



# GREAT HEIGHTS

*Roofing company elevates safety*

Cover story | page 4

## Inside:

Eliminating Fall Hazards | page 7

Safety Notes | page 10

Going the Distance | page 18

Join Gov. Kulongoski to celebrate

20 years of success in  
workers' compensation



In 1990, employers and workers developed long-lasting reforms to Oregon's workers' compensation system. Join us as we commemorate this important event.

**Monday, May 3, 2010**  
10:30 a.m. to 12 noon  
Capitol Galleria - Salem, OR

## RESOURCE

**Oregon Health and Safety Resource** is published every other month by the Oregon Occupational Safety and Health Division of the Department of Consumer and Business Services.



### Department of Consumer and Business Services

Cory Streisinger, Director

### Oregon OSHA

Michael Wood, Administrator

### Resource editor

Melanie Mesaros

### Design and illustration

Patricia Young

### DCBS editor

Mark Peterson

Reprinting, excerpting, or plagiarizing any part of this publication is fine with us. Please send us a copy of your publication or inform the **Resource** editor as a courtesy.

If you have questions about the information in **Resource**, please call 503-378-3272.

For general information, technical answers, or information about Oregon OSHA services, please call 503-378-3272 or toll-free within Oregon, 800-922-2689.

If you want to continue to receive the **Resource** newsletter, sign up for future issues at [www.orosha.org](http://www.orosha.org)



# Administrator's message:

## What makes Oregon OSHA unique?

By Michael Wood

**I'm sometimes asked what makes the Oregon approach to workplace health and safety successful. Some factors, of course, result from efforts outside Oregon OSHA. The genuine recognition by employers, trade associations, and worker representatives of the value of injury prevention is just one strength of our overall approach – and it comes from outside government.**

But our efforts in Oregon OSHA have a unique character as well.

We have, for example, a robust on-site consultation program. We also have an enforcement program that maintains the strongest workplace presence in the nation.

We have a relatively unusual approach to conferences, with active public-private partnerships at the heart of every conference we support, from the Governor's Occupational Safety and Health Conference every two years to our newest annual conference, the Blue Mountain Occupational Safety and Health Conference in La Grande. Our conference staff is busy throughout the year, planning and putting on event after event. And many of those events reach out to local employers that a statewide conference simply is not able to reach.

We have a strong public education program, with offerings throughout the state, and we actively search for other venues where we can help bring reality to worker-protection efforts. Our Resource Center is certainly among the best of its kind in the country, with the video library serving employers and workers throughout the state.

And we are known throughout the country's worker health and safety community for the quality of our publications, both in print and Web-based versions. The *Resource* itself is an award-winning publication, and our other publications have received recognition from public relations professionals as well as industry

groups themselves (including the national Homebuilders Association, which recognized our efforts to work with industry to create publications targeted to fall prevention in construction).

When I talk to government representatives and employers from other states, I frequently receive compliments on our publications and on our Web sites. And when a government administrator who is proud of their own publication makes a point of calling ours "the best in the country," that's a compliment I take seriously.

We have worked to make our outreach efforts to hard-to-reach populations more effective. Our PESO program is a national model in reaching those Spanish-speaking workers whose English proficiency is limited. Our award-winning efforts to reach nail salons and their employees, many of whom are much more proficient Vietnamese than in English, are another example of successful efforts to use creativity (again, through the work of a committee including representatives from industry and from other government agencies). And we are an active participant in Oregon's Young Worker Coalition, which is laying the groundwork for future success as these young workers fully enter the Oregon workforce.

Which of these programs – or the many others that space does not allow me to mention – makes Oregon unique? Which of these is the foundation for our success? There is no simple answer. Our success is found in the range of activities, in the variety of tools we bring to bear on the issue of workplace safety. At heart, it is that variety itself that gives Oregon's workplace health and safety efforts their unique character.



Michael Wood, Administrator





## GREAT HEIGHTS

*Roofing company  
elevates safety*

Russell Nicolai (left) and Michael Shilling of Snyder Roofing stand atop the 31st floor of the Mirabella under construction in Portland's South Waterfront.

**By Melanie Mesaros**

**A**t just 19 years old, Michael Schilling had been roofing for a year, a relative newbie. On a rainy day that October, he was working on a shingle roof in Beaverton.

"I was pretty new so I wasn't used to working on steep roofs," Schilling said.

He had hooked up his bracket and tied off so he could start setting up tow boards. Working on the edge of the roof, he noticed it was especially slippery from the rain and granules coming off the shingles.

"I lost my footing and started to slide," Schilling said. "I remember trying to reach behind and find my rope. I couldn't find it so I tried to hook my boots in the gutter. It just shot off and my rope caught. There I was with my shoulders and head just hanging above the roof."

Schilling, now an estimator at Tigard's Snyder Roofing, said that close call is something he'll never forget. Below him on the ground was shattered glass, metal, and other construction debris that could have done serious damage.



"I just started laughing when I was hanging there but once I got down to the ground, that's when I started shaking," he said.

Russell Nicolai, Snyder's safety director, said they encourage employees to talk about near-miss situations like Schilling's.

"In the summer, when we have 150 men on jobs, there is at least one or two near-misses a month," Nicolai said.

It wasn't always that way. Schilling said on the day of his close call, he was the only worker tied off. In the past 15 years, the industry attitude relating to fall protection has begun to shift. Both Schilling and Nicolai agree it could be better, but at Snyder Roofing, it's now a key part of the culture. Employees are first given a verbal warning and could be subject to time off or even termination if they don't wear fall protection when required. Subcontractors also have to work under Snyder's safety program.



Schilling said fall protection saved him from what may have been a life changing fall.



Schilling and Nicolai review how proper fall protection should be used.

Training is a critical part of how that culture was developed at the company.

"You really need to recognize those hazards up front," said Schilling. "The guys we have coming in now, it's second nature."

"It's about the employee's safety and health," Nicolai said. "We want everyone to go home safely. When I think back to Mike, he was just 19. Now he's married with a kid, and that may not have happened if he didn't tie off."

---

**Schilling said on the day of his close call, he was the only worker tied off. In the past 15 years, the industry attitude relating to fall protection has begun to shift. Both Schilling and Nicolai agree it could be better, but at Snyder Roofing, it's now a key part of the culture.**

---





**These images of employees working without fall protection were taken by Oregon OSHA staff during inspections over the past few months.**



# Eliminating fall hazards

by Ellis Brasch

## What is fall protection?

Ask 10 people what fall protection means and you're likely to get 10 different answers. For many in the construction industry, *equipment* is the first thing that comes to mind: personal fall-arrest systems, safety nets, or guardrails, for example. But fall protection is more than equipment.

*Fall protection is what you do to eliminate hazards that cause falls and to ensure that workers who do fall don't die.* Fall protection is a concept that includes:

- Identifying hazards that cause falls
- Eliminating hazards that cause falls
- Training workers to recognize hazards that cause falls
- Using appropriate fall protection systems and methods
- Inspecting and maintaining fall-protection equipment
- Ensuring that employers and employees are involved in preventing falls

## Why we need more than self-confidence to keep us from falling

We need protection because even if we're experienced working at heights, we can lose our balance or grip. We can slip, trip, or misstep. We can fall any time. We may think that our reflexes will protect us, but we're falling before we know it. And we don't have to fall far to get hurt.

We've been falling since Day One. Until we get better at landing, we'll need protection from falling.

## How to identify hazards that cause falls

Look for anything in the workplace that could cause a worker's loss of balance or physical support. Examples of hazards that cause falls:

- A worker walking near an unprotected leading edge trips over a protruding board
- A worker slips while climbing an icy stairway
- A makeshift scaffold collapses under the weight of four workers and their equipment
- A worker carrying a sheet of plywood on a flat roof steps into a skylight opening

Virtually all hazards that cause falls are foreseeable. You can identify them and eliminate or control them before they cause injuries.



During an Oregon OSHA inspection, this employee was demonstrating that he was trained on fall protection and knew how to use it. However, the employee put the equipment on upside down. (Photo credit: Renee Stapleton, Oregon OSHA)



## Real-world falls

Following are four descriptions of serious accidents in which Oregon workers weren't protected from falling. [Source: *DCBS Compensable Fatality Report, January 2007 through December 2008*]

**Fall from ladder.** A painter was working on the second story of an apartment building. When he attempted to exit the second story from a ladder, he *lost his footing* and fell 10 feet to the concrete walkway below. Balconies on the second-floor apartments were not equipped with guardrails, and the worker had no other form of fall protection at the time of the incident. He died the next day from multiple head injuries.

**Fall from ladder.** A house painter was standing on a stepladder painting the exterior trim on a house. The ladder was placed on an *uneven driveway at a slight incline*. He fell from the top of the ladder approximately 10 feet onto the paved driveway. He died in the hospital nine days later from closed head trauma and a neck fracture.

**Fall through roof opening.** A journeyman welder was on a roof welding metal decking to the main roof support structure. During a lull in the work, a carpenter removed three sheets of decking about 60 feet back from the work that the welder was doing. The welder disconnected from his fall protection and walked back to the center of the roof where the panels had been removed. He fell through the *unguarded opening*, 37 feet to the concrete floor below. He died from a cervical spine fracture.

**Fall from roof edge.** A roofer was on top of a residential building when he *lost his footing* near the edge. He fell 17 feet, striking his head on the deck below. He died two months later from multiple intracranial injuries.



This roofing company was cited in Gresham for a repeat violation after it failed to provide its employees with fall protection.

(Photo credit: Abby Burnett, Oregon OSHA)

## How to protect workers from falling

### **Eliminate hazards that cause falls.**

Eliminating hazards is the most effective fall-protection strategy. Ways to eliminate hazards include performing construction work on the ground before lifting or tilting it to an elevated position, installing permanent stairs early in the project so that workers don't need to use ladders between floors, and using tool extensions to perform work from the ground.

**Train workers to recognize hazards that cause falls.** Workers need to know about the hazards they may be exposed to, how to recognize the hazards, and how to minimize their exposure. The best way for them to learn is through training. Effective training ensures that they know about the hazards and can demonstrate how to protect themselves from falling.

**Use appropriate fall-protection systems and methods.** If you can't eliminate the hazards that cause falls, you still need to prevent falls or control them so that someone who does fall doesn't die. For example, you can *prevent* falls by covering floor holes and by using guardrails, perimeter safety cables, or personal fall-restraint systems near exposed leading edges. You can *control* falls



**Above:** This hook cannot close and the rope is starting to fray. (Photo credit: Renee Stapleton, Oregon OSHA)

with personal fall-arrest systems, positioning-device systems, and safety-net systems; use these fall-protection systems only when you can't eliminate hazards or prevent falls from occurring.

**Inspect and maintain fall-protection equipment.** Workers need to pay attention to the condition of their equipment. Be sure they inspect it frequently, keep it clean, and store it properly, and it won't let them down. Each time they use a personal fall-arrest, restraint, or positioning-device system, they should inspect the components for damage or excessive wear. Replace any component that looks damaged.

**Ensure that everyone is involved in preventing falls.** *Employers* are responsible for identifying hazards at the site and eliminating them, preventing them, or controlling them so that a worker who does fall stays safe. *Employees*

are responsible for following safe work practices, using equipment properly, and participating in required training.



**Left:** This employer put nails in the rope to keep it from unraveling, which is an Oregon OSHA violation. (Photo credit: Renee Stapleton, Oregon OSHA)



## Accident Report

Accident type | Caught in/fatality

Industry | Orchard/farm

Employee job title | Farm worker



Once a tractor-pulled harvester gathers the nuts, they are dumped from a short conveyor into a nut bin. The victim had apparently stopped picking up nuts with the harvester machine, got off the tractor, and walked back to the nut bin. He did not turn off the hydraulic system before leaving the seat of the tractor.

The nut bin has two horizontal rotating augers that move the nuts to the rear of the trailer when the bin is close to full. It was not uncommon during the harvest process for workers to reach into the bin, which had unguarded augers, to remove debris such as tree limbs or pieces of wood. A hoe and small rake stored on the tractor were also used for clearing debris.

At the time of the accident, another co-worker found the victim with his upper body face-down in the nut bin. His coat and sweatshirt were wrapped so tightly around the auger and his upper body, it was determined the victim suffocated in the machine.





Nut bin with unguarded augers



Nut bin with guards

## Applicable standards:

### OAR 437-004-1940(5)

The employer did not guard, as much as possible, all moving parts that must be exposed to operate.

## ***Oregon's workplace deaths continued to decline over past decade***

Thirty-one people covered by Oregon's workers' compensation system died on the job during 2009, according to data compiled by the Department of Consumer and Business Services (DCBS).

That total brings the average number of workers who died on the job during the past decade to just below 40 – a significant decrease from the average of 55 workplace deaths per year in Oregon in the 1990s and 81 per year in the 1980s. On-the-job injuries also have been declining in recent decades: the statewide rate of reported workplace injuries and illnesses has decreased more than 50 percent since the late 1980s.

The 2009 fatalities total matches 2005, when there were also 31 deaths. Those figures are the lowest numbers reported since the state started tracking workplace deaths in 1943. In 2008, 45 people died on the job (eight workers were killed in a firefighting helicopter crash), and in 2007, the fatality total was 35. Part of the most recent reduction is likely to be the result of the downturn in the economy, but the statistics for the decade show a continuing and positive trend.

Construction, trucking, and transportation and agricultural industries saw the largest concentration of deaths, with six in each category. Overall, 12 of the deaths were the result of motor vehicle crashes. The numbers show an improvement in construction, where there were 12 deaths in 2007.

"It's always good to see the number of fatalities go down, but we must never forget that these numbers represent real people," said Michael Wood, administrator of Oregon OSHA, a division of DCBS. "Whether 10 or 30 or two workers die on the job, the loss experienced by each fallen worker's family and friends is just as real."

DCBS 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 workers are either not subject to Oregon workers' compensation coverage requirements or are covered by other compensation systems.

The link to the full fatality report is available at [http://www.cbs.state.or.us/imd/rasums/ra\\_pdf/wc/fatal/annual\\_rpt\\_09.pdf](http://www.cbs.state.or.us/imd/rasums/ra_pdf/wc/fatal/annual_rpt_09.pdf).

# ***New workshops tackle silica, lead in construction, workplace violence, and more***

Oregon OSHA has added 11 new classes to its roster of workshops offered across the state. Included in the new offerings are classes on lead and silica in construction, personal protective equipment, ladder safety, root cause analysis, workplace violence, and safety committee problem solving.

Silica exposure is underreported to physicians and employees sometimes do not ask their physician the right questions, said Oregon OSHA consultant Russ Reasoner. That's where training can make a difference for those working in construction. Tile, stone, concrete, and granite, along with popular cement-fiberboard siding material, all contain silica.

"There's plenty of knowledge out there about the dangers of silica but people aren't acting on it," said Reasoner. "Employers have a tendency to not understand or monitor their employee exposure level for silica."

Another new course, Violence in the Workplace, will cover the methods to recognize, evaluate, and respond to risk factors.

"Everyone thinks it won't happen to them," said Senior Oregon OSHA Health and Safety Instructor Linda Pressnell. "Planning can make a huge difference in the way employees react and how companies can recover from a tragedy."



In this photo, lead paint exposure could be a hazard.



This photo shows silica dust created from breaking up concrete.

For the first time, a roundtable approach to learning will be used for the course Safety Committee Problem Solving. Pressnell said class attendees will be encouraged to share solutions and work through real-life issues related to their company's safety committee.

Three new Spanish-language classes on safety meetings and committees, hazard identification, and accident investigation are being added to a growing list of courses to introduce safety concepts to the Latino community.

"We are expanding our Spanish-language offerings to include topics that cover key safety concepts and can be used as tools for reducing injuries," said Senior Oregon OSHA Health and Safety Instructor Tomas Schwabe. "The classes will specifically help safety committee members have a more meaningful impact."

For details on class locations and times, go to [www.orosha.org/education.html](http://www.orosha.org/education.html).



## ***Safety Break for Oregon celebration planned on May 12***

Employers across Oregon are encouraged to celebrate workplace safety and health with award programs, trainings, and other special events during the eighth-annual Safety Break for Oregon on Wednesday, May 12.

Oregon OSHA coordinates the one-day event, designed to raise awareness and promote the value of workplace safety and health.

"My hope is that businesses across Oregon will get involved with Safety Break to celebrate their safety and health achievements, but also to focus attention on problems that aren't solved yet," said Michael Wood, Oregon OSHA administrator. "It's a great time to talk about hazards, host a training event, or promote the value of safety in the workplace."

The theme for this year's event, "Shine a Light on Safety," encourages employees and management to work together on safety and health concerns. The result of this cooperation can lead to fewer injuries and reduced workers' compensation costs for employers.

Companies planning to participate are encouraged to sign up online. For ideas on hosting an event and more information, go the Safety Break for Oregon Web site at [www.orosha.org/subjects/safetybreak.html](http://www.orosha.org/subjects/safetybreak.html).



## ***Fallen workers to be remembered at April 28 ceremony in Salem***

A ceremony to honor those killed on the job is planned for Wednesday, April 28, at noon outside the state's Fallen Workers Memorial in Salem. The names of Oregonians who died in 2009 will be read, and there will be remarks from Oregon OSHA's Administrator Michael Wood, labor representatives, and other officials.

The memorial, dedicated in 2009, was placed on land donated by the state and was paid for by donations. It's located outside the Labor and Industries Building on the Capitol Mall.

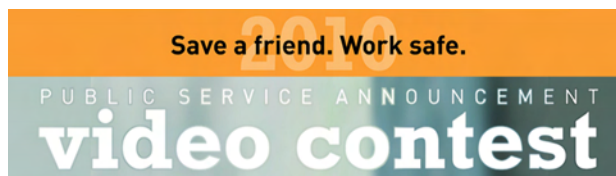
## Cast your vote in safety video contest

A construction prank, a kitchen accident, and a lifting request gone wrong are some of the stories that unfold in the top student videos designed to promote young worker safety and health in Oregon. The seven video contest finalists are now posted on YouTube for voting (sign-in required):

<http://www.youtube.com/user/OregonSafetyHealth>.

The top three entries will take home cash prizes ranging from \$300 to \$500 and will earn a matching amount for their school. The Oregon Young Employee Safety Coalition, Oregon OSHA,

SAIF Corporation, American Society of Safety Engineers, and DHS-Public Health Division, Occupational Public Health Program are sponsoring the contest.



The contest was designed to increase awareness about safety on the job for young people, with the theme of "Save a Friend.

Work Safe." Students were advised to create a 45-second public service announcement based on one of three safety and health categories.

Contest winners will be unveiled at an April 10 screening event at Northern Lights Theater in Salem at 1:30 p.m.

15

Health and Safety RESOURCE | April 2010 |

**4<sup>th</sup> Annual**

# Blue Mountain Occupational Safety & Health Conference

Blue Mountain Conference Center  
La Grande, Oregon

**What Do You See in Your Safety Mirror?**  
Join us to create a crystal-clear image of a successful safety culture!

**Wednesday, June 9, 2010**

A joint effort of the Oregon SHARP Alliance, Oregon OSHA, and employers and employees from Northeast Oregon.

**Questions?** Contact the conference section at **503-378-3272** or visit: [www.orosha.org/conferences](http://www.orosha.org/conferences)

## Ask Technical

**Q:**

***Our company tries to make sure our job site is OSHA compliant. We have been told that the guard needs to be installed on our table saw for all cuts. However, this would make some cuts such as dados and angle cuts impossible on our equipment. Are there any exceptions to this rule?***



**A:**

***Yes, there are exceptions to the rule. The rules regarding guards for table saws vary somewhat, depending on what industry you work in; however, the intent and allowances for all industry requirements are the same.***

The construction rules of Division 3 simply require all woodworking tools and machinery to meet applicable requirements of American National Standards Institute (ANSI O1.1), Safety Code for Woodworking Machinery.

The general occupational safety and health rules of Division 2, specifically the machine guarding rules, allow for other methods when guards cannot be used. For example, the general machine construction requirement says, "Combs (feather boards) or suitable jigs shall be provided at the workplace for use when a standard guard cannot be used, as in dadoing, grooving, jointing, moulding, and rabbeting." It also states, "The provision of a spreader in connection with grooving, dadoing, or rabbeting is not required. However, upon the completion of such operations, the spreader shall be immediately replaced."

The reason for these allowances is because a spreader can only keep the wood spread apart when the cut goes completely through the wood. When you dado or put kerf markings or grooves in a piece of wood, the blade of the saw does not go all the way through. The anti-kick back will work, but it is usually attached at the same location as the spreader. More often than not, the entire safety assembly, including the hood guard, is one piece that attaches at the same location on the saw as the spreader. Usually the safety devices of table saws, by design, are unusable when dadoing or grooving, if the safety assembly is one piece.

In some situations you can use table saws without the traditional guarding that normally come with the saw; although, additional training and special tools are also required. ■



# Cascade Conference in Eugene tackles business aspect of safety and more

**T**he Cascade Occupational Safety and Health Conference, held in Eugene March 9-10, put business incentives for the safety professional into focus.

Keynote speaker Lynne Seville, CSP, delivered strategies and tips on how to make the business case for safety. One key message is to find out how your organization is insured and assure that your underwriters understand the safety programs and processes that are in place.

"What you do with your safety programs can lead to credits in your insurance programs," she said. "I encourage your safety team to put together a power point to show off everything you do."



Lynne Seville was the keynote speaker at the 2010 Cascade Occupational Safety and Health Conference.



Oregon OSHA's Craig Hamelund teaches a workshop on hazard identification.

On the second day of the event, safety leaders in the following categories were honored:

## **Mark Maguire**

– *Safety Professional of the Year*

## **Wildish Construction**

– *Outstanding Safety and Health Program*

## **EWEB**

– *Safety Committee*

This was the 14th year for the biennial conference, which also featured workshops on job hazard analysis, safety leadership and accountability, lockout/tagout, and more.



Conference attendees browse exhibits and the latest safety and health products.

# Going the distance

Meet a leading Oregon health and safety professional



## What is your background and safety philosophy?

I don't really have a background in safety. I graduated from Oregon State University in 2000 with a business degree and since then, I've been working at our nursery. I started from the ground up so I've done most of the jobs here. This experience has probably given me an upper hand with safety. Knowing the work and the risks associated is important for any manager.

I have the pleasure to work with a good group of people. We have an excellent safety committee chairman, Teobaldo Orosco. He's been instrumental in our safety program and our efforts to teach employees about safety. He is a good role model and the workers look up to him. In addition, our safety committee has done a great job of conducting bilingual meetings and bringing their concerns to my attention. Our farm staff has also been a very important part of our success.

Our safety philosophy is to provide a safe and healthful workplace environment for our employees. This is something that is an ongoing process. Safety is important to me and everyone here on our farm. Our goal is that we can come to work in a safe place, work hard, and then go home to our families healthy. That's the main goal at the end of the day.

**Company:** J. Frank Schmidt & Son Co.

**Health and Safety Professional:** Gordy Webster — Hood Acres Farm Manager

**Workforce:** 100-150

**Common Hazards:** Cuts/scrapes, lifting injuries, eye injuries, ankle injuries



### Do you have examples of any current projects with unique safety challenges?

Our most unique challenge has always been our bilingual workforce. All of our safety committee meetings are in both English and Spanish. Many of our farmwide safety talks have to be translated so this takes more time than if it was just in one language.

Our real challenge has been keeping the length of time to a minimum but also keeping the content of the talks worthwhile and relevant. Let's face it, the time we spend on safety talks reduces our production time. This is production time that we seem to always be short on so there needs to be a good balance. However, there is no question that the time we've invested toward safety has paid off. Our improving safety record will reduce workers' compensation costs and help us be more profitable at the end of the year.



Webster talks with Andy Davies (left) and Francisco Garcia about the harvest progress.

### The spring season is likely your busiest time. Does that present any new hazards or issues for workers?

Winter and spring are the busiest times of the year at the nursery. We harvest our trees and put them into storage in the winter. In the spring, we ship them to our customers. The whole process is very labor intensive. At any given time, there are a number of different jobs happening. All of the jobs have unique safety concerns so we do job-specific safety talks with the employees. We go over the things the employees should be thinking about as they work. We do safety talks each week on Monday morning so the crews can be thinking about safety all week.

Every new season brings a new set of safety challenges and things to be watching out for. As we start a new job for the first time of the season, we get the crews together to show them the right technique and how to do the job safely. This gets them off to a good start and it seems to be working.

continued on page 20



A J. Frank Schmidt crew pulls orders of bundled trees from a sawdust storage area. Two people work together to pull the tree out to reduce ergonomic strains.





Cesar Guzman brings a load of bare-root trees to a staging area for shipping.

### Going the Distance, *continued from page 19*

#### Has the tight economy had any impact on your safety program?

No. We budget a certain number of safety dollars per employee. Like any other business lately, our number of employees has gone down but the safety dollars per employee is still there. This has given us the opportunity to continually be creative with our safety program and reward our employees for their extra efforts with regards to safety.

In January 2010, we had a safety lunch to celebrate reaching our goal of two years with no time-loss accidents. We had a nice pasta lunch. I did a safety talk and we rewarded the employees with lunch coolers with our company logo on them. Everyone really liked them and it was a good event. It was well worth the money.

#### What advice do you have for other safety managers hoping to make a difference?

It is important to keep people's attention during the safety talks and trainings. Keep groups small whenever possible. Tailor the talks to the specific jobs for that week. Encourage interaction within the group during the talks. Ask a lot of questions so they are forced to think about the topics.

Safety programs have to be continually changing. For years at our farm, we had been running the same old safety program. We were doing the same old talks and the same old reward program. It became too repetitive and it really wasn't sinking in. When there are new talks and new reward programs, it keeps employees more interested and thinking about safety more frequently. The work is always changing and there is no reason the safety program should be any different.

We have a lot of jobs that require heavy lifting at our nursery so I have really stressed the importance of working together as a team. When someone needs to lift something heavy, they ask for help. This new attitude has reduced our amount of back injuries during the winter. Also, when crews are working together as a team, they are more productive.

Most importantly, make sure employees understand that their extra efforts toward working safe will pay off. We've educated our employees as to how the business operates. We made different pie charts that show the different business expenses. We offer profit sharing so the more we reduce expenses like workers' compensation costs, the more profit we make and can give back to the employees. This is a good incentive for everyone to have their eyes open and keep safety in mind. It has given everyone a sense of ownership in what we are doing and how safely we are doing it. ■



Teobaldo Orosco, the Hood Acres Farm safety committee chairman, plays a key role in helping Webster translate safety messages to the farm's Spanish speakers.