

Note: If you're an employer, you must report to OR-OSHA a fatality caused by a heart attack at work. The local OR-OSHA field office safety or health manager will decide whether to investigate, depending on the circumstances. A heart attack is considered work related when there is a medical diagnosis that mental or physical stress from work activities was a contributing factor.

Construction industry fatalities in Oregon: January 2003-June 2004

Event	Description	Occupation	Age
Heart attack	The victim was getting out of a backhoe and he fell over.	Equipment operator	57
Heart attack	The victim collapsed while working.	Cement mason	55
Heart attack	The victim was working; then stopped and collapsed.	Laborer	55
Heart attack	The victim came down from a scaffold and collapsed.	Scaffold worker	54
Heart attack	The victim had a heart attack at the worksite.	Truck driver	50
Heart attack	The victim had a heart attack.	Dispatcher	50
Heart attack	The victim collapsed and was transported to the hospital.	Drywall carpenter	38
Fall	The victim fell down an elevator shaft, approximately 25 feet.	Carpenter	41
Fall	The victim fell through a skylight to a concrete floor, approximately 25 feet.	Roofer	45
Run over	The victim was run over by an industrial forklift	Owner	47
Electrocution	The victim was operating a guardrail post-hole-digging machine when the tip of the boom contacted a high-voltage power line.	Machine operator	34
Electrocution	The victim was killed when the machine he was operating contacted a high-voltage wire.	Laborer	20
Crushed	The victim was crushed between the rotating superstructure of a track drill machine and a concrete wall.	Foreman	47
Crushed	The owner of the company was operating a traversing forklift and it tipped, crushing him.	Framer	32
Crushed	The victim was operating a Jehl (similar to a Bobcat) with forks and was struck by the hoist frame.	Construction worker	32

Data source: DCBS fatality/catastrophe reports (Form: OSHA-36)

Yorke & Curtis recognized for worker safety



Rob Yorke, left, receives SHARP award from OR-OSHA administrator, Peter De Luca.

The Department of Consumer and Business Services recognized Yorke & Curtis for the company's commitment to worker safety in June. Yorke & Curtis is marking its sixth year in the Oregon OSHA Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program (SHARP).

SHARP recognizes employers who make a commitment to improving workplace safety, reducing their injury and illness

rates, and developing safe practices that become models for safe workplaces in Oregon.

"For us, safety means commitment, perseverance, and keeping track of the details," says Rob Yorke of Yorke & Curtis. "We have a great crew and management committed to working safely."

During the past 10 years, Yorke & Curtis has recorded over one million work hours without an injury that resulted in a lost day of work. Yorke & Curtis started in the Portland area in 1988.

Oregon employers who have been in business for more than one year are eligible to apply for SHARP regardless of their size or type of business.

Other Oregon construction employers in SHARP

- Emerick Construction Company
- R&H Construction
- SD Deacon Corporation of Oregon
- Swinerton Builders Northwest, Inc

For more information about SHARP, contact Mark Hurliman, Oregon OSHA, (503) 947-7437.

OR-OSHA

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QUARTERLY



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For a color version of Construction Depot and related occupational-safety-and-health information, visit the OR-OSHA Web site, www.orosha.org.