

OREGON HEALTH & SAFETY RESOURCE

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Combining booming business and construction safety in Bend

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Oregon workplace fatalities hit new low record in 2005

The number of deaths of workers covered by the Oregon workers' compensation system set a record low in 2005. Thirty-one workers died on the job during 2005, the lowest number reported since the state began tracking the statistic in 1943. That was significantly below the 46 deaths in 2004 and the average of 55 deaths per year in the 1990s. During the 1980s, Oregon averaged 81 deaths per year. The previous record low of 34 was set in 2001.

"While we are pleased that more workers are returning home safely to their families at the end of the work day, there is still much work to do," said Cory Streisinger, director of the Department of Consumer & Business Services. "Employers, workers, and government must stay focused on workplace safety and health so that the number of deaths at work continues to decline."

A total of nine deaths involved on-road motor vehicle accidents, making it the largest single category of fatalities. The industry with the most deaths (eight) was agriculture, forestry, and fishing. The oldest worker to die was a 71-year-old equipment operator whose road grader overturned. The youngest

worker was an 18-year-old logging skidder operator who died when he fell off a skidder and was run over.

"Oregon's continued success in reducing worker deaths, reflected during recent years, shows that workplace safety and health management programs work," said Michael Wood, administrator of the DCBS Occupational Safety and Health Division. "But the numbers also remind us that the job is far from done. Too many of these deaths are not only preventable, but easily preventable if employers and their employees work together to ensure that workplace risks are reduced and, where possible, eliminated."

The state compiles fatality statistics from records of death claim benefits paid by Oregon workers' compensation insurers during the calendar year. The data reported may exclude workplace fatalities involving self-employed individuals, city of Portland police and fire employees, federal employees, and incidents occurring in Oregon to individuals with out-of-state employers. These individuals are either not subject to Oregon workers' compensation coverage requirements or are covered instead by other compensation systems. Deaths that occur

during a prior calendar year may appear in the compensable fatality count for a later year because of the time required to process a claim.

Complete data on all deaths caused by injuries in Oregon workplaces, regardless of whether they are covered by workers' compensation insurance, are computed separately and reported in the annual Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI) administered by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. The 2005 CFOI report is not expected until the fall of 2006.

The Department of Consumer and Business Services regulates workplace safety through its Occupational Safety and Health Division (Oregon OSHA). Oregon OSHA offers consultation, training, and other technical services to help employers improve safety and reduce costs from workplace injuries. DCBS also administers the state's workers' compensation system and regulates workers' compensation insurers.

RESOURCE

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Cover photo: Franklin Square project under construction in downtown Bend.

Administrator's Message

It's hard to believe I've been at Oregon OSHA for nine months. Hopefully, during the coming months and years I'll have the opportunity to meet more and more of the people who make job site safety a reality in Oregon. For the moment, I'll share what I see as the fundamental role of Oregon OSHA.

The goal we all share is to protect workers in Oregon from workplace hazards that cause death, serious injury, and disease. But how can we at Oregon OSHA best pursue that goal?

We cannot allow our efforts to be limited to the immediate hazards we find when visiting job sites around the state, although that work is important. Oregon OSHA cannot take responsibility for every job site, ensuring worker health and safety on a daily basis. We do not have the resources to take on that role, nor should we. Our job is to encourage workers and employers to fulfill their responsibilities, and to provide them with the tools and resources that they need. This awareness must cover all our activities, including rule making, enforcement, on-site consultation, workshops, publications, and other educational efforts.

We are more than a regulatory agency. If we limit ourselves to regulatory tools and a regulatory model, how can we address the risks that do not lend themselves to regulation? Will we simply turn our back on broad categories of hazards for which we do not have specific rules, relying on rare "general duty" enforcement and disregarding the less clear-cut cases? If we focus on our regulatory identity alone, we will lose sight of broader worker protection goals.

Our purpose is not to issue citations, although citations can be a useful tool. Our purpose is not to tell employers what they have to do, although such education — conducted through rules, publications, workshops, consultations, or enforcement visits — is important. Our fundamental purpose is to encourage employers and their employees to do what needs to be done to eliminate or minimize hazards in the workplace. Only by succeeding at that fundamental purpose can we prevent job-related deaths, injuries, and illnesses.

Professor Mark Moore of Harvard's JFK School of Government has a simple, but useful, reminder of one way to focus our efforts. Moore notes that the primary barriers preventing people from doing what should be done fall into two categories: a lack of capability or a lack of motivation. As we determine the best approach, we need to consider the different situations in which we may find employers: Some employers are both motivated and capable. These employers (to the extent we can identify them) require little attention.

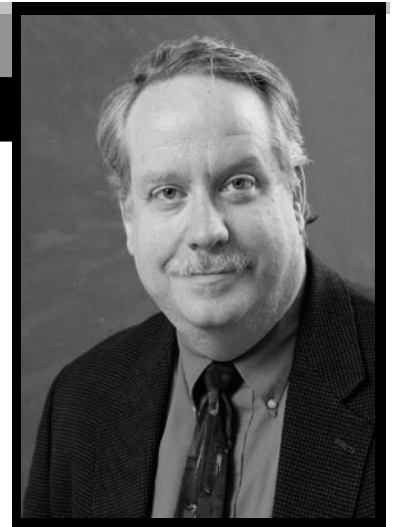
Some motivated employers lack capability. We need to enhance their capability through education, developing or identifying new tools, making other resources available, etc. They may be good candidates for a full-service consultation, not only to identify hazards requiring immediate attention, but also to teach them how to implement effective safety systems on their own. They are not good candidates for traditional sanctions-based rule enforcement designed to increase motivation rather than capability (Done correctly, enforcement visits should include a significant educational component, as well as an evaluation of the employer's safety management).

Some employers, unfortunately, have the capability, but not the motivation. These employers are good candidates for enforcement — perhaps even for significant cases. But even with these employers, there can be benefits to education — not education targeted at improving their capability, but education about the real risk and the costs of injury and illness, designed to increase their motivation and interest in doing what they need to do. Such education can be provided on the job site, by consultants or enforcement staff, or through other mechanisms.

If employers are neither motivated nor capable, does it matter which one we address first? It is likely that an unmotivated student will be a poor student, so our first order of business with such employers is to change their motivation. This will include enforcement (although it is likely to involve only modest penalties, if any, rather than significant cases). And it will include education targeted toward motivation, rather than toward increasing their ability. Once we have helped convince them of the value of workplace health and safety, we can provide them with the education and tools they need to do the job.

As we evaluate different strategies for tackling the worker health and safety challenges that remain before us, we should be prepared to test each of them to see if they will increase motivation, capability, or both. If not, they are not worth investing our resources — or the resources of the employers and workers in Oregon.

— *Michael Wood, CSP*



Michael Wood

Construction boom continues in Central Oregon – and Oregon OSHA is there!

Central Oregon is benefiting from a prosperous economy, and construction contractors are keeping busy with new projects. Oregon OSHA professionals are also in the field, ensuring the



Downtown Bend

On the Web:

Central Oregon Safety and Health Association
— www.cosha.org

Oregon OSHA's Construction Safety topic page —
www.orosha.org/subjects/construction.html

buildings that make up the new face of Deschutes County are built safely.

U.S. Census Bureau data released in 2005 ranks Deschutes County as the 40th fastest-growing county in the nation for construction growth – out of almost 3,000 counties across the United States. Oregon OSHA provides service to central Oregon through a field office in Bend with enforcement and consultation employees. If an employer requests a construction safety consultation, they will most likely receive a visit from Kevin Kilroy of the Bend field office.

“Construction is my whole life, even when I was growing up,” Kilroy says.

The Chicago-born safety professional grew up in a construction family, working as a brick and masonry laborer during summer breaks in school. Following a lengthy career in construction safety management,

Kilroy brought his passion for safety to Oregon OSHA as a compliance officer, then into his current role as a construction safety consultant.

“Residential construction is a hot market in central Oregon but commercial building is close behind,” Kilroy says. “Most of the type of construction we’re seeing, even much of the commercial work, is wood-frame construction, which is a carryover from residential projects; in fact, many contractors are currently doing both.”

Residential construction, though, still accounts for the majority of growth. Deschutes County gained 3,000 new homes in the 12-month period following July 2003, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

“In residential work here we have a lot of new companies and companies coming in from other states,” Kilroy says. “Framing and falls continue to be the biggest hazards in residential work. We zero in on the falls and have come up with innovative ways to keep workers safe. There may not be the huge contracts in residential work as there are in large commercial work, but the hazards are very real.”

Growing too fast?

One of the concerns that many builders may face is suddenly being bombarded with additional contracts. What was previously a two-person construction crew within days can double or triple in size to meet production needs.

“When they do grow into that bigger company and they call to say they want a consultation visit – that’s my chance to tell them to take advantage of the opportunity to do this right,” Kilroy says. “I advise employers to expand on the things they’ve done well as a small team – communication, training, and accountability – and see how that can transfer to a bigger crew.

They will have to do it differently than when they were a small group, but it can be done. The builder can make that paradigm shift.”

Innovative training is vital to helping construction contractors make a paradigm shift regarding safety and health management. Kilroy was among a group of Bend-area safety professionals concerned that the construction industry in central Oregon might develop a less-innovative safety culture than counterparts in more urban regions. In 2001, that led to the creation of the annual Mid-Oregon Construction Safety Summit, a collaborative effort between the Central Oregon Safety and Health Association (COSH) and Oregon OSHA held each January.

“There were some concerns that central Oregon was missing out on some of the innovations in safety that were happening in the Willamette Valley and Portland,” Kilroy says. “That was some of the thinking behind establishing the construction safety summit. The Bend area was little behind back then; and there was no reason for it, except that it was the way business had always been done. The great thing was by drawing the contractors together, a core group was formed and we could learn from each other. I’m in contact with these people each week. The contacts and relationships we’ve built are great, and we can rely on each other as a resource.”

Kilroy stresses planning, communication, improving what you have, and holding employees accountable. Planning a project is crucial; sometimes what seems like a logical shortcut can create an expensive – and perhaps dangerous – solution. Kilroy recalls one visit to a worksite where a builder opted not to rent a piece of equipment, relying instead on people to lift trusses.

“I went out to consult at a residential project that was under way, and the builder wanted me to evaluate his

framing process,” Kilroy says. “Despite being a one-story house, the builder was still encountering heights of 14 feet on some rock outcroppings, but he wanted to figure a way to safely frame the house and raise trusses. Rather than bring a crane in to lift trusses, the builder constructed an elaborate catwalk down the center. One worker would walk the truss into place – 12 feet off the floor – while one worker at each end of the truss guided it into place. The builder asked how to do this task safely. I could see where he was coming from, but when you’re this far along it limits your options.”

“We ended up working out a brackets and scaffolds system for this project as the builder’s concern was paying the crane time to swing all those trusses into place,” Kilroy says. “We did agree that he needed the crane in one dangerous area. Instead, he spent a number of work hours and expense in building that catwalk. Had the builder spent a little more on having a crane swing those trusses in, he could have spent less time dealing with building a catwalk and having three guys manually bring those trusses into place.”

The old saying goes that timing is everything. Kilroy says the same applies to construction.

“I sometimes am asked, ‘How should I do this?’ but they’re already in the middle of construction,” Kilroy says. “If they had taken the extra step of preplanning, before the job started or before they got to that phase, they wouldn’t be in that predicament at all, and they probably could have delivered the contract cheaper. For the next job, that builder now knows the real economy. But for this job, they’re going to have to make the best of the situation. Do the work and do it safely.”

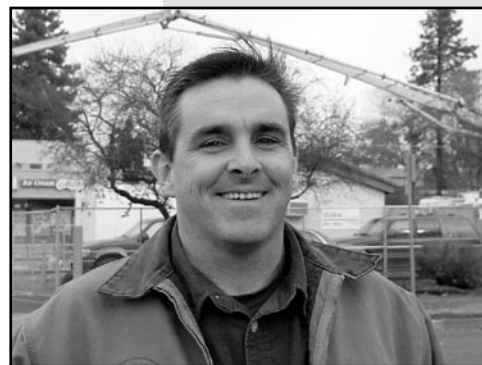
Kevin Kilroy’s recommendations to improve safety on expanding work teams:

Planning. *Think about what you’re doing before you do it.*

Communication. *Talk to your crew about what they have observed about a process and how to do it safely.*

Use the resources *you already have.*

Accountability. *Hold your crew accountable for unsafe practices. Take a stand.*



Kevin Kilroy



Josephine County Property Services — first county operation in Oregon to receive SHARP recognition

Josephine County Property Services Department, based in Grants Pass, joined the Oregon OSHA Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program (SHARP) in February. Of the 109 employers that participate in SHARP, Josephine County Property Services is the first county government department in Oregon to qualify for certification in the program.

During 2004, the Josephine County Public Works Department (as the organization was known prior to a reorganization last July) maintained an injury and illness average that was 15 percent below the state average for county governments.

“Josephine County should be commended for embracing the value of safety and health and working together

to achieve this goal,” said Mark E. Hurliman, Voluntary Protection Program (VPP)/SHARP program manager for Oregon OSHA. “While the average cost of a serious workplace injury in Oregon is about \$43,000, the personal costs cannot be qualified so easily. Every hazard that has been eliminated helps bring an employee home safe and healthy to their family.”

City of Eugene, Weyerhaeuser increase their commitment to SHARP

Two employers entered into formal collaboration agreements with Oregon OSHA earlier this year to expand participation in the Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program (SHARP). Through these agreements, multi-site employers agree to commit resources to the SHARP process, learn how to move their safety and health program forward, and share knowledge among their numerous worksites.

To earn SHARP status, an employer works closely with Oregon OSHA to evaluate current programs, correct safety hazards, and develop and implement safer processes. The goal of SHARP is to help employers implement effective safety and health programs, continuously improve, and become self-sufficient in managing occupational safety and health issues.

The city of Eugene signed a SHARP collaborative agreement in February to coordinate its efforts to achieve SHARP status for fire and EMS services. Eugene’s public safety services currently have one SHARP site, with the potential for up to a dozen more.

Weyerhaeuser announced its entrance into a similar cooperative training agreement on April 25.

“The safety and health of our employees is our number one priority,” said Ernesta Ballard, Weyerhaeuser’s senior vice president of corporate affairs. “The SHARP program recognizes those employers who value safety excellence, something Weyerhaeuser strives for everyday. Because our safety practices already reflect the highest government standards, this agreement was a natural step for us to take in supporting Oregon OSHA’s efforts to improve workplace safety.”

Weyerhaeuser has committed additional resources to meeting SHARP requirements as a part of the agreement. Weyerhaeuser will manage all site preparation for the SHARP application process, which includes evaluating each site’s safety and health program; refining comprehensive safety hazard identification, analysis and control processes; and conducting employee training. Oregon OSHA then will host on-site reviews to determine SHARP status.

Several Weyerhaeuser facilities are involved with SHARP. These include:

- Eugene iLevel Sales Service Center, 24 employees
- Eugene iLevel Veneer Technologies plant, 382 employees
- Junction City iLevel Veneer Technologies plant, 101 employees
- Beaverton Corrugated Box plant, 121 employees
- Beaverton iLevel Sales Service Center, 31 employees
- Beaverton Recycling plant, 70 employees
- Coos Bay Timberlands operations, 30 employees
- Springfield Timberlands operations, 70 employees
- Springfield TOPS, 18 employees
- Wilbur Pole facility, 16 employees

Weyerhaeuser, one of the world’s largest integrated forest products companies, employs 4,600 people across Oregon. The company owns and manages more than 1 million acres of forestland statewide.

GE Security joins VPP safety recognition program

The management and staff of GE Security's Tualatin plant celebrated achieving "VPP Star Award" status from the Oregon OSHA Voluntary Protection Program on May 31. The Voluntary Protection Program (VPP) is a workplace safety and health management program that encourages employers to voluntarily meet rigorous workplace safety standards to protect workers and reduce injuries. Currently, 10 Oregon worksites participate in VPP.

GE Security employs 400 people at its Tualatin facility, which manufactures systems for intrusion and fire detection, access and building control, video surveillance, explosive and drug detection, key management, and structured wiring. During the past three years, GE Security in Tualatin has maintained a workplace injuries and illness average that is 43 percent below the national industry average for manufacturing. The Tualatin site is among 103 General Electric sites across the nation that have either been approved or recommended for approval in VPP or similar recognition programs.

"Our employees have worked very hard and very diligently to earn VPP Star status," said Sarah Heiner, manager of the GE Tualatin plant. "Achieving VPP's standards have proven to be effective in driving superior health and safety performance, and in ensuring 100 percent OSHA compliance and minimizing injuries. I commend our employees and safety teams who have been key in the process to achieve this significant honor."

"As an Oregon VPP participant, GE Security has entered into a new relationship with Oregon OSHA," said Mark E. Hurliman, VPP program manager for Oregon OSHA. "We are partners working together to improve safety and health in the workplace. VPP is growing because it works. The program provides employers with a

blueprint for success by working with Oregon OSHA, and when we work together, we can accomplish incredible things."

VPP is designed to recognize employers that have made an exceptional commitment to workplace safety and health. To achieve VPP status, a worksite must have a three-year average injury and illness rate at or below the rates of other employers in the same industry. The worksite undergoes an extensive Oregon OSHA review of workplace conditions, safety records, employee safety and health programs, and regulatory compliance. The review includes Oregon OSHA interviews with employees.

Evaluators review 19 program elements, including management commitment to safety, employee participation, self-inspection, safety and health training, emergency programs and drills, and preventive maintenance. VPP employers are removed from Oregon OSHA's routine scheduled inspection list for the duration of their participation. Employees do not lose



Oregon OSHA Administrator Michael Wood and GE Tualatin Plant Manager Sarah Heiner proudly display the VPP Star plaque.

any rights under the program. Oregon OSHA still investigates accidents, formal complaints, and chemical spills.

Additional VPP sites in Oregon are AmeriTies West LLC in The Dalles, BOC Edwards Medford Electronic Materials in White City, Georgia-Pacific Toledo pulp and paper mill, Georgia-Pacific Philomath mill, Georgia-Pacific Coos Bay mill, Impregilo-Healy Joint Venture in Portland, Marvin Wood Products in Baker City, PW Eagle in Eugene, and Timber Products Spectrum Division in White City.



Portland hosts 2nd HealthCare Ergonomics Conference in June

Oregon OSHA is among several organizations presenting the second HealthCare Ergonomics Conference, June 26-29 at the Oregon Convention Center in Portland.

"The quality and diversity of the sessions being offered will appeal to a wide variety of health care professionals and leaders," said Lynda Enos, RN, MS, COHN-S, CPE, and chair of the Oregon Coalition for Health-Care Ergonomics. "As in 2004, the conference features speakers from across the United States, Canada, and Australia to share new innovations and ideas about health care ergonomics. The large exhibitor event will be the first in the United States to address a broad cross section of ergonomic needs in health care — from computer workstations, clinical devices, and new technologies in patient handling equipment to housekeeping and material handling equipment."

The conference is presented by the Oregon Coalition for Healthcare Ergonomics (OCHE), Oregon Nurses Foundation, and Oregon OSHA. Feedback from the 2004 session helped conference organizers design improvements for the 2006 conference.

"Several sessions are longer to allow participants to learn in-depth about practical ergonomics solutions that can be adapted to their work environment," Enos said. "There are also special sessions for therapists related to safe patient handling and rehabilitation. We have two keynote speakers who are leaders in the field — they will discuss research that demonstrates there is no safe way to manually lift and move patients or residents."

Enos said one of the most exciting aspects of the conference is promoting the new "Safe Patient Handling and Movement Curriculum" developed through a partnership of the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), American Nursing Association, and Veterans' Administration.

"We are offering nurse educators the opportunity to learn about the new curriculum during a workshop sponsored by NIOSH on June 26," Enos said. "This workshop will be the 'kick-off' event for OCHE to assist nursing schools in Oregon to implement the curriculum."

*The Oregon Coalition for HealthCare Ergonomics
and the Oregon Nurses Foundation present a*

HealthCare Ergonomics Conference



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or (888) 292-5247 option one, or
visit the conference's Web page at
www.orosha.org/conferences.*

Oregon OSHA joins Portland for Safety Awareness Day

The city of Portland presented awards in January to employees and work teams from 10 city bureaus that excelled in workplace safety and health during 2005. The Jan. 25 event, held before a large gathering in the City Council chambers, was the 11th Safety Recognition Day marked by the city.

Michael Wood, Oregon OSHA administrator, and Mark E. Hurliman, program coordinator of OSHA's Voluntary Protection Program (VPP) and Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program (SHARP), presented a special award to Senior Risk Specialists Lonnie Turner and Paul Schulberg for their dedication to promoting the SHARP program within city of Portland bureaus. The city of Portland's Wastewater Group within the Bureau of Environmental Services has been a SHARP employer since 2002, maintaining a three-year average injury and illness rate 50 percent below its statewide industry average.

According to the city of Portland's Bureau of Risk Management, an increased commitment to safety and health resulted in a 45 percent reduction in workers' compensation claims between 1996 and 2005.

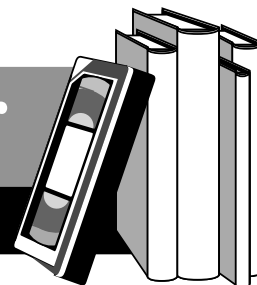
(Left to right) Portland Mayor Tom Potter reads a proclamation recognizing Lonnie Turner and Paul Schulberg's efforts to improve workplace safety in the city of Portland, as Oregon OSHA's Michael Wood, Turner, OR-OSHA's Mark Hurliman, and Schulberg look on.



City of Portland Senior Risk Specialists Lonnie Turner and Paul Schulberg



The OR-OSHA Resource Center and Audiovisual Library



Khaki boxes: reminders of our mission

Jane Kirby, Oregon OSHA Resource Center Library Specialist

A few khaki green boxes with metal-reinforced corners and strong canvas binding are stashed away in the storage room at the Oregon OSHA Resource Center. At first glance, the boxes look like artifacts from World War II. Is it possible? Did these well-worn boxes once hold vital documents shipped to soldiers on the frontline?

In truth, the boxes have a less dramatic but nonetheless important role in history. These heavy-duty containers previously protected 16-millimeter educational films and videos sent to employers throughout the state by the Accident Prevention Division (APD) and Oregon OSHA Resource Center. The center discontinued use of the containers in favor of cardboard mailing boxes a few years ago as shipping practices changed.

Soon the center's collection will undergo yet another change as the AV Library adds its first DVDs sometime this year. Eventually DVDs will replace the collection's videos, as digital technology becomes the format of choice.

One might expect that as technology improves, the cost of library products might be reduced — but that is not the case in the workplace safety and health market. In fact, educational videos still cost substantially more than the latest entertainment films because of the relatively small audience for these materials. For example, while you might buy the latest Hollywood mega-hit for \$19.99 at your favorite big-box store, a video on fall protection or machine guarding might cost \$100 to \$500. We anticipate that this trend will continue as we migrate to DVDs.

The high replacement cost for items in our collection is one of the reasons that Gwen Ottoson, AV librarian, reminds borrowers to take extra special care when returning their materials. "Always pack your videos carefully," Ottoson says. "Use a cardboard box and cushion the items with bubble wrap."

She asks that items not be returned in manila envelopes or other makeshift packing.

"Envelopes just don't provide enough protection for videos moving through the postal or package delivery system," she says.

Another helpful hint from Ottoson: "If you always have trouble finding a suitable box, just remember to keep the package in which your video was delivered. Turn it inside

out, adhere the Resource Center mailing sticker, and it is ready to take to the post office or package courier of your choice."

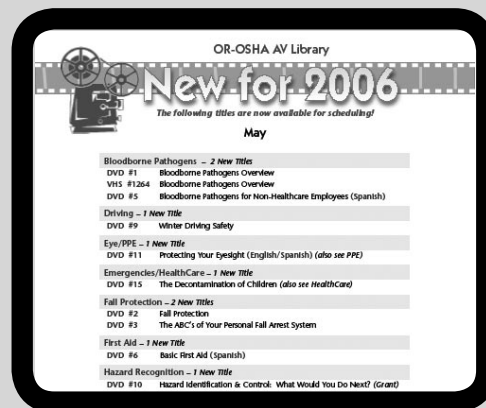
"Remember to use a traceable carrier, such as USPS Priority Mail with delivery confirmation or UPS. Those options provide a tracking number that will be invaluable in case the item is lost in shipment," Ottoson says. "It will provide both of us with peace of mind and, more important, will help protect you in case of loss."

Insurance on your returned package is optional, according to Ottoson. A traceable carrier should provide enough coverage if something goes wrong.

If it is convenient, borrowers are always welcome to return their items in person. The Resource Center, in the basement of the Labor and Industries Building at 350 Winter St. NE on the Capitol Mall, is open weekdays from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m., including the noon hour.

While cardboard boxes have replaced the sturdy containers of years past, the AV Library's mission hasn't changed. In fact, you might even say that the Resource Center has captured the spirit of those old khaki boxes by continuing to provide vital information for troops serving on the frontlines of workplace safety and health.

Look on the Web for titles now available for scheduling!



Visit www.orosha.org and click on the "AV Library" link in the left column to order online.

Questions?

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

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(503) 229-5910
Consultations:
(503) 229-6193

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1140 Willagillespie, Ste. 42
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(541) 686-7562
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(541) 686-7913

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NexCon 2006 Next Generation Construction Summit: *Defining the New Critical Path*

Photo by Kent Anderson



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More information and on-line registration:
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