

Health and Safety

# RESOURCE

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## Motor Vehicle Safety

p. 6

### Behind the wheel in Oregon

What you should know about crashes, accidents, and the Haddon Matrix p. 11

### Going the Distance

SAIF Corporation: Chuck Easterly p. 21



## RESOURCE

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### Administrator's Message

- 3** Workplace health and safety in 2016

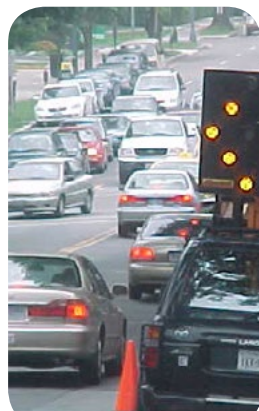
### Don't miss out

- 4** Upcoming events



### Did you know?

- 5** Oregon motor vehicle quick facts



### Features

- 6** Motor vehicle safety – Building an effective driver safety program



- 11** Behind the wheel in Oregon: What you should know about crashes, accidents, and the Haddon Matrix

### Short takes

- 14** Oregon businesses invited to take a 'Safety Break' May 11
- 15** March 1: New speed limits for drivers in Oregon
- 16** PGE Biglow Canyon wind farm earns first-year SHARP award
- 17** Oregon OSHA teams with restaurant industry to achieve safety and health goals

### Safety Notes

- 18** A tractor operator not wearing a seat-belt was severely injured when his ROPS-equipped tractor rolled over

### Ask Technical

- 20** What can I do about nauseating paint fumes?



### Going the Distance

- 21** Meet the Loss Control Manager for SAIF Corporation



# Workplace health and safety in 2016

By Michael Wood

As we begin the new year, those of us who work to make workplaces safer here in Oregon may well take a moment to reflect on our past successes – as well as the challenges that remain before us.

This time of year, I am frequently asked about what has changed . . . what new initiatives we will be pursuing . . . what new safety challenges are arising in the workplace . . . what changes we may be making in how we try to make safer workplaces a reality.

There are, of course, a number of new initiatives on the horizon, both here in Oregon and at the federal level. There are potential new efforts and renewed emphasis in relation to chemical exposures, fall protection in construction, confined spaces, firefighting, dual employer situations, and high voltage transmission facilities, to name just a few. So it would be inaccurate to say that 2016 will simply look like 2015 or 2014.

And yet, much of what we do, we will continue to do. Much of what we do here at Oregon OSHA and in the broader workplace health and safety committee will indeed remain unchanged as the year progresses.

In part, that is because we have a good sense of what works. The fundamentals of workplace health and safety – the need for robust hazard recognition, the need for a supportive system, and the importance of the hierarchy of controls – do not change simply because an old year has passed and a new year has begun.



Oregon OSHA Administrator



And, in part, the lack of a change in focus is because the hazards we place and the problems that contribute to them remain largely unchanged – in some cases, they seem almost intractable. We focus on fall protection because the risks of fall protection remain very real. We have but to glance at the data to see the problem. We struggle with effective lockout/tagout because the failure to control the energy sources of machinery kills and maims workers every year. We pay attention to excavation and trenching because we continue to see to many unshored and unprotected trenches. And their consequences.

**“The fundamentals of workplace health and safety – the need for robust hazard recognition, the need for a supportive system, and the importance of the hierarchy of controls – do not change simply because an old year has passed and a new year has begun.”**

We emphasize logging and construction and agriculture and manufacturing because that is where we find many of the risks that require our attention. And because achieving real and lasting change does not always come easily.

As we look back over the past decades, we have much to be proud of here in Oregon. Those committed to workplace health and safety have made a real difference. But as we look around us today, we know that we have not yet arrived at our ultimate destination. And as we look toward the future we can dream of a day when some of the risks we face today have largely become nothing but memories.

We have done a great deal. But there is much left to do.

# Don't miss out



**SAVE THE DATE!**

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[www.regonline.com/cascade\\_16](http://www.regonline.com/cascade_16)

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### Education:

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Accident Investigation	Salem	3/17/16
	Bend	3/23/16
Confined Space Safety	Salem	3/17/16
Hazard Communication Aligned with GHS	Klamath Falls	3/29/16
Hazard Identification and Control	Bend	3/23/16
Worker Protection Standard	Klamath Falls	3/29/16



For more information: [www.orosha.org/educate/pdf/schedule4.pdf](http://www.orosha.org/educate/pdf/schedule4.pdf)

To access the public education schedule for April-June 2016:

[www.orosha.org/educate/pdf/schedule1.pdf](http://www.orosha.org/educate/pdf/schedule1.pdf)

# Did you know?



**“ Quotable:**  
**The one thing that unites all human beings, regardless of age, gender, religion, economic status or ethnic background, is that, deep down inside, we ALL believe that we are above average drivers.”**

— Dave Barry, *“Things That It Took Me 50 Years to Learn”*



## Oregon motor vehicle quick facts

### Top three driver errors:

1. Failure to avoid stopped or parked vehicle ahead
2. Failure to yield right-of-way
3. Ran off road

### Top three pedestrian errors:

1. Crossing between intersections
2. Disregarded traffic signal
3. Failure to yield right-of-way

### Top three bicyclist errors:

1. Failed to yield right-of-way
2. Disregarded traffic signal
3. Bicycling on shoulder facing highway

*Source: Oregon Department of Transportation, 2014 Quick Facts*

## Oregon OSHA's top 10 rule violations

Rule	Description	Violations
1 1910.1200(e)	Hazard communication: Written program	663
2 437-001-0765(1)	Safety committees and meetings: Committee or meetings required	394
3 437-003-1501	General fall-protection requirements	265
4 1910.1200(g)	Hazard communication: Safety data sheets	210
5 437-001-0765(13)	Safety committees and meetings: Documentation	190
6 437-002-0187(2)	Inspection and maintenance of fire extinguishers	183
7 1910.1200(h)	Hazard communication: Information and training	180
8 1926.1053(b)	Requirements for use of ladders	167
9 1910.305(g)	Wiring requirements for flexible cords and cables	152
10 437-002-0161(5)	Emergency eyewash and shower facilities	132

Source: DCBS, Oregon OSHA top 25 violations report, 2015, preliminary data

# Motor Vehicle Safety

## Building an effective driver safety program

By Aaron Corvin

Laden with diesel fuel, the semi-truck trundling north on Highway 30 in Northwest Portland would never reach its destination.

The commercial vehicle swerved off the road and plowed into a train that was not moving. The collision triggered a blaze that halted traffic, forced nearby residents to stay in their homes, and drew firefighters to the scene. The driver of the truck died.

To some observers, the Dec. 13, 2015, crash might have seemed like a headline-grabbing anomaly – a horrible deviation from the otherwise relatively safe and well-regulated world of driving.

To workplace safety experts, however, the high-profile incident put another exclamation point on a disturbing fact: Motor vehicle crashes remain the leading cause of death among workers in Oregon and the U.S.

Between 2010 and 2014, 136 people covered by the Oregon workers' compensation system died on the job. Highway vehicles accounted for 38 percent of those deaths. Of 47,718 work-related deaths reported by the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics between 2003 and 2011, 17,037 (36 percent) involved motor vehicles.

In 2011 alone, for example, workers' compensation costs related to crash injuries were an estimated \$2.4 billion, according to the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health. And although motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for truck drivers, the institute says such events lead to far more deaths of other drivers. Although such accidents frequently involve multiple human, environmental, and vehicle factors, most, if not all, such accidents are avoidable.

Best practices for protecting workers from injury or death involving motor vehicles are available to employers who are willing to pay attention and to take precautions. What's more, leaders in the public and private sectors are pushing to develop the next wave of safety measures to further boost motor vehicle safety.

### A focus on safety

A variety of government agencies play a part in enforcing the rules of the road. Oregon OSHA focuses on helping employers develop effective driver safety programs. It also enforces several work-related motor vehicle rules, including use of seat belts, driver qualification, and securing cargo.

"Many workplace safety professionals – and the regulatory agencies themselves – have simply relied upon law enforcement to address traffic safety issues," said Michael

**“We certainly don't have all the answers when it comes to safety on the roads, but we recognize that change starts when you ask the right questions.” — Michael Wood**

Wood, administrator of Oregon OSHA. "We here at Oregon OSHA consciously set out to change that approach a number of years ago, recognizing that law enforcement will focus on what happens on the road but may disregard workplace factors and expectations that created the risk in the first place."

But keeping workers safe from motor vehicle hazards isn't just about checking off a box next to a rule and moving on. It also takes self-reflective employers who make motor vehicle safety a regular part of how they do business.


"We certainly don't have all the answers when it comes to safety on the roads," Wood said. "But we recognize that change starts when you ask the right questions."

## Driving might be the most important part of your safety program, especially if your employees spend most of their workday on the road.


### Here are guidelines for employers to build an effective driver safety program:

- **Develop a written vehicle safety policy.** Tell employees, in writing, what you expect them to do as drivers and passengers. Employees should also acknowledge, in writing, that they have read and understood vehicle-safety policies and procedures.
- **Check workers' driving records.** Examine employees' driving records before they get behind the wheel and annually afterward.
- **Investigate accidents.** Make sure all vehicle accidents are properly reported and investigated.
- **Keep vehicles maintained.** Develop procedures that ensure safety inspections and maintenance are done on regular schedules. Employees should immediately report mechanical problems to their supervisors.
- **Reward and discipline.** Recognize employees who have exemplary driving records. Make it clear to employees that those who violate safety policies will be disciplined.
- **Invest in education and training.** Ensure that employees understand vehicle-safety policy and highway safety rules when they are hired. All employees should have the opportunity to regularly update their knowledge and skills.
- **Know the rules.** The Oregon Vehicle Code Book ([www.oregon.gov/ODOT/DMV/pages/form/vehiclecodebk.aspx](http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/DMV/pages/form/vehiclecodebk.aspx)) has the state's requirements for vehicle registration, driver licensing, and rules of the road. Oregon OSHA's motor-vehicle safety requirements apply to general industry, construction, agriculture, and forest activities workplaces ([www.orosha.org/subjects/vehicles.html](http://www.orosha.org/subjects/vehicles.html)).


## Reminders for all drivers




**Wear safety belts:** With limited exemptions, all Oregon drivers and passengers must use safety belts. Vehicle owners must keep safety belts working properly.




**Stay focused on the road:** Using a hand-held mobile device to talk or text while driving is against the law in Oregon. Drivers 18 years and older can use a hands-free accessory.




**Stay alert:** Drowsiness increases your risk of a crash. Signs that you need to stop and rest include difficulty focusing or keeping your head up, frequent blinking or yawning, and drifting in your lane. Get plenty of sleep before leaving on a trip. Drive only during the hours you are normally awake.




**Don't drive impaired:** Alcohol, certain prescription drugs, over-the-counter medications, and illegal drugs can all impair a person's ability to drive safely. Drivers who have a blood-alcohol level of 0.08 percent or more are considered intoxicated under Oregon law.



**Keep your cool:** If you encounter an aggressive driver, concentrate on your driving and make every attempt to get out of the way. Avoid eye contact, ignore gestures and name calling, and refuse to return them.



**Watch out for pedestrians:** Pedestrians have the right of way at all intersections, even those that don't have painted crosswalks.

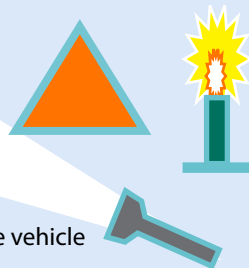


**Secure tools and equipment:** Unsecured and poorly secured items can become airborne and can harm you or your passengers, or those in vehicles behind you. Make sure such items are properly stored and secured – inside and outside your vehicle.

**Consider the following items to prepare for emergencies:**

- Flashlight
- Reflective safety vest
- Light sticks
- Fire extinguisher
- Tire inflator or sealant
- Reflective triangles or flares

Know where the items are stored in the vehicle and how to use them.



Take, for instance, Funtastic Traveling Shows in Portland. On a daily basis, the longtime provider of carnival entertainment in Oregon and Washington carries out safe motor vehicle practices. The company has 64 semi-trucks, racks up some 300,000 vehicle miles annually, and hauls carnival rides of every kind to entertainment venues big and small.

The company maintains a well-oiled process for keeping workers and the motoring public safe. That includes fine-tuning hydraulic controls, conducting walk-throughs to make sure vehicles are sturdy and secure, assigning certain loads to drivers who have the experience hauling them, and keeping extensive safety and maintenance records.



Photo: Craig Hamelund

Mick Smith, transportation manager for Funtastic Traveling Shows in Portland, said the company maintains comprehensive vehicle maintenance and driver safety programs. "We want to be around for a long time," he said.



Moreover, Funtastic keeps its transportation and entertainment operations separate. Drivers focus on safely reaching their destinations. They aren't burdened with the additional tasks of setting up rides and operating them. In this way, drivers get the sleep they need to avoid the hazards of being drowsy while on the road.

"Our drivers just drive," said Ron Burback, president and principal owner of Funtastic. "We are in the transportation and logistics business," he added, punching home the point that Funtastic is as serious about motor vehicle safety as it is about creating family entertainment.



Ron Burback, president and principal owner of Funtastic, said the company keeps its transportation and entertainment operations separate, which helps sharpen the company's focus on motor vehicle safety



Funtastic hauls carnival rides of every kind to entertainment venues big and small.



### A five-year plan

No one agency, company, or person shoulders the responsibility of preventing and reducing motor vehicle accidents. The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) understands that perhaps better than anyone.

Although NIOSH has conducted research on work-related motor vehicle safety for years, the institute only recently intensified that endeavor with the 2010 launch of the Center for Motor Vehicle Safety.

The center aims to strengthen NIOSH's research and prevention activities to reduce on-the-job motor vehicle crashes by bringing together governments, non-governmental organizations, academia, labor, and industry to better identify crash risk factors, develop and evaluate workplace interventions to prevent crashes, and to communicate the results to employers and other stakeholders.

By 2018, the center is expected to achieve multiple goals under its five-year strategic plan. They include providing evidence-based assessments of the effects of long hours of driving and sleepiness on motor vehicle crashes; implementing engineering and technology-based solutions so that prevention does not depend on driver initiative in all situations; and developing a guide to help organizations justify the economic and occupational safety benefits of carrying out a comprehensive motor vehicle safety program.

"Whatever the regulatory environment, the safety of workers who drive on the job is a responsibility shared by many employers, workers, policy makers, vehicle manufacturers, and the research community," NIOSH noted in its five-year plan. "The

efforts of all these stakeholders are critical if we are to make meaningful progress in reducing the burden of work-related crashes."

That's not to say employers must wait for the completion of cutting-edge research before they act to bolster motor vehicle safety. Managing driver safety begins with leaders who remain vigilant and who commit to an effective driver safety program for their employees.

**“We want to be around for a long time” — Mick Smith**

To be sure, it's not easy. It takes grit, mindfulness, and teamwork. "It's a juggling act," said Mick Smith, transportation manager for Funtastic. But the company understands why it's important, for reasons of human safety, financial prudence, and reputation. "We want to be around for a long time," Smith said.

**For more information about national driver and vehicle safety, Oregon's traffic rules, and Oregon OSHA's vehicle-related workplace safety rules:**

**National Highway Traffic Safety Administration: [www.nhtsa.dot.gov](http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov)**

**National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) – vehicle safety: [www.cdc.gov/niosh/motorvehicle](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/motorvehicle)**

**Rules of the Road: [www.oregon.gov/ODOT/DMV/pages/road\\_rules.aspx](http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/DMV/pages/road_rules.aspx)**

**Network of Employers for Traffic Safety (NETS): <http://trafficsafety.org>**

**Oregon OSHA – vehicles: [www.orosha.org/subjects/vehicles.html](http://www.orosha.org/subjects/vehicles.html)**



# Behind the wheel in Oregon: What you should know about crashes, accidents, and the Haddon Matrix

By Ellis Brasch

If you happen to be driving the Interstate 5 corridor in Portland between 5 and 6 p.m. on a Friday, and you're feeling a bit tense, there's a good reason for it. It's a peak time for vehicle encounters of the unwelcome kind: crashes. But crashes happen anytime and the numbers add up. In 2014, there were 51,245 motor vehicle crashes in Oregon, according to the most recent data available from the Oregon Department of Transportation. Those crashes affected 93,526 drivers, 11,954 passengers, 1,074 motorcycle riders, 1,010 cyclists, 927 pedestrians, and 107 occupants of parked vehicles. That's 108,598 people – roughly the entire population of Gresham.

However, when you factor in all the miles that drivers, passengers, pedestrians, cyclists, and motorcycle riders travel on Oregon roads every second of every day, motor vehicle crashes are actually rare events. Consider that there were 1.45 crashes per million vehicle miles traveled on “non-freeway” highways and 0.47 crashes per million vehicle miles traveled on Oregon interstate freeways in 2013.

If vehicle crashes are rare events, why aren't they called accidents? They are, and that's a problem for many safety professionals who say that an accident is a convenient category for describing anything unfortunate that happens by chance. Most vehicle crashes do not happen by chance, however; they can be expected to happen even if the time, place, and precise circumstances cannot be foreseen. The word “accident” has never been graced with a clear working definition, which makes it too easy for people to claim that the accidents that happen to them – or their employees – are beyond their control.



Dr. William Haddon Jr. was not fond of the word accident either. He asked people at his meetings to put a 10-cent fine in a penalty jar each time they used the word. Haddon happened to be an early crusader for safer automobiles and was the first director of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Haddon proposed that people, vehicles, and the environment were all critical to the study of motor vehicle safety. The idea may seem obvious now, but it was Haddon who built these factors into an analytical framework. In 1970, he used the framework to analyze vehicle crashes, and it became known as the Haddon Matrix.

In a **classic 1979 study** (the study's title included the word "accidents" rather than "crashes") conducted at Indiana University's Institute for Research in Public Safety, J.R. Treat and other researchers used elements of the Haddon Matrix to evaluate the causes of vehicle crashes among Indiana drivers. Why was the study important? The study found that human factors caused 93 percent of the crashes; environmental factors caused 12 percent to 34 percent of the crashes; and vehicle factors caused 4 percent to 13 percent of the crashes. And those percentages are still valid today.

In theory, if you can precisely control the human, environmental, and vehicle factors, you can eliminate motor vehicle crashes. In the future, **autonomous vehicles** might do just that, but for now, we will have to settle for softer interventions. That is the approach that the **NIOSH Center for Motor Vehicle Safety** is using in its strategic plan for 2014-2018 to protect workers from vehicle crashes. The center is also evaluating employers' motor vehicle policies and procedures in developing the plan.

**Crashes involving Oregon workers**

The NIOSH Center for Motor Vehicle Safety defines work-related crashes as those that occur on or off public roadways when workers are on the job and events in which a pedestrian worker is struck by a motor vehicle. In 2014, there were 900 Oregon workers injured in crashes that met the definition.

Within those work-related crashes are crashes reported to Oregon OSHA. (As Oregon employers

know, you must report work-related fatalities and catastrophes to Oregon OSHA within eight hours, and all inpatient hospitalizations, amputations or avulsions, and loss of an eye to Oregon OSHA within 24 hours. The requirement includes motor vehicle crashes.) Only a handful of crash-related casualties

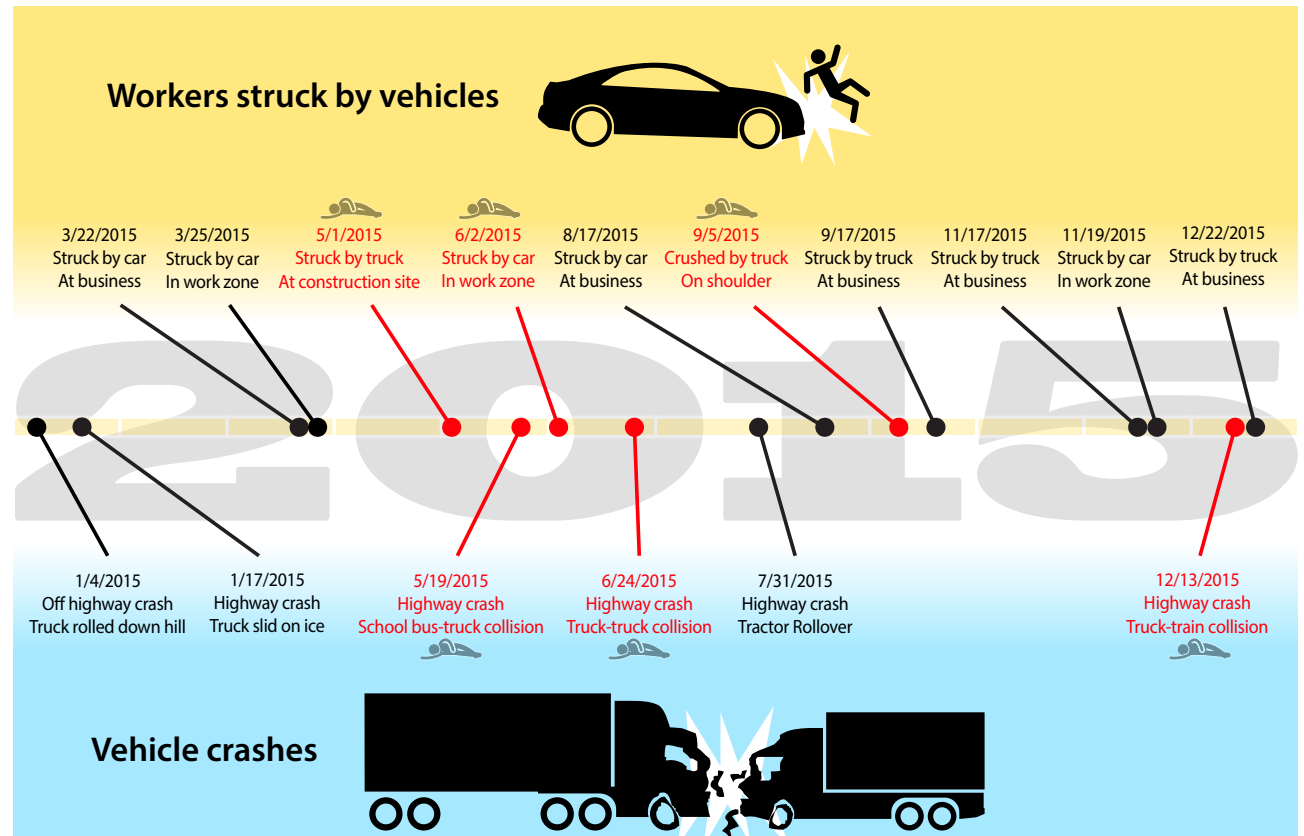
filter through to Oregon OSHA, but the injuries are severe. The number was 16 in 2015.

The infographic shows when they happened. Human factors, environmental factors, and vehicle factors determined how they happened. Here is a summary.

**Worker injuries and deaths involving moving motor vehicles**

Incidents reported to Oregon OSHA in 2015

Deaths are in red



### Workers struck by vehicles: 10 cases

#### Work zone crashes – three cases

**What happened?** In each case, an intoxicated driver crashed into a work zone and struck a worker.

#### Struck by a vehicle, backing up – four cases

**What happened?** These four cases had just one thing in common: the vehicle was backing up.

- A dump truck backed up and ran over a worker at a construction site; employees were following all required safety procedures. It is not known why the victim walked behind the truck.
- A worker was found dead under the rear tire of a semi-truck trailer. He may have been trying to fix an air leak in the brakes when the truck began to roll backward. The case is still under investigation.
- An angry driver at a gas station backed up his pickup truck at high speed and struck an attendant.
- A worker was connecting his truck to a trailer at a busy package distribution center when he was struck by another truck backing up its trailer. Better communication between drivers and more space between vehicles may have prevented the incident.

#### Struck by vehicle, going forward – three cases

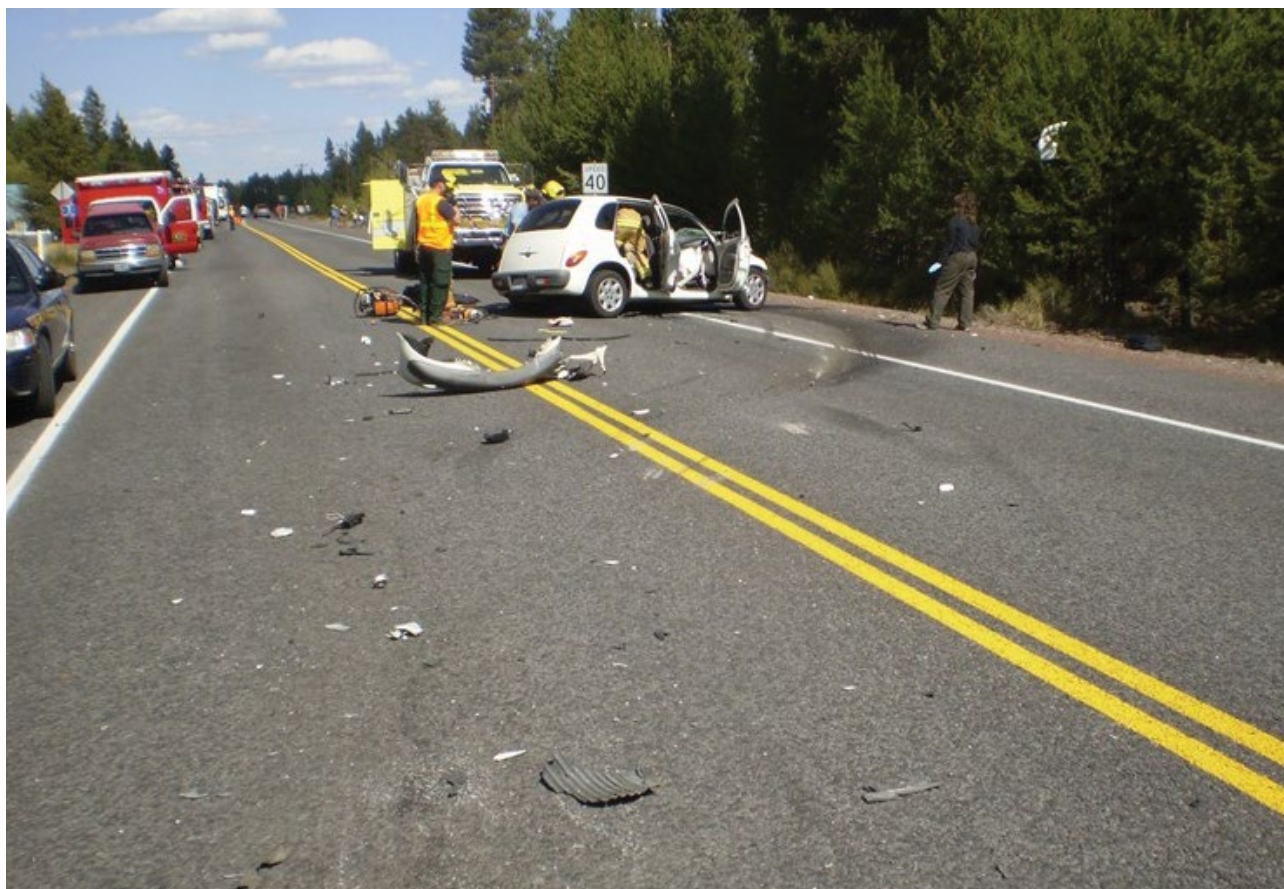
**What happened?** In two cases, the drivers were sitting partially in their vehicles trying to move them slightly when their foot slipped and the vehicles lunged forward. In the third case, a car wash attendant walked in front of a car when it suddenly lunged forward.

### Vehicle crashes: six cases

**What happened?** The fiery truck crash near the St. John's Bridge in Portland on Dec. 13 marked the sixth vehicle crash reported to Oregon OSHA in 2015. It was also the third fatal crash reported to the agency. The other two fatal crashes involved vehicles crossing centerlines. In one of those incidents, a school bus driver died in May when her bus crossed over the centerline and collided head on with a semi-truck. In the other incident, two workers died in June when their work truck crossed over a centerline and crashed head on into a loaded gravel truck. Oregon OSHA did not investigate those cases.

In the remaining three vehicle crash cases, one driver was injured when his truck crashed in a whiteout along a black-iced stretch of Interstate 84, and two drivers who were not wearing seatbelts were injured in separate crashes when their vehicles overturned.

**Note:** Generally, Oregon OSHA investigates a crash only when it appears an employer did not enforce a requirement that would have prevented the incident. Just as police do not cite every driver involved in a vehicle crash, Oregon OSHA does not cite every employer whose employees are injured in crash-related incidents.



# Short takes

## Oregon businesses invited to take a 'Safety Break' May 11

The 13th annual event promotes workplace safety, health

It's a day to pause and reflect on why workplace safety and health matter. It's a day to turn that reflection into sustained action to prevent on-the-job injury, illness, and death.

Employers across Oregon are invited to participate in Safety Break for Oregon, the Wednesday, May 11, event aimed at raising awareness and promoting the value of safety and health in shielding workers from harm. Now in its 13th year, Safety Break encourages employers to bolster workplace safety and health with training, award recognition gatherings, or other creative activities.

Oregon OSHA coordinates Safety Break, which is voluntary for employers. Businesses can decide what activities are most beneficial to their workforce.

"Safety Break is an opportunity for employers to remind their workers, and themselves, about the importance they attach to safety in the workplace," said Michael Wood, Oregon OSHA administrator. "A safety stand-down such as this provides an opportunity to celebrate past successes, to reflect about the remaining challenges, and to share a renewed commitment for the future."

Safety Break encourages employees and managers to work together to identify safety and health concerns. The result of this cooperation can lead to fewer injuries and reduced workers' compensation costs for employers.

Companies that participate will be entered to win one of three \$100 pizza luncheons when they [sign up online](#) by Wednesday, May 4. The prizes will be given to participating companies as part of a random drawing. The Oregon SHARP Alliance is sponsoring the contest.

For more information, ideas on how to host an event, or to download graphics, visit the [Safety Break for Oregon website](#).



## March 1: New speed limits for drivers in Oregon



**O**n March 1, you will be able to shift your motor vehicles into hyperdrive and legally cruise at speeds of up to 70 mph on parts of Interstate 84 and U.S. 95. Thanks to House Bill 3402, which was approved by Oregon lawmakers last year, legal speeds for passenger vehicles will increase to 70 mph and commercial trucks can top out at 65 mph on Interstate 84 between The Dalles and the Idaho border, and on U.S. 95, which runs through southeast Oregon between Nevada and Idaho.

Several secondary highways in central and eastern Oregon will also have speed limits increased, including sections of U.S. 20, U.S. 26, U.S. 95, U.S. 97, U.S. 197, U.S. 395, OR 31, OR 78, and OR 205.

The changes, which bring Oregon up to speed with neighboring states, might make some drivers happier, but safety advocates point out that **raising speed limits leads to more deaths.**

Lawmakers in this country have been trying to adjust the speed-vs.-safety equation for centuries as motor vehicle speeds continued to increase – except for a 13-year period when safety was not the issue. *Do you remember why?* Here is a timeline:

- **June 27, 1652:** The colony of New Amsterdam decreed that “[N]o wagons, carts, or sleighs shall be run, rode, or driven at a gallop...”
- **Aug. 1, 1757:** Boston town records decreed that “no Coach Slay Chair Chaise or other Carriage shall [on Lord’s days] be driven at a greater Rate than a foot Pace...”
- **May 21, 1901:** Connecticut enacted a law that declared, “No motor vehicle shall be run on any highway or public places outside the limits of a city at a speed to exceed 15 miles an hour, and no such vehicle shall, on any highway or public place within the limits of any city, be run at a speed to exceed 12 miles an hour.”
- **Jan. 2, 1974:** President Richard Nixon signed the Emergency Highway Energy Conservation Act, which prohibited speed limits exceeding 55 mph. The reason for the law was not safety but rising oil prices and energy conservation. However, many drivers just ignored the law and most states opposed it.
- **April 2, 1987:** Congress passed the Surface Transportation and Uniform Relocation Assistance Act, which permitted states to raise speed limits to 65 mph on rural interstate highways.
- **Nov. 28, 1995:** President Bill Clinton signed the National Highway System Designation Act of 1995, which repealed the national 55 mph speed limit and allowed each state to decide the maximum speed for motor vehicles.



**Since 1995, 35 states have increased their speed limits to 70 mph or more. On March 1, Oregon will become No. 36.**

## PGE Biglow Canyon wind farm earns first-year SHARP award



*Employees of PGE's Biglow Canyon wind farm gather at the site near Wasco in Sherman County.*

***Portland General Electric Co.'s Biglow Canyon wind farm has received an award for completing its first year of involvement in Oregon OSHA's Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program (SHARP).***

SHARP provides an incentive for Oregon employers to work with their employees to find and correct hazards, develop and implement effective safety and health programs, and continuously improve. The program aims to encourage employers to become self-sufficient in managing workplace safety and health issues.

PGE employs nine people at the wind farm near Wasco in Sherman County. Encompassing 217 turbines spread across 25,000 acres of wheat fields, the wind farm produces an average of 150 megawatts – enough to power an estimated 125,000 homes. The wind farm's peak generating capacity is 450 megawatts.

"The SHARP program is important to us because it is driven and owned by the employees," said Ken Brock, safety coordinator for PGE's generating plants in eastern Oregon and Washington. "It continues to push people to look for something better or think outside the box instead of settling for the 'we are good enough' mindset. You look around in different industries and see so many top-down driven programs, but they just aren't as effective. When a program is owned by the employees it changes the culture, and that's what drives us to a safe and healthy workplace."

"This is a compilation of a lot of hard work by our employees over several years," said Bill Messner, PGE's safety director. "There is a lot of pride among the employees and the company in knowing that they have owned this from the beginning, and together, they are now a part of an elite group of companies that have achieved this significant safety milestone. There's an added point of pride in knowing we're on the cutting edge for achieving SHARP certification at a wind farm."

Currently, about 32 employer locations in Oregon participate in SHARP. That's in addition to about 142 employers that have graduated from the program. An employer becomes a graduate when it completes five years of SHARP.

Oregon employers that have been in business for more than one year are eligible to apply for SHARP, regardless of size or type of business, although the program is primarily designed to help small and mid-size businesses.

For more information about the SHARP program, go online to visit Oregon OSHA's [Consultation and Services Section](#).



*Trena VanDeHey, a field consultation manager for Oregon OSHA, presents Scott Elliott, wind asset manager for PGE, with a SHARP award.*



## Oregon OSHA teams with restaurant industry to achieve safety and health goals

By Aaron Corvin

Partnerships are key to advancing the safety and health of Oregon's workers. Oregon OSHA and the Oregon Restaurant and Lodging Association (ORLA) have forged an alliance to work together to achieve a variety of communication and outreach goals – all with the overarching objective of reducing illness and injury rates among employees in the restaurant industry.

**"Our agreement with ORLA reflects a commitment on their part to use our shared resources to protect workers in the hospitality industry."**

— *Michael Wood*



restaurant and lodging partners have the resources they need to maintain safe workplaces for their employees and customers."

"Employers who are committed to protecting the safety and health of workers don't achieve those goals by going it alone, regardless of the industry," said Michael Wood, administrator for Oregon OSHA, which is part of the Oregon Department of Consumer and Business Services. "Our agreement with ORLA reflects a commitment on their part to use our shared resources to protect workers in the hospitality industry."

"Safety in Oregon's hospitality industry comes first," said Jason Brandt, president and CEO of ORLA. "The term overcommunication comes to mind to make sure our

In seeking to reduce illness and injury rates, the agreement Wood and Brandt signed calls on both parties to increase awareness of hazard communications, electrical contacts, ergonomic issues, personal protective equipment, and slips and falls.

Additionally, Oregon OSHA and ORLA will promote a statewide dialogue about workplace safety and health, with a particular focus on the young and mobile workforce that is emblematic of the restaurant industry.

The communication and outreach goals of the alliance include developing and providing information — in English, Spanish and other languages — to employers and employees in the restaurant industry about how to recognize and prevent workplace hazards; sharing information among Oregon OSHA personnel and industry safety and health professionals about ORLA's best practices; and promoting and encouraging ORLA members to participate in Oregon OSHA's Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program (SHARP) and Voluntary Protection Program (VPP).

Both parties will meet quarterly to share information on activities and results in pursuing their common goals.



Michael Wood, administrator for Oregon OSHA, and Jason Brandt, president and CEO of ORLA, recently signed an agreement to work together to reduce illness and injury rates among employees in the restaurant industry.

# Safety Notes

## A tractor operator who was not wearing a seatbelt was severely injured when his ROPS-equipped tractor rolled over.

The victim was driving an agricultural tractor equipped with ROPS (rollover protection structure) northbound in high gear on a paved two-lane road after he had moved and set irrigation equipment in a nearby field.

While he was driving, the tractor drifted onto the gravel shoulder on the east side of the road. He steered the tractor to the left to bring it back on the road but overcorrected and then turned the tractor abruptly to the right. Because he was not wearing a seatbelt, he was thrown from the driver's seat when the tractor began to roll over. As he landed on the road, his pants caught in the right rear tire between the tire bead and the rim, which pulled them down to his ankles as the tractor went into the ditch.

He managed to find his cell phone and called 911 while he was hanging upside down from the wheel. A passing motorist stopped and used his phone to complete the 911 call to the dispatcher.

Emergency responders took him to the hospital with a fractured pelvis and deep lacerations on his right leg, knee, and arm.

## Accident Report

**Incident:** Tractor rollover

**Industry:** Crop farming

**Employee:** Farm laborer



### Findings

- Employees were not required to use seatbelts when they were driving ROPS-equipped tractors.
- Tractor operators had not been trained before their initial assignment and annually thereafter.

### Violations

- 437-004-3600(3)(a)(B) [Seatbelts], When ROPS were required, the employer did not ensure that workers used a seatbelt while the tractor was moving.
- 437-004-3430(1) [Training for Agriculture Tractor Operators], Training for employees operating tractors was not conducted at first assignment of driving duties and annually thereafter.



**Above:** Emergency responders attend to the tractor driver who was hanging upside down from the tractor's right wheel. The tractor drifted onto the right shoulder and overturned when the driver tried to steer it back to the road. He was not wearing a seatbelt.

**Left:** The driver was thrown from the driver's seat when the tractor began to roll over and his pants caught in the right rear tire between the tire bead and the rim.

# Ask Technical

*What can I do about nauseating paint fumes?*

**Q:** My employer is painting the interior spaces of the building I work in. I had to go home today because the fumes were making me nauseous and giving me a headache. I don't know if it is oil or latex paint. All I know is that it smells very bad. Shouldn't they be painting after hours when employees are not present? What can I do? I don't want to miss any more work.

**A:** While Oregon OSHA does not have a rule that explicitly requires an employer to conduct painting after hours, we do require that every employer evaluate the hazards their employees are exposed to, and take appropriate actions to eliminate or control that exposure.

Your employer must have a material safety data sheet (MSDS) or safety data sheet (SDS) for the paint being used. These sheets provide information about the paint's chemical ingredients, hazards, symptoms of exposure, and protective measures. If an employee requests the information, the employer must provide it by the end of that employee's work shift. As an employee, you have a right to this information. If you continue to have symptoms, you may want to see a doctor about it, and take a copy of the MSDS or SDS with you.

You also have the right to file a complaint with Oregon OSHA's Enforcement Section for any unsafe or unhealthy working condition. You can find more information at [www.orosha.org/subjects/complaints.html](http://www.orosha.org/subjects/complaints.html).



# Going the Distance

## What are your responsibilities and what's a typical day like for you?

I'm responsible for providing the overall strategic direction and technical support for SAIF's occupational safety and health services to our 50,000 policyholders. But more often, I see myself as an ambassador and representative for an amazing group of safety and health professionals here at SAIF. My biggest role is to remove obstacles and continue to equip our team to do what they do best. We have a fabulous group of safety consultants and industrial hygienists who don't need a lot of direction. They need leadership that inspires them and enables them to come join our policyholders as valued business partners to create safer and healthier work environments.

Like most people, I don't have a typical day, but some of the typical issues I deal with include working on cooperative partnerships with other organizations, exploring business systems to help our team be more effective and efficient, developing strategies for how we can expand or enhance our services, working with my team on advancing specific goals and objectives, and being an effective conduit of information between our field staff and our senior leadership team.

**Company:** SAIF Corporation

**Loss Control Manager:** Chuck Easterly

**Workforce:** 949

### What sparked your interest in working in the worlds of safety and workers' compensation insurance, and what do you enjoy most about working for SAIF?

I got into the field of safety through my role as the emergency preparedness coordinator for the Disneyland Resort in 1989. That was a very interesting job, and it enabled me to work alongside the Disneyland Safety Department staff. In those days, that was a very small staff, so I got to quickly expand my knowledge and skills as I worked with safety professionals and was mentored by a great boss. I eventually moved from emergency preparedness to full-time safety work at Disneyland. I was later given the opportunity to manage the workers' compensation department for Disney operations in California while continuing to lead the safety department. When I moved to Oregon, I was able to experience safety from the vantage point of a national workers' comp insurer before arriving at SAIF in April 2002. So, like most people in workers' comp insurance, I didn't set out on a path to get here, but I sure love what I do.

When I left Disneyland, I wondered if I would ever again work for an organization where I would be

surrounded by exceptional people who were so mission-driven. My arrival at SAIF answered that question. I love working with like-minded people who genuinely care about each other, and about fulfilling our vision and mission. Because we insure more than 50 percent of Oregon businesses, we're in a great position to influence the health and safety of the people of this state. And because we're a not-for-profit, state-chartered public corporation, we see it as our responsibility to help make Oregon the safest and healthiest place to work and live.

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— *Chuck Easterly*



Photo: Ron Conrad

**SAIF's vision is to make Oregon the safest state in the nation. What successes would you point to that show we're on the right path to achieving that vision?**

We won't make Oregon the safest state unless we expand our efforts to make it the safest *and healthiest* state. Fulfilling that vision is a long-term process that requires a lot of help. We're not going to do that completely on our own, and we're actively partnering with other organizations that share our vision. So, one of the successes I would point to is our collaborative relationships with groups like Oregon OSHA, the Oregon Institute of Occupational Health Sciences at OHSU, the Oregon Healthy Workforce Center, the Oregon Young Employee Safety Coalition, industry associations, and many others.

Another success is our selection as a National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) Total Worker Health Affiliate. We're the only insurance company in the U.S. to have earned this designation. This designation recognizes the commitment we have made to expand our efforts beyond workplace safety and health to focus on protecting the worker, regardless of where the hazards originate. Our Total Worker Health efforts put us on the leading edge of where the safety and health profession is headed. In the future, when

Chuck Easterly, loss control manager at SAIF Corporation, meets with Safety Representatives Tom Melendy, Courtney Merriott, and Meelisa Arenas to discuss some of their recent experiences in the year-long safety consultant training program they began in September.

we look back on those efforts, they will be seen as being among the most important elements of our vision.

I'm also very proud that our industrial hygiene team is working to better protect worker health by using safer exposure limits when describing chemical exposures instead of relying on outdated and inadequate permissible exposure limits.

Oregon OSHA is working to change some of these standards. In the meantime, every time we discuss workplace health exposures with an employer, we're making sure they are protecting their workers using newer and safer exposure limits from NIOSH or the American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists (ACGIH) whenever the OSHA limits are not as effective.



Photo: Ron Conrad

**In some ways, the work to achieve such an ambitious vision is never done. What are some major hurdles that remain, and what key initiatives are underway to overcome them?**

Oregon is largely comprised of small businesses, and, in many cases, those business owners have limited resources. That often means businesses can't or don't purchase safer tools and equipment. For safety consultants, it's frustrating when we make recommendations for how to perform tasks in a safer or healthier way, but we know the business is in no financial position to act on those recommendations. That's a major hurdle, and we're in the early stages of exploring how to effectively assist these small businesses in overcoming that obstacle. At the same time, we're also expanding some of the resources and services we provide to these small businesses.

Attitudes about safety and risk-taking are another hurdle. Although the safety climate of organizations throughout Oregon and the U.S. is definitely

improving, there are still many people who see injuries as a cost of doing business and being OSHA-compliant as the equivalent of a good safety program. Our safety consultants are now using a model developed by Trevor Ansbro at SAIF to help employers move beyond minimum standards and instead strive for integrated approaches to safety and health that are self-sustaining. This model, called the Safety Culture Spectrum, examines six key areas that are essential to the development of a strong safety culture: safety leadership, accountability, employee involvement, risk and systems assessment, programs/procedures/training, and equipment/budget/environment. The model enables employers to get an accurate picture of where they stand by reviewing statements about these six elements from four different categories (reactive, compliant, managed, or integrated) and selecting the statements that best describe their own efforts. Once they have a realistic picture of where they are on the spectrum, we help develop a plan to help move them toward the integrated side of the scale.



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— Chuck Easterly



### Helping employers build robust safety cultures is no small task. How do you stay passionate about helping to bring about innovation and change, sometimes in the face of status-quo ideas and practices?

I'm a big Steve Farber fan, and in his book, "The Radical Leap," he advises us to "do what you love in the service of people who love what you do." I absolutely love and deeply believe in what we do, and that love generates an energy that fuels my passion. I also see this same level of passion in the people I work with here at SAIF, so it's very hard not to stay energized and excited about what we're doing and what our future holds. We have a great team.

### What advice do you have for other safety and health professionals hoping to make a difference?

I learned a long time ago how important it is that the people I'm consulting with see me as someone who is trying to help them succeed, as opposed to someone who is just telling them what the rules say they can't do. When you become Dr. No, people quit asking for your help. Instead, you need to take the time to understand what they're trying to do and help them find safe ways to accomplish that.



Photo: Ron Conrad