

RESOURCE

June, July, August (2002)



Work-related deaths in Oregon at record low

Oregon’s workforce reached a multi-decade record low number of deaths attributed to work during 2001. Fatalities directly linked to workplace injuries eligible for workers’ compensation fell to 34 cases in 2001. Last year’s compensable workplace fatalities total is down 25 percent from the 2000 case total of 45 deaths.

“Our mission for workplace safety is making sure that as many workers as possible come home from work at the end of their shift,” says Peter De Luca, administrator of Oregon OSHA. “These low numbers are very heartening and worth noting. They are also a reminder that we can-

not stop educating workers and employers about on-the-job safety and health.”

The Oregon Occupational Safety and Health Division (OR-OSHA) and the agency’s forerunner, the Accident Prevention Division, have been tracking worker fatalities since the signing of the *Oregon Safe Employment Act* in 1973. “We have made incredible progress,” says De Luca. “For instance, in 1973, when the act was signed, we had 144 deaths accepted as workers’ compensation claims. Those annual work-related deaths did not fall below one hundred cases per year until 1980.”

See “*Record Low*,” page 6

Improving worker safety during National Safety Month

June is National Safety Month as designated by the National Safety Council. This annual observance helps focus safety education and injury prevention on four main areas: driver safety, home and community safety, preparedness, and workplace safety. The final week of June focuses on workplace safety and reminds us that safety starts at the top. The theme for the week of June 23-29 is *Workplace Safety Week: Focus on Management Leadership*. Remember that leadership in any workplace activity can come from anyone, not just the CEO. There are a number of ways that managers and supervisors can model behavior that becomes an accepted part of every employee’s daily activities.

See “*Safety Month*” page 6

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Innovative safety committees for workplaces with 10 or fewer employees

By Ellis Brasch, Technical/Research, Oregon OSHA

Effective workplace safety committees can find solutions to problems that cause accidents, injuries, and illnesses. Fewer accidents, injuries, and illnesses lower your workers' compensation costs and insurance premium rates and can increase your profit. Many small-business owners, however, have told OR-OSHA that their safety committees should be less formal and require less paperwork than the safety committees we require for larger workplaces. We agree.

Now you can have a safety committee that meets the needs of your small business and meets the intent of our safety-committee rules – we call it an “innovative safety committee.” If you're an employer in construction, general industry, or agriculture, and your workplace has 10 or fewer employees – including part-time and seasonal employees – you're eligible to participate.

How to participate

To participate, you'll need a copy of our booklet, *Safety Committees: A Guide for Workplaces with 10 or Fewer Employees*. We'll be happy to send you one or you can download a copy from our Web site: www.orosha.org in the “Publication” section. The booklet covers everything you need to do to establish and maintain an effective innovative safety committee. Here's a summary:

Hold weekly safety committee meetings with all your employees

Once a week, bring them together to discuss what everyone can do to achieve – or maintain – a safer, more healthful workplace. Keep meetings brief but effective by focusing discussion on important topics such as the following:

- The week's work assignments: Emphasize hazards involved in work assignments.
- Workplace hazards: Identify new hazards and report on action taken to control existing hazards.
- Safe work practices: Educate employees about the safe practices that apply to their jobs.
- Feedback: Encourage employees to identify hazards and suggest how to control them.

If you have a construction business, you must hold a pre-job planning meeting with the general contractor to discuss workplace hazards. You must also have a pre-job meeting with your work crew to evaluate the hazards, inspect tools and equipment, and review safe work practices.

Take minutes at each meeting

Minutes are the written record of your committee's activities and accomplishments. It's an important task but the innovative safety committee option makes it easier.

You need only record on a one-page form the meeting date, the location, who attended, and a brief summary of the discussion topics. (Forms are included in the booklet.)

Be accountable

Accountability means that your employees know and follow the safe work practices that apply to their jobs; they know how to identify hazards and they're willing to discuss how to control them during weekly safety committee meetings. Accountability also means that you make your commitment to workplace safety and health a company policy, and you require your employees to follow safe work practices as a condition of their employment.

Be involved

Require your employees to attend the weekly safety meetings. Encourage them to report hazards and unsafe work practices. Act on their suggestions and recognize their contributions.

Identify, report, and control hazards

Prevent workplace hazards and unsafe practices by doing the following:

- Ensure that employees know how to recognize hazards and that they understand the basic principles for controlling them.
- Focus on identifying hazards and unsafe practices that are likely to cause serious injuries.
- Conduct thorough walk-around inspections at least quarterly.
- Document hazards during the inspections and discuss how to control them at weekly meetings.

Educate and train

Employees need to understand how they can contribute to achieving and maintaining a safe, healthful workplace. The best time for them to learn is during weekly safety committee meetings. Your employees should know that you have a safety-and-health policy and that you expect them to follow it.

Questions?

If you'd like to know more about the innovative safety committee option for small-business owners, call our Standards and Technical Resources Section: (503) 378-3272.

Administrator's Message



Peter De Luca

There are reasons we celebrate National Safety Month halfway through the year. It's because business tends to pick up during the summer (no matter what the industry) and also, by the middle of the year we have solid report card data on how we did regarding worker safety and health during the year before.

Oregon OSHA gears up for summer the same way your business does. Summer is a busy season for construction, excavation, agriculture, and many other occupations. We also know that Oregon OSHA will have to respond to more worker deaths and injuries in summer than any other season of the year. Why? Maybe people were in too much of a rush, there were too many jobs that day, they were only going to be on the roof for a few minutes Our compliance officers have heard every excuse in the book.

How does \$28,000 sound to you? No, that's not the average fine levied by Oregon OSHA. Recent research shows that is the average financial impact ONE serious workplace injury has on the employer's bottom line. If your business does great during the summer, don't turn your profit into a financial nightmare of losses due to workplace injuries or deaths. Focus on safety, plan ahead, and keep your eyes open when you're at work.

How did we, the safety community, do last year in reducing worker fatalities? Oregon reached an all-time low in fatality claims submitted for workers' compensation. The federal Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries also shows a downward trend — from 111 deaths in 1990 to fewer than 50 last year.

During the past 12 years, working together, we have reduced the workplace injury rate by 43 percent for private-sector employers. Let's celebrate that people are getting the message and that employers and workers are collaborating on worker safety and health. But let's not get complacent and walk away from the continuing need to create a workplace culture of safety and health.

Slow down! Take the time to do the job correctly. That goes for reading this issue of the OR-OSHA Resource, too. We have some great information to share about innovative safety committees, fall-protection for the construction industry (in English *and* Spanish), and how to avoid some common aches and pains from computer-screen use. And take the opportunity to celebrate June as National Safety Month by reminding every person at your worksite that safety is everyone's responsibility. And remember, **BE CAREFUL OUT THERE!**

RESOURCE



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DPR Construction receives VPP Merit Award from Oregon OSHA

DPR Construction, based in Portland, received a Merit Award from Oregon OSHA's Voluntary Protection Program (VPP) in April for its outstanding workplace safety record. DPR serves as the project contractor for the Campus Housing Project at Lewis & Clark College in Portland, a 78,000-square-foot, three-building dormitory complex scheduled for occupancy in August 2002.

Oregon OSHA's Voluntary Protection Program promotes effective safety and health management. Nationally, VPP companies are recognized as leaders in occupational safety and health. To achieve VPP status, a worksite must have a three-year average injury-and-illness rate that is at or below the average for that industry. Additionally, the worksite must undergo extensive Oregon OSHA reviews of workplace conditions, safety records, employee safety-and-health programs, compliance with applicable state and federal regulations, and interviews

with project personnel. DPR features a three-year lost-workday case rate of 0.37 percent, below the national construction industry average of 3.2 percent and well

below Oregon's lost-workday case rate of 5.0 percent for the construction industry. At the Lewis & Clark worksite, DPR did not experience a lost-time injury in 2000 or 2001.

Oregon OSHA's VPP companies are removed from routine scheduled inspection lists for the duration of their participation. Employees lose none of their rights under the program, and Oregon OSHA will still investigate accidents, valid formal complaints, and chemical spills that occur at a VPP worksite. DPR Construction has approximately 95 employees on the Lewis & Clark project. Project management team members at the Lewis & Clark site tailored a safety plan to meet the unique demands of building on the urban college campus.

The Campus Housing Project is registered as a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED)



One of the three new buildings that make up the Campus Housing Project at Lewis & Clark College in Portland.



DPR did not experience a lost-time injury in 2000 or 2001 at the Lewis & Clark worksite.



Peter DeLuca (left) presents the VPP Merit Site Award to Andrei Blaj and Rob Fallow of DPR Construction.

project by the U.S. Green Building Council. "Earth-friendly" practices included removing only those trees within the building's footprint (and protecting existing trees from equipment damage), recycling more than 99 percent of construction-produced waste, and using recycled materials in construction of the building.

For questions regarding VPP, please contact Oregon OSHA's VPP/SHARP program manager, Mark E. Hurliman at (503) 947-7437, or toll free in Oregon, (800) 922-2689. You can find out more about VPP on Oregon OSHA's Web site, www.orosha.org. For an online tour of the Campus Housing Project, go to Lewis & Clark College's Web site, www.lclark.edu.

Central Oregon

Occupational Safety & Health Conference

“Get Hooked on Safety & Health”

September 17-20, 2002

Eagle Crest Resort • Redmond, Oregon

For registration and exhibit information, contact the Conference Section:

(503) 378-3272 or toll-free at (888) 292-5247, option 1

Oregon.conferences@state.or.us • www.orosha.org

A joint effort of Oregon OSHA and the Central Oregon Safety & Health Association



STEP up to SHARP



Cory Stengel, OR-OSHA industrial hygienist, right, presents a SHARP award to Dr. C. Duke Aldridge.

*By Cheryl Mushaney
Administrative Assistant
Consultation and Services Section*

On the Oregon OSHA Web site, www.orosha.org, you will find a list of 70 Oregon SHARP employers. These Oregon OSHA employers have worked with OR-OSHA consultants and their own employees and management staff to achieve the SHARP designation, which indicates outstanding effort to maintain and improve upon safety and health at their worksites. Two of the Oregon SHARP employers have gone to the next level and become VPP (Voluntary Protection Program) employers.

Employers that have recently achieved SHARP status:

- Portland General Electric
Coyote Springs Power Generating Facility
- Bon Appetit Management Co.
- Grant Western Lumber Co.
- C. Duke Aldridge, D.D.S.

Dr. C. Duke Aldridge was so eager to become part of SHARP that he applied before his company had been in

business for the requisite year. His preparation for SHARP participation included purchasing modern equipment to reduce hazards common to dental practices and doing things such as having a contractor remove sharp corners from the cabinetry so the staff would not bruise themselves while working.

While waiting to apply, Aldridge's company did not have any lost-workday cases. ■



Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program (SHARP) second-year certification was awarded to the Snake River Correctional Institution in Ontario on March 27.

Snake River Correctional Institution is the first prison in Oregon to receive second-year certification (Two Rivers Correctional Institution in Umatilla received first-year SHARP certification.) With strong staff, management, safety committee, and union involvement, SRCI is proud of its efforts to continually improve safety within a corrections environment. ■

“Safety Month,” from page 1

Take simple steps. Work on one safety-related item, hazard, or concern and complete the task before moving on to the next. Make safety a team effort just the way you make production and service delivery a priority at your workplace. Report your success at correcting the problem, keeping everyone posted on safety progress improves overall communication.

Get a ‘sense’ for safety in the workplace. Humans are gifted with a number of complex senses that help us explore and fully appreciate life. Make sure that you are helping to protect your sensory world while at work. Is your hearing properly protected at work? How about sight – do you have adequate lighting and frequent breaks from staring at a computer screen? Then there’s touch – are sharp surfaces protected and caustic solvents safely stored and handled? Don’t forget what the nose knows: Monitor your indoor air quality.

Energize your safety committee at work. Oregon OSHA has come up with some innovative ways to make safety committees work, especially for the small-business employer (*See story on page 2*).

Learn and practice basic first aid on the job. Even in a business that has a spotless industrial safety record and that observes safe practices every minute of the day, you will eventually face a medical emergency. Know what to do to in the first critical minutes before Emergency Medical Service crews arrive. It can save a coworker’s or customer’s life. Keep your CPR training current and your emergency kit materials freshly stocked and rotated. ■

Need additional suggestions on workplace safety and health? Contact Oregon OSHA today.

Our ultimate goal at Oregon OSHA is to make workplace safety such a standard part of your daily work routine and business philosophy that you won’t think about safety just one week every year – you’ll do it every day!



Oregon OSHA and its safety partners
are proud to participate in
Safe Workplace Night
at PGE Park
August 5, 2002

as the Portland Beavers take on the
New Orleans Zephyrs in exciting
minor league baseball.

Call 503-947-7428
for additional information about
this fun family-oriented summer event.



“Record Low,” from page 1

Reports from 2001 indicate that transportation and public utilities experienced the largest number of compensable fatalities at seven cases, while government services and logging each experienced five deaths.

The compensable fatalities report tracks only those work-related deaths that are eligible for workers’ compensation coverage and excludes other workplace deaths for those who may be exempt from coverage, such as federal employees, City of Portland public safety workers, workers covered by the compensation laws of other states, and the self-employed.

The federal *Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries* tracks all work-related fatal injuries in Oregon, and that count has experienced a steady decline during the past decade. The preliminary total for 2001 in Oregon is approximately 45 work-related deaths, down from 52 the previous year. *The Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries* report will not be finalized until June 2002.

What the statistical data may not reflect is the human toll. “Every one of those workers leaves behind a family and a crew of coworkers whose lives are forever altered by the loss of this person,” says De Luca. “We need to remember each of these valued people every day and commit to keeping our workplace fatality count in Oregon low.” ■

SAFETY NOTES

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

Accident Report

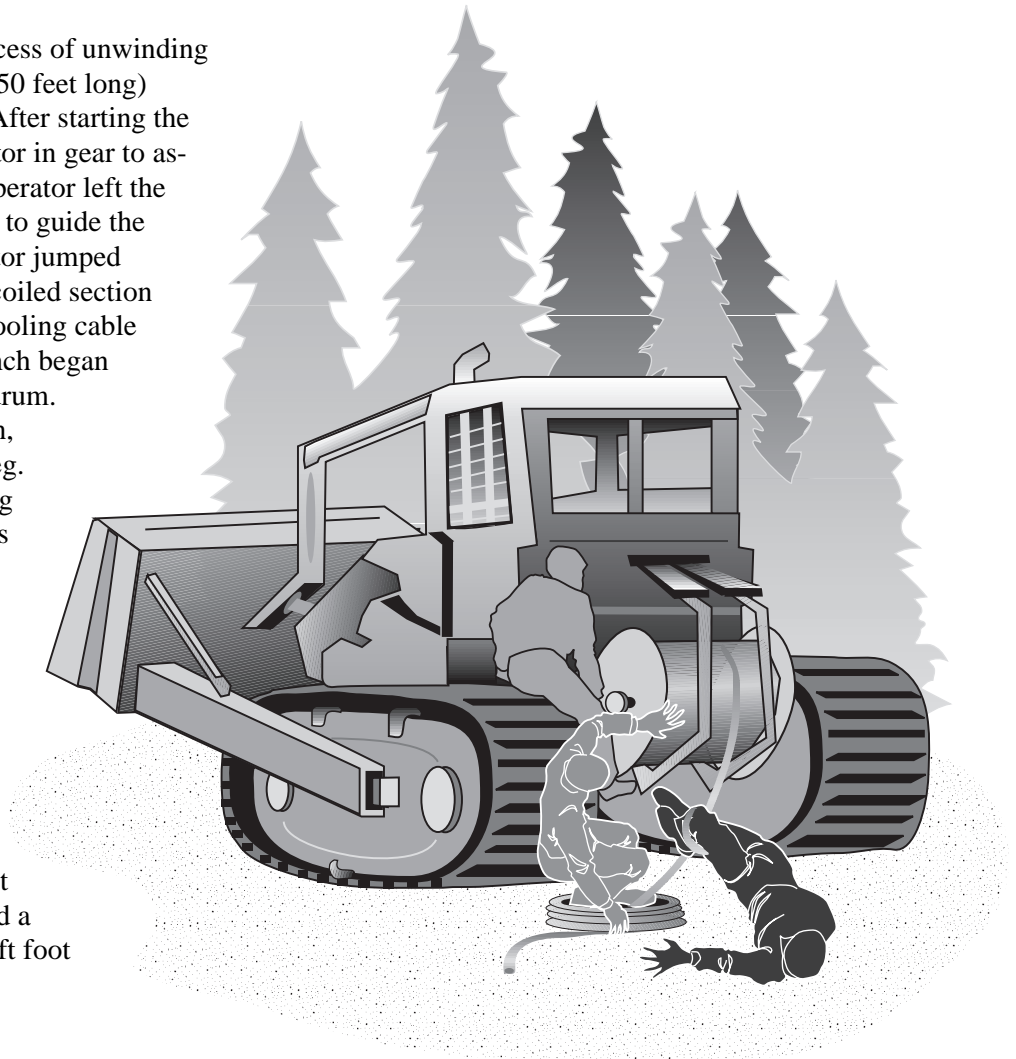
Accident type Foot trapped in winch
Industry Logging
Employee job title Hook tender

Description of accident

The hook tender was in the process of unwinding a haywire (a 3/8-inch wire rope 250 feet long) from the winch of a D-8 tractor. After starting the engine and placing the winch motor in gear to assist in unwinding the cable, the operator left the cab while the engine was running to guide the cable onto the ground. The operator jumped down from the equipment into a coiled section of cable on the ground. The unspooling cable jammed in the winch, and the winch began wrapping cable back around the drum.

The coiled cable sprang to tension, wrapping around the operator's leg. The cable pulled the operator's leg into the winch, severing the man's foot above the ankle and pulling the operator's pants into the winch. The pant leg ripped off, the operator fell to the ground, and he was able to crawl to safety.

The injured man was spotted by a log truck driver who radioed company personnel on site for assistance. Despite prompt attention from EMS personnel and a hospital trauma unit, the man's left foot could not be saved.



Investigation findings

The injured worker left the operator's cab with the equipment running, contrary to manufacturer's recommendations. The worker had not received proper instruction or training for safe equipment operations and safe work practices.

Applicable standards

- OAR 437-006-0260(2)
- OAR 437-006-0260(3)

PROTECCION CONTRA CAIDAS EN LA INDUSTRIA DE LA CONSTRUCCION



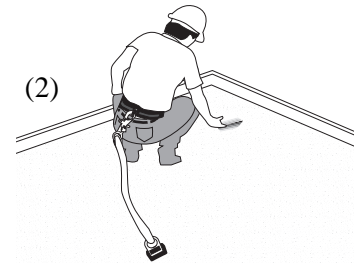
En la industria de la construcción, si un trabajador esta a 6 pies o más de altura (1m 83 cm), y existe el peligro de caer, se deben emplear sistemas de protección contra caídas. Para cierto tipos de actividades en la construcción de tipo residencial tal como el techado, la protección contra caídas se requiere a 10 pies o más de altura (3m 5cm). *La norma de protección contra caídas en la construcción se esta enmendando para requerir protección contra caídas a una altura uniforme de 10 pies o más. Para mayores informes sobre esta y otras enmiendas, llame al (800) 843-8086 (español).*

Los sistemas contra caídas son de dos tipos.



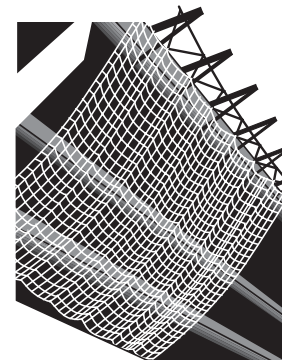
(1)

El primer tipo son los sistemas que impiden que el trabajador caiga a un nivel inferior. Ejemplos incluyen (1) **GUARDARRIELES** y (2) **CORREAS PARA EL CUERPO con CUERDAS DE SEGURIDAD**.

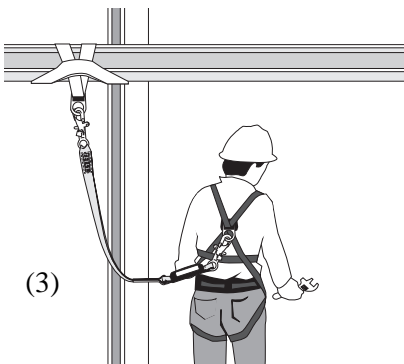


(2)

El segundo tipo son los sistemas que **DETIENEN** las caídas. Estos sistemas previenen que el trabajador pegue en niveles inferiores después de caer. Ejemplos incluyen (3) **SISTEMAS PERSONALES CONTRA CAIDAS** y (4) **REDES DE SEGURIDAD**.



(4)

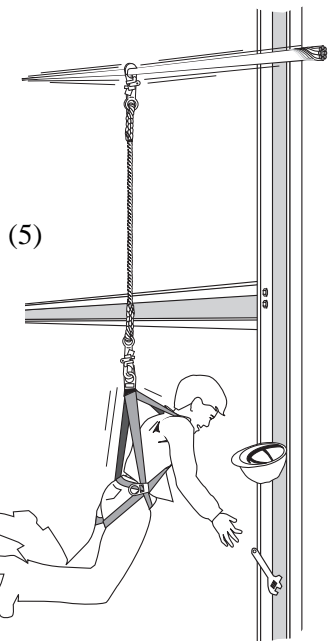


(3)

¿Cual de los dos sistemas es mejor?

El primero, o sea, un sistema que impide que el trabajador caiga a niveles inferiores. Los sistemas que **DETIENEN** las caídas evitan la muerte, pero aún pueden causar lesiones serias por la fuerza de detención (5). Cual sea el sistema que se utilice, debe ser diseñado por una persona calificada.

Un sistema personal de prevención de caídas consta de un **ARNES PARA EL CUERPO COMPLETO, CONECTADORES, CUERDA DE SEGURIDAD, ANCLAJE** y normalmente, un **DISPOSITIVO DE DECELARACION**.



(5)

El contenido de esta plana se es una simplificación de OAR 437, División 3, Subdivisión M de OR-OSHA y no se debe pensar que remplaza la norma en sí.

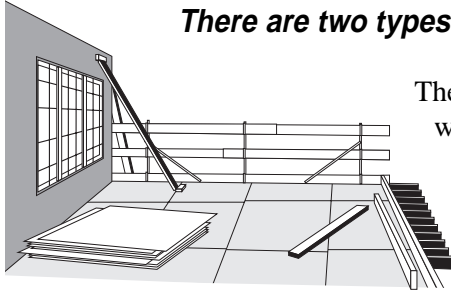
Para mayores informes llame al (800) 843-8086 (español).



FALL PROTECTION IN THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

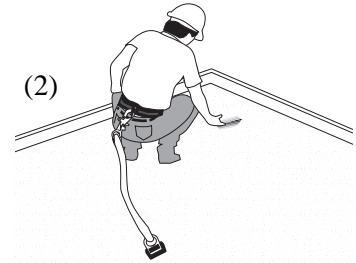
In the construction industry, if a worker is at 6 feet or higher (1m 83cm) and the danger of falls exists, fall-protection systems must be used. For certain residential-type construction activities such as roofing, fall protection is required at 10 feet or higher. *The construction fall protection rule is currently being changed to require fall protection at a uniform 10 feet or higher. For more information about this and other changes, call (800) 922-2689 (English).*

There are two types of fall protection systems.



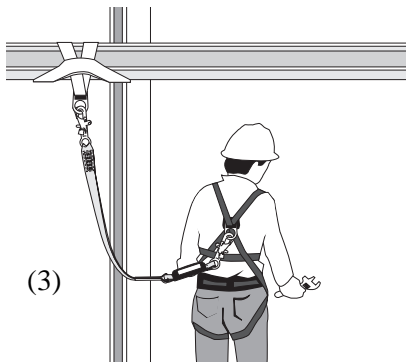
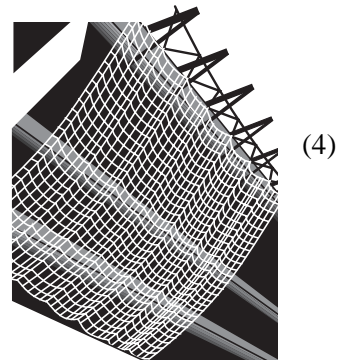
The first type are systems that prevent the worker from falling to a lower level.

Examples include: (1) GUARDRAILS and (2) BODY BELTS with LANYARDS.



(1) The second type are fall ARREST systems. These systems prevent the worker from hitting a lower level after falling.

Examples include: (3) PERSONAL FALL ARREST SYSTEMS and (4) SAFETY NETS.

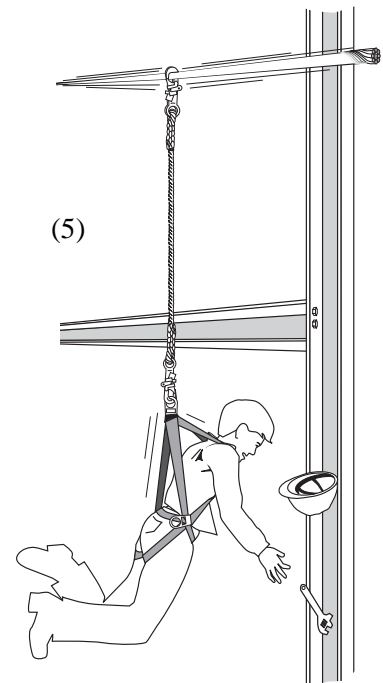


Which of the two systems is better? The first type, a system that prevents workers from falling to lower levels. Systems that ARREST falls prevent death but may still cause serious injuries from the arresting force (5). Whichever system is used, it must be designed by a qualified person.

A personal fall arrest system is comprised of a FULL BODY HARNESS, CONNECTORS, LANYARD, ANCHOR and normally a DECELERATION DEVICE.

The contents of this sheet are a simplification of OAR 437, Division 3, Subdivision M of OR-OSHA and should not be considered a substitute for the actual rule.

For more information call (800) 922-2689 (English).





Russ Reasoner, Oregon OSHA Senior Occupational Health Consultant

By Cheryl Mushaney
Administrative Assistant
Consultation and Services Section
OR-OSHA

The experience of working at Ground Zero has deepened Russ Reasoner's appreciation for humanity. He greatly appreciates having the opportunity to help in some small way at Ground Zero with thousands of other Americans.

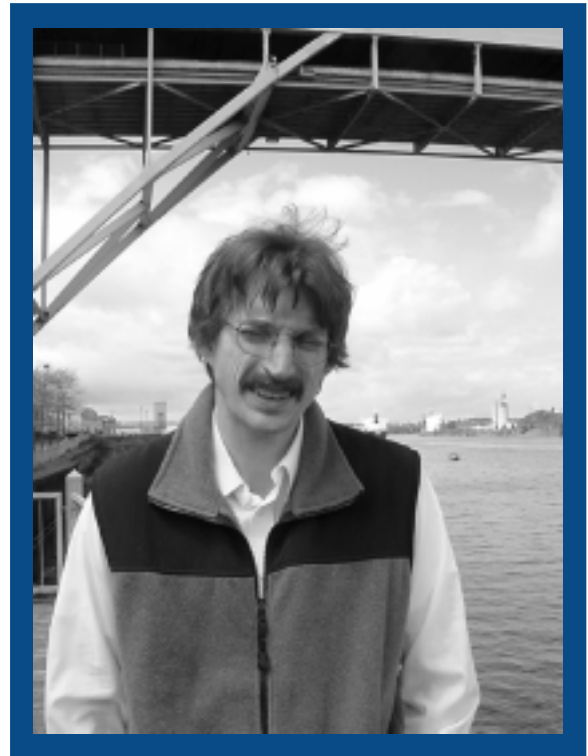
"Seeing Ground Zero was evidence of our vulnerability and tough resilience," says Reasoner. "American citizens need to prepare to deal with potential attacks of terrorism. Planning for these all-too-real possibilities is one way we can strengthen our resiliency and not allow terror to cage our freedom. We need a civil defense, coordinated through a local, state, and national response plan to address at least the possibility of a chemical / biological terrorist attack."

In Oregon, as well as in other states, defense plans on the local and state level are under way. Oregon OSHA is addressing the threat of bio-terrorism with a task force. The task force is finding ways to provide guidance and advice, reduce roadblocks, and establish communications between front line responders and medical personnel.

Reasoner was born and raised in Michigan and for a short time attended Sienna Heights College. Never having experienced the ocean, and wanting to try a summer course in marine biology, he came to Oregon in

1979 to attend the University of Oregon's Oregon Institute of Marine Biology in Charleston.

While attending OIMB, Russ worked on shrimp boats to pay for his return to Michigan, but Oregon's vast ocean, obsidian-colored falls, and rocky deserts caught Reasoner's senses like a strong magnetic field capturing a circling planet. He was captivated by the beauty and diversity. Michigan was no longer home. Wanting to



Russ Reasoner

Russ Reasoner is the second member of the Oregon OSHA team that went to Ground Zero in New York City. Russ kept a journal on his trip to try to paint a picture of his thoughts and experience. You can read Russ' journal, "Humanity From Chaos," on the Oregon OSHA Web site at www.orosha.org.

continue his education in biology and become an Oregon resident, Reasoner attended the University of Oregon in Eugene.

In 1986 Reasoner went to work for Multnomah County Environmental Health in Portland. He graduated from Portland State University in 1988. While taking post-graduate courses at PSU, Reasoner met Mike Rodia, a former Accident Prevention Division employee, who encouraged Reasoner to apply with Oregon OSHA. In 1991 Reasoner went to

work for OR-OSHA's Enforcement Section and, in 1995, he transferred to the Consultation Section.

Reasoner and his wife had a son in 1994. The seven year-old keeps the family hopping. Reasoner and his son started taking *tae kwon do* together last August. When not busy with work, the family explores Oregon, enjoying the vast natural diversity our state has to offer. ■

You've got eyestrain!

How to keep our computer-centered world from being a pain in the neck

By Tia Howell, Oregon OSHA Web coordinator

It's the end of another long work-day spent focusing on a video screen – or is it? Many Americans spend many of their off-hours in front of a video screen, too, relaxing in front of a TV or spending more time in front of a computer. Screens are showing up in cars and soon will be in shopping carts and refrigerators.

It seems we just can't get away from video screens. How can we minimize the stress caused by these unrelenting visual demands?

Fortunately, OR-OSHA has compiled a list of things people can do to reduce the stress on their bodies in it's publication, *Health and Safety Guidelines for Video Display Terminals in the Workplace*. The guidelines incorporate ergonomics, the "science or study of the evaluation, planning, and adapting of equipment and tasks to promote the comfort of the human body for the health and efficiency of workers."

And just because you may be at home, it doesn't mean you are not putting stress on your body! Here are some things you might consider to reduce video-screen stress:

Fatigue: When you're already tired after a long day, focusing on a computer or TV screen can be even more fatiguing. Remember to BLINK and get up! A three-to-five minute break after an hour of intense video work (e.g., e-mail, interactive media, and games – all intense stuff) is recommended. A 10- to 15-minute break from moderate video viewing (hmmm – TV?) is also recommended.

Video source: Hey, somebody adjust that screen! If the video source itself is misadjusted, then your eyes will quickly tire. Make sure the

screen controls are properly adjusted for you, not someone else. Raise or lower that screen so you can view it without tilting your head. If the TV or monitor is too low or high, it commonly causes neck problems. Because most of us

already have enough pains-in-the-neck in our lives, this should be avoided! Clean the screen: Dust can quickly gunk up the screen, reducing the sharpness and brightness of the display, and causing more eyestrain.

Posture: Quit slouching! Poor seating and poorly designed seating areas can adversely affect you, causing physical stress and musculoskeletal strain. Is your seating optimal for comfortable long-term viewing, or is it just the seat closest to the screen? You should be able to face the screen with your lower back well-supported, without twisting or turning, and be able to change your position regularly. Look at your chair or couch: If armrests are too high, your shoulders will be elevated, causing neck- or shoulder-muscle stiffness or pain. Armrests that are too low encourage slouching or slumping to one side.

Lighting: Use indirect lighting wherever possible. Dimmer switches are better for adjusting light levels. If glare is a problem, try placing the screen at right angles to the window and use drapes or blinds to control the level of outside light entering the room. The goal is to maximize contrast and minimize glare while providing adequate light to prevent



you from stubbing your toe.

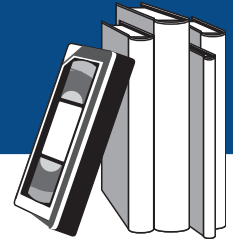
Noise: Turn down that racket! Although computers themselves rarely are noisy, a combination of computer, radio, washer, and the car your neighbors' teenager drives back and forth in front of the house all combine to make a cacophony that makes it hard to focus and increases your stress levels. Try to eliminate one source of noise or move to a less noisy environment.

Adjust your video environment so that you can get the most utility and have the fewest problems. The primary reason your video environment should be ergonomically maximized is because it's for you, and one size does not fit all. Remember, comfort is a personal matter! ■

OR-OSHA offers workplace ergonomic assessments at no cost to employers through its consultation program. You can save yourself and your employees a lot of headaches and other pains by having an ergonomic evaluation of your workplace with one of our ergonomists. Call for a consultation: (503) 378-3272 or (800) 922-2689, toll-free.

The OR-OSHA Resource Center and Audiovisual Library

A RESOURCE FOR PROMOTING
HEALTH & SAFETY IN THE WORKPLACE



Celebrating 50 years of service

by Don Harris, AV Librarian
and Judy Sugnet, Resource Center Coordinator

Visual aids in education have come into greater use during the past few years. It has been found that a message by way of pictures is far more effective than by the straight lecture method. The safety message, too, may be more forcibly told through the use of visual aids. For this reason the Accident Prevention Division has developed a modest safety film library for use in safety educational work. Safety committees and other interested groups may make use of any of the films. The films are for your use – avail yourself of this service.

– Safer Oregon, May 1952

Undoubtedly, times have changed since these words appeared in the May 1952 edition of *Safer Oregon*. Fifty years later, the Accident Prevention Division is Oregon OSHA and *Safer Oregon* is the *Oregon Health & Safety Resource*. The “modest film library” now includes more than 900 safety training videos, and exists as a component of a much larger health and safety resource library created in 1988 when book and document collections throughout the division were brought together.

And yet, the important things remain the same – our mission, for example. OR-OSHA’s mission, to advance and improve workplace safety and health for all Oregon workers, stands in direct continuity with the initiatives created by the people of Oregon in 1911 and 1913 and carried out for many years by the State Industrial Accident Commission. Your OR-OSHA Resource Center and AV Library continue to play an important role in this mission, providing the best safety and health resources available at the lowest possible cost. We could find no better way to celebrate 50 years of continuous service than by significantly improving that service. By the time these words reach you, we expect to have in place the most comprehensive improvements to the OR-OSHA Resource Center and AV Library in many years.

We’re pleased to announce the Oregon OSHA on-line data resource system!

The data resource system is a Web-based system that will allow you to create your own borrower account, update your existing account, review your account history, and check your schedule for future loans. You’ll also be able to search for videos by topic, review the availability of videos, and request specific videos, all from your office or home. And that’s not all! You’ll be able to send us your comments and questions electronically, to submit reviews of specific videos, and to read the reviews provided by other borrowers. And, for the first time, a complete list of books and documents owned by the library will be available and searchable by title, author, category, or language. (Note: Books and documents must be checked out in person at the Resource Center). To use the data resource system, start at our Web site:

www.orosha.org.

The inauguration of this on-line system is indeed an important milestone in our 50-plus years of existence, and we’re grateful to exceptional individuals within DCBS’s Information Management Division for helping to make this long-standing dream a reality. Thanks to their efforts, it is now possible for us to provide on-line access to our resources. We hope that this new system will make it easier than ever for you to promote health and safety on the job.

New systems, new books, new videos, and new safety standards all come into being for one reason: Nothing is more important to us here at Oregon OSHA than helping to ensure that you stay safe and healthy on the job. The 50th “birthday” of our AV Library is important – but not as important as *your* birthday. We don’t want anything to happen at work that would prevent you or your loved ones from celebrating another birthday.

So, help us celebrate *our* birthday by staying safe! Whether you reach us on line or in person, we invite you, as always, to use the many resources available to you through Oregon OSHA. As we were saying back in 1952: “Avail yourself of this service”! ■

Many thanks to OR-OSHA’s Karl Sloan for his research assistance on this article.

For a free copy of the 2001 AV Catalog, call (503) 378-3272 or visit our Web site, www.orosha.org under “Publications.”

Hazardous energy: Should you be concerned?

Do you maintain or repair equipment at your workplace? Do you use equipment that is periodically shut down for service or maintenance? Are you accountable for the safety of workers who do these tasks? If you can answer "yes" to any of these questions, you should be concerned about hazardous energy and you should know how to control it.

What is hazardous energy?

Energy is the capacity for doing work and it's present in many forms. Energy in any form becomes hazardous when it builds to certain levels (potential energy) or when it's released in a quantity (kinetic energy) that could harm a worker. The threat of energy is never far from those who need to service or repair powered equipment – particularly those who think that simply turning the power off makes the equipment safe. Other energy sources or forms may affect the equipment and their activities could release the energy, harming them or their coworkers.

How to control hazardous energy

To control hazardous energy, you have to prevent it from being transmitted from its source to the equipment that it powers. You can accomplish that by doing the following:

- Identifying the hazardous-energy source
- De-energizing the equipment by isolating or blocking the energy source
- Eliminating any potential energy that could affect the equipment
- Locking out the equipment

Identifying hazardous-energy sources

Identify equipment in your workplace that needs periodic service or maintenance. Determine the forms of energy that power the equipment, including potential energy that may

remain when the energy source is disconnected. Label energy sources to help workers know what equipment is powered by each energy source.

De-energizing equipment

De-energizing equipment means isolating it from its energy source and controlling potential energy so that no energy can flow to the equipment. The method you use to de-energize equipment depends on the form of energy and the means available to control it. Common methods include the following:

- Disconnecting motors from the equipment
- Isolating electrical circuits by disconnecting the power source from the circuits
- Blocking fluid flow in hydraulic, pneumatic, or steam systems with control valves or by capping or blanking the lines
- Blocking equipment parts that could be moved by gravity

Eliminating potential energy

Potential energy must be controlled after equipment has been de-energized. Capacitors, coiled springs, elevated machine members, rotating flywheels, and air, gas, steam, chemical, and water systems are sources of hazardous potential energy. If the energy could return to a hazardous level, make sure that it remains isolated from the equipment until all service work is finished.

- Vent pressurized fluids until internal pressure levels reach atmospheric levels.
- Discharge capacitors by grounding them.
- Release or block tensioned springs.
- Ensure that all moving parts have stopped completely.

Locking out equipment

The most effective way to ensure that no one will release energy that could cause equipment to start or

move unexpectedly, is to lock out the equipment's energy-isolating device. An energy-isolating device can be locked out if it has a hasp that accepts a lock or if it has a locking mechanism built into it. Examples of energy-isolating devices include manually operated electrical circuit breakers, main disconnect switches, and line valves and blocks.

A lockout device, usually a lock with a unique key or combination, secures the energy-isolating device in a safe position; the equipment it controls will not work until the lockout device is removed.

Traditional and group lockout

Under traditional lockout, each employee locks out an energy-isolating device before beginning service work then removes that lock after completing the work. However, service work on equipment that involves several employees and several energy-isolating devices can make traditional lockout complicated.

When a group of employees needs to service equipment that has multiple energy-isolating devices, group lockout is usually more effective than traditional lockout. Under group lockout, just one employee in the group assumes responsibility for securing each energy-isolating device, reducing the number of needed locks and making it easier for the other employees to coordinate their work tasks.

Where to learn more about controlling hazardous energy

OR-OSHA's Guide to Controlling Hazardous Energy explains what you need to know and do if you have employees who could be exposed to hazardous energy. Copies are available at our Resource Center (503) 947-7447. The publication is also on the OR-OSHA CD-ROM and our Web site, www.orosha.org. ■

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