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January 31, 2003

## **Rules Adopted - Division 3/Q, Construction/Concrete & Masonry Construction - Masonry Wall Bracing**

Oregon OSHA was petitioned by the Masonry Institute of Oregon, the Masonry Contractors Association of America, Portland Chapter, and the International Union of Bricklayers & Allied Craftworkers, Local 1 of Oregon, to adopt rules which provide clear criteria for “adequate” bracing of masonry walls during construction. Oregon OSHA proposed to adopt new rules, OAR 437-003-0017, Additional Definitions to Concrete and Masonry Construction, and OAR 437-003-0706, Protection of Employees on or Near Braced Masonry Walls. The new rules, in conjunction with (a slightly modified) 1926.706, in Division 3/Q, Construction/Concrete and Masonry Construction, will provide greater clarity for “adequately braced”, and a higher level of safety to workers constructing or working near braced masonry walls. The criteria in the proposed rules were developed under a work site redesign grant from OR-OSHA.

A public hearing was held on November 25, 2002. In response to comments received at the hearing, and written comments that were received, a small number of changes were made to the original proposal, which include:

- Rules addressing nonreinforced masonry walls were added back into the proposal;
- language was added requiring the bracing system to be designed by a registered professional engineer, or follow the requirements of the proposed standard;
- language was added allowing the possibility of more than one competent person;
- language was changed to require bracing of all masonry walls rather than just structural masonry walls;
- language was changed to indicate that minimum design requirements for bracing “may be” included in blueprints; and
- “length” was changed to “height” in two rules addressing bracing of walls with grout pours.

Overall, the final adoption reflects very few changes from the original proposal.

In order to allow contractors to become familiar with the rules, and purchase needed materials, this standard will become effective three months from the date of its adoption.

This is OR-OSHA Administrative Order 1-2003, **adopted January 30, 2003, effective April 30, 2003.**

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