

OREGON HEALTH AND SAFETY RESOURCE

December (2000), January, February (2001)

Georgia-Pacific's Philomath sawmill and planer recognized by OR-OSHA for safety excellence

Oregon OSHA honored Georgia-Pacific's Philomath sawmill and planer operations for excellence in workplace safety during a ceremony recognizing the plant's recent acceptance into the Voluntary Protection Program (VPP) at the Merit Level on October 13.

VPP recognizes and promotes effective safety and health management programs. The program brings together management, employees, and government to cooperatively create and sustain exemplary safety and health programs in workplaces. There are only three other VPP sites in Oregon and fewer than 600 nationwide.

At the ceremony, David Sparks, Oregon OSHA's deputy administrator, presented Georgia-Pacific team representatives with a certificate of recognition and a VPP Merit flag to fly at the plant. More than 150 employees at the plant participated in the celebration.



The Georgia-Pacific VPP team managers accept their VPP flag.

See "sawmill," page 12

Check your worksite for fall hazards!

Falls cause about 5,200 injuries a year in Oregon; in the construction industry, they follow only overexertion (sprains and strains) as the leading cause of accepted workers' compensation claims. That means that OR-OSHA and its compliance officers, trainers, and consultants will emphasize fall protection over the next two years.

OR-OSHA's strategic plan (Oct. 2000) made falls a local-emphasis program in construction, which is one of four industrial groups with the most accepted claims for falls. The other industrial groups that experience a high number of fall-related claims are agriculture; food and kindred products, which includes establishments that manufacture or process foods and beverages for human consumption; and lumber and wood products.

See "fall hazards," page 11

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New and changing Oregon OSHA rules

In its ongoing effort to make rules more practical and understandable to Oregon workers and employers, OR-OSHA has added to, rescinded, and changed the following rules. Proposed or final text and more information are available at OR-OSHA's Web site (www.orosha.org) under "Rules/Laws."

Working On or Over Water

OR-OSHA held meetings with affected parties including the U.S. Coast Guard over the past year to develop the proposed changes to this 30-year-old rule in Division 2/I, General Industry. The original rules were created primarily to apply to log ponds and similar applications, and do not reflect current technology or practices.

OR-OSHA is proposing new rules about working on or over water in Division 4/I, Agriculture, also. A public hearing was held on Dec. 12 in Salem. Final comment is due by December 26. Questions about working on or over water may be directed to Ron Preece, (503) 378-3272.

High-Visibility Garments

Changes in this category were made because research showed that 21 fatalities between 1990 and 1999 could have been prevented had highway/street workers worn high-visibility clothing. Furthermore, the existing garment requirements are ambiguous and require a program directive for interpretation.

New text:

"Employees exposed to hazards caused by on-highway type moving vehicles in construction zones and in street/highway traffic must wear highly visible upper body garments. The colors must contrast with other colors in the area sufficiently to make workers stand out. Colors equivalent to strong red, strong orange, strong yellow, strong yellow-green or fluorescent versions of these colors are acceptable. During hours of darkness, the garments must also have reflective material visible from all sides for 1,000 feet."

Note: High-visibility garments for flaggers must meet the requirements in OAR 437-002-0223(23)(c) in general industry, and OAR 437-003-1926.201(a)(4) in construction.

High-visibility rules are in Division 2/I, PPE in General Industry, 437-002-0128, and Division 3/C, Construction, 437-003-0128. Changes were filed November 7; they become effective April 1, 2001. Questions about high-visibility garments may be directed to Bob Thiessen, (503) 378-3272.

Means of Egress

OR-OSHA has adopted three new standards to replace federal OSHA standards related to means of egress (Subdivision 2/E) and has rescinded others that no longer apply in Oregon. The new standards are OAR 437-002-0041, Exits and Exit Routes; 437-002-0042, Emergency Action Plan; and 437-002-0043, Fire Prevention Plan.

Rescinded: OAR 437-002-0044(1) and(2); 437-002-0050; 437-002-0051; 437-002-0052; and 437-002-0053.

Questions about the means of egress standard may be directed to Ron Preece, (503) 378- 3272. ■

For a copy of proposed or final rules, call the Oregon OSHA Resource Center, (503) 947-7447, or log on to our Web site: www.orosha.org.

Administrator's Message



Peter De Luca

As we close out the year 2000, I am closing out my fifth year as administrator for Oregon OSHA. Many people thought I would never stay this long! To me, it is only surprising that the time has passed so quickly.

We have accomplished much in five years. From where I sit, it feels like we have turned some major

corners. We have made the transition to a helping organization. We add value to the workplaces we visit. We have created an enforcement program that is fully capable of turning every regulatory action into a learning experience. We continue to have the strongest, most effective voluntary programs — training, consultation, and technical assistance — in the nation.

Together with our stakeholders, business and labor, we have reduced injuries, illnesses, and fatalities in Oregon workplaces. We have achieved record low rates for Oregon. We have achieved reductions in the cost of workers' compensation for 10 consecutive years.

We have increased our partnership activities. Two years ago, we created a Partnership Committee made up of the leaders of organizations that are major stakeholders of Oregon OSHA. This group serves as an informal advisory board. We have revived the Logging Advisory Committee and created other new advisory committees. We have strengthened our relationship with groups such as the American Society of Safety Engineers, Associated Oregon Industries, and the AFL-CIO.

Our relationship with the federal government is better than ever. We entered into the first comprehensive performance agreement with Region X and pioneered strategic planning as a model for all of OSHA, which earned a Hammer Award from the office of the vice president of the United States.

All in all, it has been a good five years. We have continued to build a strong program and have made it the best program anywhere. Much of our success can be attributed to strong support from business, labor, the legislature, and the governor.

As we begin the new year, we must redouble our efforts as we attempt to build upon our past successes. We can never stop and say, "This is as good as it gets." As long as people get hurt in the workplace, there's work to do. Oregon OSHA's mission will continue to be to advance and improve occupational safety and health for all workers in Oregon. And the mission of all occupational safety and health professionals will be to send every worker home in the same condition he or she came to work in the morning.

I want to wish all of you a happy and prosperous new year. I want to thank all who work for occupational health and safety everywhere for their tireless efforts. And I want to remind everyone: PLEASE be careful out there! ■

RESOURCE



Oregon Occupational
Safety & Health Division

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Oregon SHARP Alliance seeks new board members

The Oregon SHARP Alliance is in the process of electing a new board of directors for the calendar year 2001, and is looking for volunteers from SHARP companies to become involved. The Oregon SHARP Alliance has received its incorporation papers, as well as the tax ID information, and is ready and excited about attracting more members.

"It's taken us a little while to get everything in place for this nonprofit group to get started, but we're ready to go with great ideas on helping other Oregon businesses," said Adam (AJ) Gutierrez of Barrett Business Services, acting board president. The Oregon SHARP Alliance is made up of companies that have received SHARP designation from Oregon OSHA and that want to help other companies and themselves improve safety and health management.

SHARP is a recognition program sponsored by Oregon OSHA that provides an incentive and road map for Oregon employers to work with their employees to find and correct hazards, to develop and implement effective safety and health programs, to continuously improve, and to become self-sufficient in safety and health. The goal is to reduce injuries and illnesses and to show other employers that occupational safety and health can work for everyone. SHARP is a program of the Oregon Occupational Safety and Health Division (OR-OSHA) Consultation and Services Section.

The SHARP Alliance meets quarterly throughout the state to make it easier for company representatives from all parts of Oregon to attend. The alliance's mission is to promote safety and health management and cooperation among companies and government for the

betterment of all Oregon workers. Its goals are to advocate for excellence in occupational safety and health; assist companies that are already in the process of becoming SHARP; assist all companies in Oregon in safety and health management; contribute to OR-OSHA activities, rulemaking, and strategic planning; and most important, to serve as a resource to other members of the alliance.

To meet these goals, the alliance is partnering with Oregon's VPP companies (see G-P Philomath article, Page 1) to present an interactive workshop at the Governor's Occupational Safety and Health Conference (GOSH 2001), March 5-8 in Portland. This workshop will help companies make needed improvements in their programs by working through a

problem-solving exercise.

At its next regular business meeting, the alliance will offer a no-cost workshop on advance accident investigation techniques and will plan for future educational opportunities. The SHARP Alliance met November 28 in Lebanon.

Need more information? Contact one of the officers: Adam (AJ) Gutierrez, chair, Barrett Business Services, (541) 688-3355, ext. 110; Mark Goldberg, treasurer, Cascade Employers Association, (503) 474-4320; Dennis Elder, delegate-at-large, Marvin Wood Products, (541) 523-6318; Jim Clarke, delegate-at-large, Weyerhaeuser Coos Bay, (541) 269-9336 ext 243, John Gander, delegate-at-large, Blachly-Lane Services (503) 868-7238, Gerry Gerlach, delegate-at-large, Pioneer Cut Stock, (541) 447-5962; and Phyllis Straight-Millan, OR-OSHA liaison, (503) 947-7432. ■



All Oregon employers are eligible to participate in the SHARP program. Please direct questions to Steve Beech or Cheryl Mushaney, (503) 378-3272, or toll-free in Oregon, (800) 922-2689. Information, including a list of Oregon's SHARP employers, is available on the OR-OSHA Web site, www.orosha.org under "Services." Also at the site, you'll find a self-evaluation that tests your readiness to become an Oregon SHARP employer.



Chuck McFarland, Field Safety Manager

by Cheryl Mushaney, Oregon OSHA Administrative Assistant

Medford Field Office Enforcement Manager Chuck McFarland's roots are deep in Oregon. In 1851, his great-great-grandfather was the first doctor to practice medicine in Douglas County. Born in Canyonville, Chuck McFarland was raised on a farm owned by his grandfather's and father's family. The family also leased land and, at one time, had three buses that picked up more than 1,200 Douglas County pole-bean pickers. In 1959, the family business grew and packed cantaloupes under the label "Dillard Quality Cantaloupes."

When McFarland entered the job market, it was not unusual for him to work two or three jobs at once, including retail sales, residential construction, sporting goods store management, timber falling, high-lead logging and contract bidding. McFarland also worked at the Hanna Nickel and Smelting mine, the only operating nickel mine in the United States, where he started as a laborer and eventually became the production foreman.

McFarland joined the Accident Prevention Division in 1987 as a safety compliance officer. In 1996, he was promoted to the position of enforcement field manager in Medford. He was chosen employee of the year in 1989. He has a staff of eight safety compliance officers and two support staff.

McFarland and his wife Dianna have been involved with Special Olympics since 1987. He is certified to coach cross-country skiing, baseball, basketball, volleyball, powerlifting, swimming, and track and field. McFarland helped introduce power lifting as a demonstration sport in Oregon in 1989. In 1991 powerlifting became part of the World Games at Special Olympics International.

As the coach for the Oregon powerlifting team at the 1995 World Games, McFarland rubbed elbows with Eunice Kennedy Shriver, Arnold Schwarzenegger, and Donna Shelala of President Clinton's staff. McFarland coached his son Chad in powerlifting. McFarland observed a high point in his coaching career when Chad placed third among the 123 countries represented at the games. In 1990 and 1993, McFarland was named Jackson County's coach of the year.



Chuck McFarland

McFarland is also a power lifter who competes at Master's Level II (ages 45-49). McFarland set a state record in August, lifting 1,200 pounds. Chad holds American National records for Special Olympics with a 915-pound total in the 148-pound (body weight) category. They will travel to the state of Washington in December to compete in the Holiday Classics.

McFarland's wife Dianna has returned to college to get a bachelor's degree in human services and their son Dustin is a high school sophomore at Central Point. McFarland and Dustin have become "gentleman farmers," spending summer weekends watching fruits and vegetables grow on the remaining nine acres of the original family farm near Myrtle Creek.

When first hired by Oregon OSHA, McFarland was asked about his goals. His immediate response was to "save someone's life." Not much time had passed when an employer approached him and thanked him for saving one of his employee's lives. Initially, the employer had been angry when he was cited for employees not wearing safety belts when working in lift baskets. But when one of his trucks was hit and an employee was catapulted from the lift basket, a safety belt saved the employee from serious injury or death.

McFarland is happy to contribute to the success of the enforcement program and is pleased to be a participant in achieving Oregon OSHA's mission: to advance and improve workplace safety and health for all workers in Oregon. ■

OR-OSHA sets goals for 2001

By Sue Kailey, OR-OSHA Federal Liaison

October 1 marked the beginning of a new year for Oregon OSHA with the start of the federal fiscal year (October 1 - September 30) and the beginning of a new annual performance plan that supports the five-year strategic plan.

After working with its first strategic plan for almost three years, Oregon OSHA evaluated the plan to identify its positive outcomes and areas where improvement is needed. Positive outcomes of the plan included such things as increased outreach and stakeholder involvement, more focus for organizational energy, direction for organizational decisions across all programs, increased staff understanding of key issues, and an improved relationship with our federal OSHA partners.

The general direction and goals of the five-year plan were not identified as needing improvement. What did surface as a key target for improvement was the plan's size and organization. Evaluators found that the large size of the plan and its many goals didn't allow the most effective use of OR-OSHA resources. It was determined that a smaller, better-organized plan would provide better direction for the division.

The revised five-year strategic plan contains the same three overall goals, now given short titles: workplace culture, workplace safety and health, and public confidence. Almost all of the activities and goals remain intact under each of those strategic goals. The shorter goals allow staff to easily remember the division's focus without memorizing long goal statements.

Goal 1 - Workplace Culture

Efforts under this goal are separated into three major areas: self-sufficiency, education and partnerships. Under self-sufficiency, OR-OSHA will continue to promote safety committees, the Voluntary Protection

Program (VPP), the Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program (SHARP), comprehensive consultations, and a standardized approach to promoting the benefits of a safety and health program across all division programs. Under education, OR-OSHA will focus external training efforts on strategic initiatives and improving the safety-and-health knowledge of young workers. The division will continue to pursue additional partnerships with external stakeholders and define goals for those partnerships.

Goal 2 - Workplace Safety and Health

Efforts are separated under two major categories: injuries and illnesses, and fatalities. Under injuries and illnesses, OR-OSHA will continue to focus on reducing fall hazards, noise, lead and silica hazards, and ergonomic injuries in the workforce. OR-OSHA will also focus efforts on reducing worker fatalities. Efforts in fiscal year 2001 will focus on the construction and logging industries.

Goal 3 - Public Confidence

This goal is also separated into two categories: organizational excellence and customer satisfaction. The organizational excellence efforts include core competencies for staff and a new goal: an employee survey to improve agency excellence. Under customer satisfaction, OR-OSHA will conduct and analyze customer-satisfaction surveys and encourage stakeholder involvement in standards and policy adoption.

Oregon OSHA's strategic plan provides direction for the division on its mission to advance and improve workplace safety and health for all workers in Oregon. ■

To view the entire text of OR-OSHA's Strategic Plan, FFY 2001-FFY 2005, log on to our Web site: www.orosha.org, under "About Us."

SAFETY NOTES

Department of Consumer & Business Services
Oregon Occupational Safety & Health Division
Salem, OR 97310

Fatality Report

Accident type Electrocution
Industry Reforestation/timber thinning
Employee job title Owner, crew member



Description of accident

A crew of 10 was finishing a late-August day of timber thinning and brush cutting on a tract of timber. At about 3 p.m., one of the crew fell a small-diameter tree that struck and caught on a power line as it fell. The owner of the company, who was working nearby, reached out with his chain saw to cut the butt end of the hung-up tree so that it would dislodge from the power line and fall to the ground.

His chain saw exploded upon contact with the electrified tree, which carried a current of 115,000 volts. Flames from the burning saw engulfed the victim. The crew member who had dropped the tree onto the power line had been shocked as electrical current flowed through the tree, the ground, and his saw. He was able to drop his saw, which also caught fire.

A third crew member tried again to rescue the owner, after having been knocked down by electricity in his first attempt. Another crew member dumped a jug of water on the first faller's burning saw and received an electrical shock. He left the saw to rescue the faller. Fire began to spread as the rescuers dragged the victim and the other man to safer locations, and some of the crew began fighting the fire.

The rescuer who first reached the victim began CPR, but determined that the man was dead, and stopped CPR. When emergency medical personnel arrived, two employees received medical treatment and were taken to a hospital. The worker who fell the tree onto the power line and reported having been shocked, did not seek medical treatment. Fire fighters arrived at the scene to relieve the crew of its fire-fighting efforts.

SAFETY NOTES

Department of Consumer & Business Services
Oregon Occupational Safety & Health Division
Salem, OR 97310

Fatality Report Continued

Accident type Electrocution
Industry Reforestation/timber thinning
Employee job title Owner, crew member

Investigation findings

Investigation revealed that the owner had not notified the power company that his crew would be falling trees within 10 feet of power lines. Employees of the reforestation/thinning crew had not been properly trained to fall trees; most of the trees that had been fallen in that tract had been fallen toward the power lines. No precautions had been taken to prevent trees from being fallen onto power lines. Also, the fallers dropped trees within one tree-length of other workers (must be at least two tree-lengths apart), and all of the trees fallen by one faller lacked undercuts and backcuts. Interviews with employees revealed that trees had been fallen onto power lines on three other occasions and that the owner was on site on those occasions. The crew had not been trained in fire-suppression techniques.

Applicable standards

Citations were issued for the following serious violations:

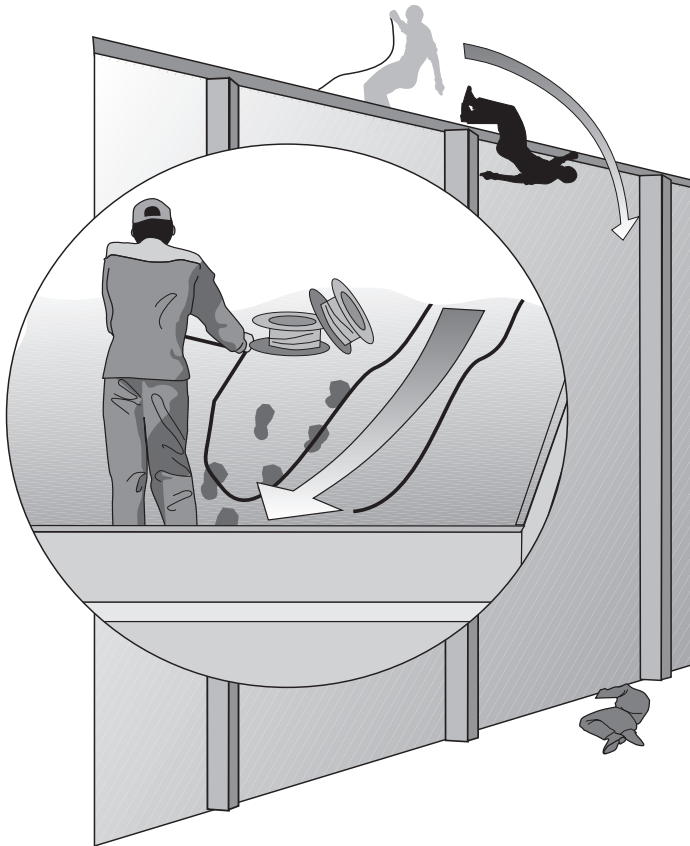
- OAR 437-006-0355(15) The employer must ensure that all precautions have been taken when falling trees near power lines.
- OAR 437-006-0028(3) The employer must notify the owner of high-voltage power lines when planning to work within 10 feet of a power line.
- OAR 437-006-0015(4) The employer must provide adequate training.
- OAR 437-006-0080(1)(a) The employer must provide fire-suppression training for employees expected to conduct fire suppression.
- OAR 437-006-0355(1) The employer must ensure that the required clearance (between or among employees) is maintained at all times when trees are being fallen.

SAFETY NOTES

Department of Consumer & Business Services
Oregon Occupational Safety & Health Division
Salem, OR 97310

Serious Disabling Injury Report

Accident type Fall
Industry Construction
Employee job title Journeyman electrician



Description of accident

On a frosty December morning in Southern Oregon, a crew of three arrived at a store rooftop to install electrical wiring for an air conditioning upgrade. They rolled out #4 CU wire. The foreman held the reel of wire as a journeyman electrician walked backward, pulling and twisting the wire to straighten it as he went about 185 feet, toward the edge of the roof. He then pulled out a second length of the red, blue, and black wire that the crew was using. As he got close to the edge of the flat roof, he stumbled and fell over the 12-inch parapet at the roof's edge. He was able to grab onto the parapet with one hand, but fell before the foreman could reach him. He fell about 22 feet to the ground. It had been the victim's first day on the job.

The foreman called to another employee to dial 911 and went to the aid of the injured worker. The ambulance arrived and the injured worker was taken to the hospital. He suffered a punctured lung, severe head injuries, a fractured knee, and broken ribs, clavicle, and wrists. He spent a month in intensive care, comatose.

Investigation findings

OR-OSHA investigation determined that although the victim had attended an OSHA 500 class intended for trainers, which included two hours of fall-protection overview, he was not adequately trained in fall protection. The foreman had not conducted a hazard assessment at the job site before employees were allowed on the roof and was not qualified as a competent person in fall-protection evaluation. Roof edges were not guarded. The company did not fulfill requirements for safety committee meetings and had no fall-protection plan for this worksite, which was part of a chain of stores that was a customer of the electric company. The worksite was not kept free of obstacles that could cause falls.

Applicable standards

- 29 CFR 1926.503(b)(1)
The employer did not verify compliance by preparing a written certification of training provided for each employee who might be exposed to fall hazards.
- 29 CFR 1926.21(b)(2)
The employer did not instruct each employee in the recognition and avoidance of unsafe conditions and the regulation applicable to his work environment to control or eliminate any hazards or other exposure to illness or injury.

HAZARD

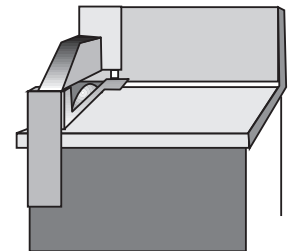
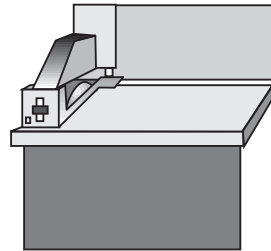
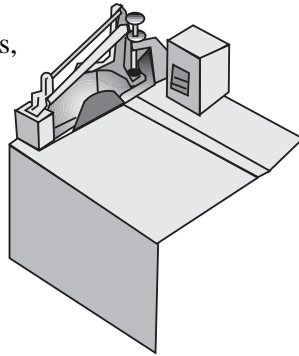
Department of Consumer & Business Services
Oregon Occupational Safety & Health Division
Salem, OR 97310

ALERT

“Nose guards” for cut-off, inverted swing cut-off, and similar saws

All firms that own or may be purchasing saws referred to in the industry as cut-off saws, inverted swing cut-off saws, jump saws, or chop saws need to be aware that these saws must have “nose guards.” Nose guards should be permanently affixed to the saw tables in front of the hood guards to prevent accidental entry of fingers or hands into the path of the saw blade during operation. An equivalent method that provides the same kind of protection may be used. Employers found in non-compliance are subject to citation.

The saws addressed are primarily used in lumber remanufacturing plants, but may also be used in other similar workplaces. They may be operated by a knee actuator button or a foot pedal.



Manufacturers of the saw include Tri-State, Industrial, Precision Products, and Mid-Oregon Labor.

OR-OSHA encourages all employers to contact OR-OSHA's Standards and Technical Section for help in guarding methods, (503) 378-3272 or (800) 922-2689 toll-free. You can also contact your insurance carrier for assistance.

OR-OSHA will continue to evaluate guarding on these saws.

Metal halide lamps may fail or rupture

Metal halide lamps operate at high pressures and extremely high temperatures (1832 degrees F, 1000 degrees C). Because of this, the quartz arc tubes of all metal halide lamps from all manufacturers have the potential to rupture due to internal or external causes.

Federal OSHA and the National Electrical Manufacturers Association recommend the following to ensure safety:

- Follow the lamp manufacturer's operating instructions
- Heed the lamp manufacturer's warnings
- Turn off metal halide lamps for a minimum of 15 minutes at least once a week
- Replace lamps at or before the end of their rated lives.

Special metal halide lamps with outer jackets designed to contain all particles in the event of a rupture are available. Users may want to replace their open-luminaire metal halide lamps with such lamps.

There is no new standard regarding metal halide lamps. Nor is there a legal obligation to take action on this topic. This Hazard Alert is intended to help employers and workers make workplaces safer.

“Part of the reason that Oregon’s construction industry has had so many fall-related claims is the pressure to get the work done and move to the next job. Oregon has undergone a lot of construction in the past decade,” said Rod Comstock, OR-OSHA Central Region manager. “But nationwide, falls are the leading cause of construction fatalities. Between 1989 and 1998, we had 46 fall-related fatalities in Oregon.”

“It’s an area that deserves the attention of OR-OSHA and of employers and their employees. By being proactive in this area, we hope to prevent injuries and deaths among Oregon workers.”

Compliance officers will be looking at construction sites for the lack of adequate safety measures, work practices, or fall protection. Examples of sites with potential fall hazards include, but are not limited to:

- Structural steel erection, whether or not it’s a building
- Scaffolds or work platforms, whether they’re in use or being assembled or dismantled
- Open-sided floors and floor openings
- Roofing activities
- Activities involving the use of any kind of ladder
- Other construction activity, including bridges, water towers, suspension scaffolds, and roof decking and sheathing

Although construction is the current target of OR-OSHA’s local-emphasis program, other industries need to pay attention to the types of activities that cause fall injuries: product or debris on the floor, ladder use, jumps

from equipment, and taking short-cuts instead of using designated walkways and exits.

Sources of falls related to specific industries include the following:

Agriculture — Falls on and off equipment; falls into pits; ladders; poor housekeeping.

Health care — Spills not cleaned up; running up stairs; jumping out of ambulances.

Food and wood products — Open-sided floors; overhead storage; product on floors; trips and slips; spills not cleaned up.

Construction — Ladders that are defective, not tied off, or not appropriate for the job; inadequate scaffolding; temporary stair, barricades, ladders, etc.

What can you do?

Take action before a fall injury or fatality happens on your job.

Call OR-OSHA for help. OR-OSHA offers no-cost on-site consultations to help you plan for fall protection. The Standards and Technical Section can offer advice or provide copies of printed materials. OR-OSHA’s Audio-visual library has films about fall prevention that you can borrow. Attend one of our fall-protection workshops. Again, there is no charge for most of these services.

Your insurer or your trade or professional association can probably help in preventing falls, also. ■

A series of publications on fall protection is available

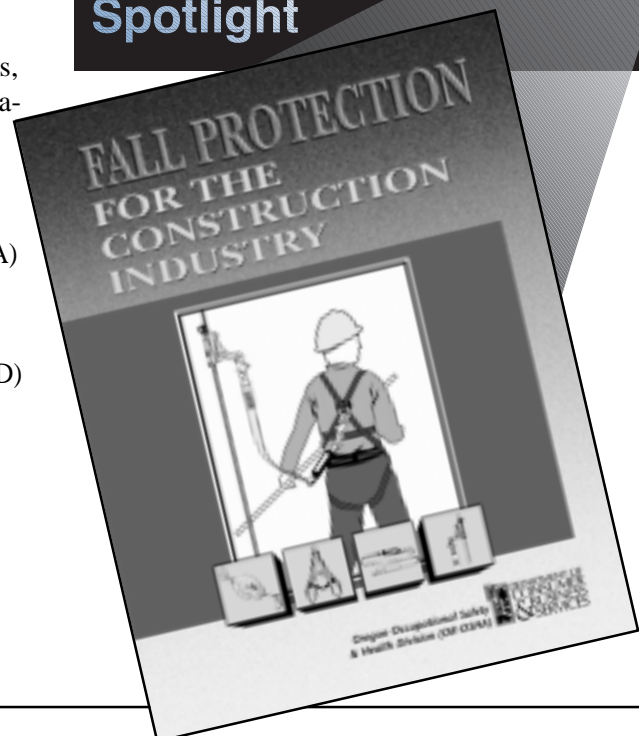
Fall protection is a concept that describes behaviors, systems, processes, procedures, equipment, and regulations used to protect workers from falls.

The titles:

- Fall Protection in The Construction Industry (2824)
- Fall Protection for Residential Type Construction (2824A)
- Fall Protection for Roofing Work (2824B)
- Fall Protection for Structural Steel Erection (2824C)
- Fall Protection for Rebar and Concrete Formwork (2824D)
- Fall Protection Responding to Emergencies (2824E)

For copies of these valuable publications, call the OR-OSHA Resource Center, (503) 947-7447 or (800) 922-2689 (V/TTY) or fax your request to (503) 947-7463. The first copy of any OR-OSHA publication is free. There may be charges for additional copies. ■

Publication Spotlight



“sawmill,” from page 1

“We here at OR-OSHA are very pleased with Georgia-Pacific’s Philomath Sawmill and welcome them into the Oregon OSHA VPP program,” said Sparks. “This is an exclusive group of companies who have made an extraordinary commitment to the advancement of occupational safety and health for the protection of their workers. They are truly the best of the best.” Sparks also commented that the Philomath plant was the first facility to use OR-OSHA’s SHARP consultative services program to help it achieve VPP status. SHARP helps companies draft plans for safety and health program improvement.



James Schwindt, plant manager; David Sparks; Wes Colter, past safety committee chair; Mike Shope, safety committee chair.

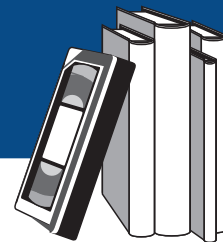


Georgia-Pacific VPP team members raise their VPP merit flag.

Georgia-Pacific plant manager Jim Schwindt added his praise for the sawmill and planer employees: “The time, energy, and commitment they have invested to create a safer work environment have been recognized and rewarded. This is their program and it represents a true team effort.”

Philomath is the seventh in Georgia-Pacific’s lumber divisions to achieve VPP status. “We congratulate Philomath on this achievement and its leadership role in the division,” said Ronnie Paul, executive vice president, Wood Products and Distribution. “We’re committed to the VPP program because it recognizes the efforts of our employees to make safety the foundation for how we operate our facilities.”

For more information about OR-OSHA’s VPP, call Phyllis Straight-Millan, (503) 378-3272, or toll-free in Oregon, (800) 922-2689, or send e-mail to Phyllis.S.Straight-Millan@state.or.us. ■



A Victory Worth Winning

By Don Harris, AV Librarian for Oregon OSHA

Is there a word for “nephew-cide”? If not, there should be. But let me start at the beginning ...

One of my roles away from Oregon OSHA is that of “Uncle Donald.” It was in that capacity that I recently found myself at a baseball game, with, of course, “The Nephews.” There, we happened to run into my long-lost cousin, Susan. Susan and her husband have owned and operated a successful construction business for several years.

Now, whatever my nephew Payton’s intentions might be, his skill as a diplomat leaves something to be desired. The first words out of his mouth were, “Hi, Susan! Susan, do you like OSHA?”

To her lasting credit, Susan was candid. With an expression not unlike that of one who has just eaten moldy cheese, she said, “OSHA?! Are you kidding? Who would? OSHA is a pain in the neck!” (Mind you, had there not been children present, I feel certain she would have substituted another word for “neck.”)

Payton waited until just the right moment. Then, with his most angelic smile, he nodded and said, “Uncle Donald works for OSHA.”

Poor Susan. You should have seen her face. After a lengthy anecdote describing an isolated and not-quite-forgotten encounter with Oregon OSHA, she got right to the heart of the matter. “I’d like to take some workshops,” she said, “but I’m scared.”

Poor me — face-to-face yet again with common misperceptions about OSHA. Obviously, it was time to get on my soapbox. What follows is an abbreviated version of my “speech.”

I can’t tell you how many more-or-less furtive phone calls I still get from anonymous people, who want to borrow videos from the AV Library, but are afraid that if they do, a compliance officer will be at their doors. That is simply untrue. Nor will someone be “targeted” if they take a workshop, arrange a consultation, or apply for a grant from Oregon OSHA. Barring a situation where there is a clear and imminent danger of serious injury or death, the various sections of Oregon OSHA do not pass organization or individual names to the enforcement section.

Let me be very plain: Using Oregon OSHA’s resources and services does not mean that you will be “targeted” by enforcement.

Those who most fear a visit from enforcement tend to be the people who have experienced it least — people who have **never** had contact with Oregon OSHA’s enforcement section. Many people who have had such contact are pleasantly surprised. Here are some fairly typical comments:

“An OSHA representative visited us on May 31 ... Ted McDermand. We appreciated his professional conduct, his focus on education and his sense of humor. He was thorough in his investigation ... but conducted it in a very efficient manner. We appreciated how well he explained

everything before and after the inspection without consuming a lot of our time. On several issues, he promised to do some research and get back to us, which he did promptly. We want to thank you for sending someone of his caliber to do our inspection.” (OR-OSHA Weekly Update, 6/19/00)

To sum up, then: Don’t be afraid to contact us. Don’t be afraid to take a workshop, arrange a consultation, or borrow a video. If an inspector does appear at your door, don’t be afraid! Our resources and services, including enforcement, are here to help you, to advance and improve workplace safety and health for all workers in Oregon.

With that, I concluded my presentation, and Susan and I went on to bewail the fact that our team was losing ...

Our team lost that game, but the “foul ball,” which now sits on my desk, is a kind of symbol of victory. This baseball reminds me that, whatever Payton lacks in tact, he makes up for with speed and agility. More important, it also reminds me of my conversation with Susan. To me, this baseball will always represent the victory of the facts over fear, of perception over prejudice. Whenever someone is able to get past the hesitation and begins to use the resources and services available through Oregon OSHA, we all win. ■

Reserve a copy of the **2001 AV Catalog**. Call (503) 947-7453, or send e-mail to don.j.harris@state.or.us.
You can view or download the current catalog on the Web: www.orosha.org.

Applying OR-OSHA standards to “real-life” situations may not always be “standard” procedure. Sometimes, answers and solutions to problems can be tricky. *Ask OR-OSHA* is a regular feature of *Resource* so that your questions concerning OR-OSHA standards and your business may be answered by experts. So please, *Ask OR-OSHA* by calling the Standards and Technical Section, (503) 378-3272 or e-mailing your question to tech.web@state.or.us. We’ll answer your question(s) as quickly as possible. We’ll also print selected questions and answers in this newsletter so that the answer to your questions may help others.

Q What is the standard for skylight guardrails?

A 1910.23(4), which applies to general industry, requires every skylight, floor opening, and hole to be guarded by a standard skylight screen or a fixed standard railing on all exposed sides.

A fixed standard railing consists of 2-inch by 4-inch materials, a top rail 42 inches above the floor, a midrail located about halfway between the top rail and the floor, and vertical posts eight feet apart, or less. The railing must be capable of withstanding a load of at least 200 pounds applied in any direction. In evaluating any form of skylight protection, the minimum requirement is that whatever is provided must be able to prevent a person from falling through the skylight opening.

In construction, 1926.501(b)(4) requires that unprotected sides and edges of skylight openings six feet or more above a lower level must be protected by guardrail systems, personal fall arrest systems, or by secured covers built with a 2:1 safety factor and marked to identify that an opening is beneath.

Q When is the use of a horizontal lifeline considered to be in compliance?

A Horizontal lifelines used in construction must comply with 1926.502(d)(8), which requires them to be designed, installed, and used under the supervision of a qualified person as part of a complete personal fall arrest system that maintains a safety factor of at least two. A qualified person is someone who, by possession of a recognized degree, certificate, or professional standing, or by extensive knowledge, training, and experience, has successfully demonstrated the ability to solve or resolve problems relating to horizontal lifelines. Horizontal lifelines used in general industry and manufacturing must comply with the fall protection rules located in Division 2, Subdivision I, OAR 437-002-0125.

Q What criteria must be met to field-test a horizontal lifeline?

A When used in the construction industry, a horizontal lifeline is required to be designed under the supervision of a qualified person and is required to be part of a complete personal fall arrest system. It is not required by the standard to be tested. The qualified person is supposed to have the knowledge and training to be able to design a system of adequate strength that complies with the standard. Should testing be desired, the non-mandatory guidelines in 1926, Subpart M, Appendix C may be applied. If a fall-arrest system or any part of it is subject to impact loading (as would happen during testing), then that system or component must be immediately removed from service and inspected by a competent person for any damage and to determine that the system or component is suitable for reuse. A horizontal lifeline used in general industry is required to perform to the standards listed in OAR 437-002-0125 (unless it is used in conjunction with a powered platform for building maintenance, which is covered by 1910.66(i)(2)(j)). The general industry standard does not specifically require that a qualified person design a horizontal lifeline system. Because the standard is performance based and because horizontal lifelines can fail if not designed properly, it is essential that whoever designs such systems be qualified. The note that follows the standard refers to other standards, such as 1926 and 1910.66, which do require that horizontal lifelines be designed under the supervision of qualified persons.

Q How are OR-OSHA personnel trained to recognize the hazards of using horizontal lifelines and how can the public be made aware of these hazards?

A OR-OSHA field personnel are required to attend basic training soon after being hired. Occupational safety compliance officers and consultants attend a personal protective equipment class in which basic fall protection for general industry is taught. Additional instruction in fall protection, including horizontal lifelines, is given to those people who will be working with the construction industry. After completing basic training, OR-OSHA personnel are regularly offered fall-protection classes that include information about horizontal lifelines.

The public may take fall-protection classes offered by OR-OSHA’s Public Education Section or private sources. OR-OSHA has several training booklets addressing fall protection, which are available from the Resource Center. ■

Mark your calendar for the 2001 GOSH Conference

To reach new heights in occupational safety and health, attend the 2001 Oregon Governor's Occupational Safety and Health (GOSH) Conference, March 5-8, at the Oregon Convention Center in Portland. There's something for everyone interested in safe and healthful workplaces.

The conference offers 43 professional development workshops on agriculture, health care, construction, industrial hygiene, emergency response, ergonomics, safety committee issues, incident investigation, communications, safety and health management, and training. You can choose from more than 68 training sessions. The Exhibit Hall will house 200 exhibitors, demonstrating the latest safety and health products and services. The conference will also offer a series of classes for high school students.

Exhibitor's packets are available, and registration packets for educational sessions will be mailed in January. Exhibit booths are still available. For registration prices, which vary according to attendee selections, and for exhibitor information, call (503) 378-3272 (V/TTY) or (888) 292-5247, option 1. Fax requests to (503) 947-7462, send e-mail to Oregon.GOSH2001@state.or.us, or mail them to GOSH, P.O. Box 5310, Salem, Oregon 97304. Include your name, company name, mailing address, phone, and fax.



The 1999 GOSH Conference attracted more than 2,600 safety and health professionals and practitioners from the Pacific Northwest.

The GOSH Conference is a joint effort of the Columbia-Willamette Chapter of the American Society of Safety Engineers and the Department of Consumer and Business Services Oregon Occupational Safety and Health Division. ■

RESOURCE

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Questions?

OR-OSHA has field offices across Oregon. If you have questions or need information, call us, toll-free, (800) 922-2689, or phone one of the offices listed below. (All phone numbers are V/TTY.)

Portland

1750 N.W. Naito Parkway,
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(503) 229-5910
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