

Health and Safety

RESOURCE

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Resource

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We must do better – we owe it to those we've lost

by Michael Wood

"Mourn the dead, but fight like hell for the living."

– Mother Jones

Each year, as Workers Memorial Day approaches, I find myself reflecting on those we have lost in Oregon workplaces. It's an important reminder that the work we do is real, and that it affects real people and real lives. It's a reminder that what we do matters.

But the last year or two have also provided a reminder that the work we do is far from done. The simple truth is not only that too many people died in Oregon workplaces in 2018, but also that the rate of fatal injury in Oregon workplaces can no longer be relied upon to display a steady downward trend. For years, those of us speaking at Workers Memorial Day ceremonies could acknowledge those who have died and argue that we could do better. But we could also take some limited solace in the reality that the numbers were no longer what they once were – and that we had made progress even in the past five years or so. But those days are gone.

This year, we can say that the number of fatal claims in the Oregon workers' compensation system – one measure of our workplace death rate – remained steady, even as the number of workers went up slightly. But the truth is that the 2017 number was a dramatic increase over the previous year. At best, over the past five or six years, the overall trend is flat. It may even be increasing somewhat. That, to say the least, is not good news.

And it isn't as though we are facing some new set of challenges. The causes of these deaths on the job displays a frightening consistency, year in and year out ... decade in and decade out. We know how to address the hazards we confront. We know the solutions.

So this year, as we look upon the families and friends of those lost on the job, we must do so with renewed energy. We must do so with a renewed commitment.

We must reject complacency. And we must not be discouraged. We must do better, because it is not enough to mourn, it is not enough to remember, it is not enough to acknowledge. We must face forward and confront the challenges that remain. We must fight.

And, in the blunt words of Mother Jones, we must fight like hell! Because we owe it to those whom we have lost, and to those whom they have left behind. ●



Oregon OSHA
Administrator



Don't miss...



Education: April-June workshops

April 23, 2019 • Medford

8 a.m. Safety Meetings and Committees

1 p.m. Accident Investigation

May 29, 2019 • Salem

8 a.m. Lockout/Tagout and
Machine Safeguarding

1 p.m. Job Hazard Analysis

June 19, 2019 • Wilsonville

8 a.m. Safety Meetings and Committees

1 p.m. Accident Investigation



For more information: osha.oregon.gov/edu

For the most recent public education schedule updates: osha.oregon.gov/edu/workshops

To receive registration materials, exhibitor information, or sponsorship information for the 2019 events, contact the Conference Section: oregon.conferences@oregon.gov | 503-947-7411



NORTHWEST SAFETY & HEALTH SUMMIT

May 14-16, 2019

Red Lion Hotel on the River – Jantzen Beach
Portland, Oregon

This summit is designed for all industries and worksites, even if they are not in the Voluntary Protection Program (VPP). Operations personnel, program/project managers, safety managers/coordinators, and safety committee members will benefit from this world-class workplace safety training and networking.

Registration now open!

Visit safetyseries.cvent.com/vpp19 and regionxvpppa.org



The Key to Safety is in Your Hands

June 3 & 4, 2019

Pendleton Convention Center • Pendleton, OR

Keynote by Rob Fisher

Registration now open!

Visit safetyseries.cvent.com/blue19

Safety leadership workshop (June 3)..... **No cost**
Conference (June 4, includes lunch) **\$85**

Watch the Forklift competition on June 3!

The 13th annual event focuses on helping organizations strengthen their safety culture. Topics featured include:

- Safety leadership and communication
- Safety committee series
- Machine guarding
- Root cause analysis
- Forklift safety
- Hot topics in IH
- Safety for supervisors
- Confined Spaces
- ... and more!

Did you know?

Oregon OSHA has launched Spanish-translated versions of three online training courses – [accident investigation](#), [safety meetings and committees](#), and [hazard identification](#) – as part of a larger move to promote the new [Safety Committee Suite](#) to employers and workers.

Completing the three courses that make up the suite – offered in both English and Spanish – satisfies the basic requirements for training safety committee members.

As part of the project, Oregon OSHA restructured the suite's presence on the agency's website to make it easier to find and use. The idea is to strengthen the agency's ability to reach Spanish-speaking members of safety committees, and to hand employers and workers important training resources to help boost workplace safety and health.

[Visit our online courses page](#) to learn about additional learning opportunities.

Quotable

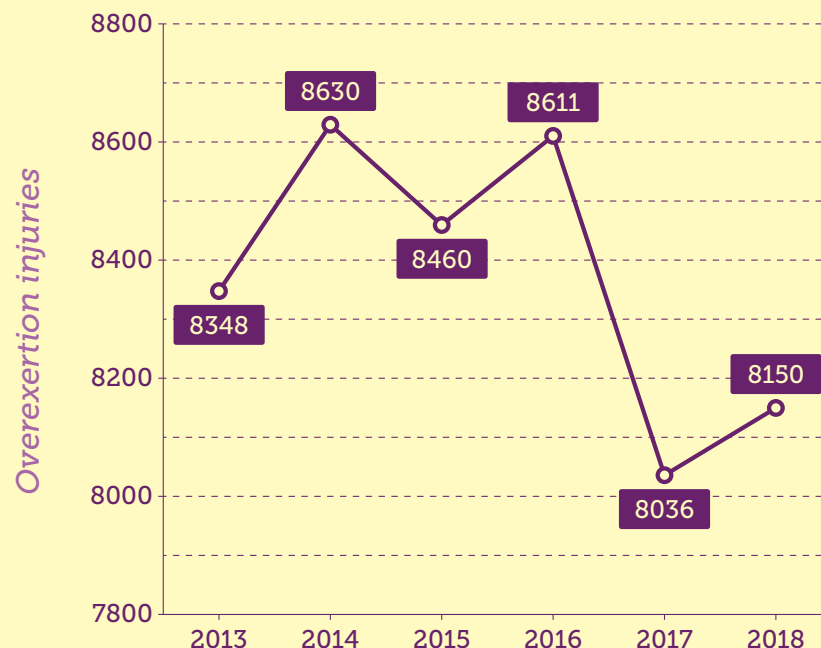
"Your safe performance isn't just good for the company ... it's good for you and your family."

– **Dale Lesinski**, vice president of sales and training for DiVal Safety Equipment in Buffalo, N.Y., who delivered the keynote presentation at the 2019 Oregon Governor's Occupational Safety & Health Conference.

Overexertion injuries in Oregon: 2013-2018

When workers' jobs involve awkward postures or excessive effort to complete a task, fatigue and discomfort are often the result. As those tasks are repeated over and over, muscles, tendons, ligaments, nerves, and blood vessels are damaged. Workers' compensation claims for these injuries are classified as overexertion injuries and more generally known as work-related musculoskeletal disorders.

Overexertion injuries were responsible for about 39 percent of all accepted workers' compensation claims in Oregon in 2018. Overexertion injuries, which decreased significantly in 2017 and increased slightly in 2018, are still the largest single cause of workers' compensation claims in this state.



Snap your safety committee to attention

By Aaron Corvin

Memo to safety committee members: If you dread your committee's meetings, something's gone wrong.

Maybe the agenda is stuffed with too many items. That is, if there is one.

Maybe your meetings drag on with no end in sight and plenty of yawns to go around.

Maybe no one really knows what to do – except show up at the meetings.

Or perhaps everyone understands what to do, but the boss likes to do all the talking, making the whole experience feel like a bad college lecture.

Whatever the source of your dread, none of it is necessary.

You just need some tips to get back on track.

Randy Jones and Jake Teeter are here to help.

Jones, a retired U.S. Navy captain, is safety director for Olsson Industrial Electric in Springfield. Teeter is a senior safety management consultant for SAIF Corporation in Portland. They co-presented "Starting and Sustaining an Effective Safety Program" – which included insightful takes on safety committees and meetings – during the 2019 Oregon Governor's Occupational Safety and Health Conference in March.

Jake Teeter (left), is a senior safety management consultant for SAIF Corporation in Portland. Randy Jones is safety director for Olsson Industrial Electric in Springfield.



When you make room for an energetic safety committee – as part of a strong safety program – you send workers home safe at the end of each work day, Jones said. “The bottom line is it’s the right thing to do,” he said. “It is an economic issue, but really, it is a personal and moral issue. The reality is we want to take care of our people.”

Fact is, if you’re an employer in Oregon, your business *must* have a safety committee or hold safety meetings – unless you are the sole owner and the only employee of a corporation.

Such committees or meetings enable workers and managers to regularly discuss and address on-the-job safety and health concerns. They are critical components in helping [build and maintain sturdy safety and health programs](#).



During the GOSH conference in March, Teeter and Jones gave a presentation on how to build an effective safety program.

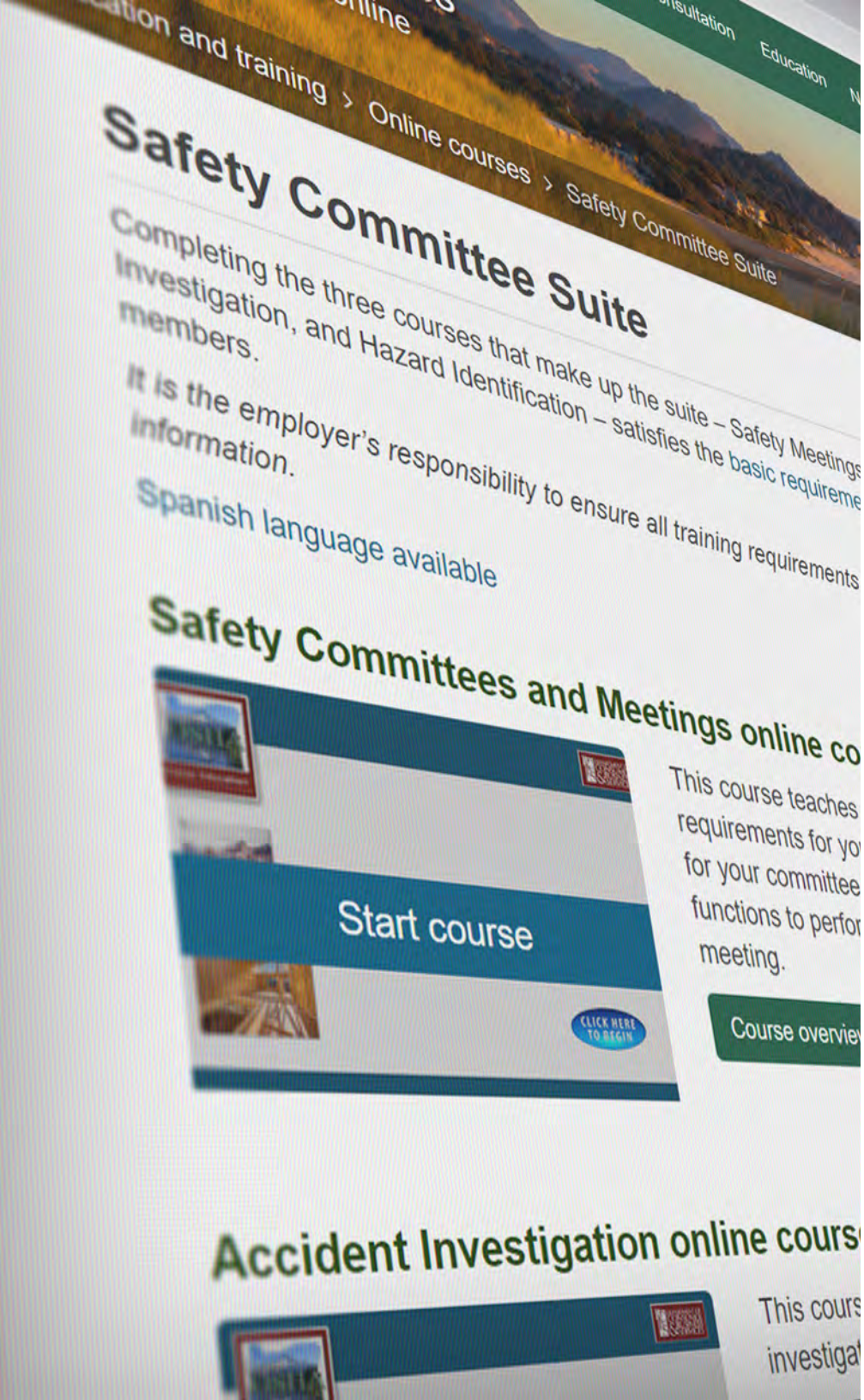
Help is available

Before taking tips on how to make safety committees or meetings work better for your company, you have to make sure you’re having such huddles in the first place. And if the top Oregon OSHA standards most often violated in 2018 are any indication, employers have room to improve in that regard.

The requirement to establish and administer an effective safety committee or hold effective safety meetings ranked No. 3 last year, with 336 total violations and initial penalties of \$19,965. Meanwhile, the need to document safety committee meetings was No. 4, with 191 total violations and initial penalties of \$2,280.

In light of the pileup of violations, you might think complying with such rules is difficult. It isn’t. Oregon OSHA provides information and training to help employers understand – and carry out – their responsibilities. [General industry and construction employers](#) must follow the safety committee and meeting requirements for their industries. Likewise, [agriculture](#) and [forest activities](#) employers must adhere to the requirements that apply to their respective fields.

A clearinghouse of information about safety committees and meetings is available on [Oregon OSHA’s A-to-Z topic page](#). When requested, [Oregon OSHA’s no-cost, confidential consultation services](#) staff will visit your job site and participate in safety committee discussions.



Meanwhile, training for safety committee members is available through Oregon OSHA's free workshops and online resources. The [workshop schedule from April to December](#) includes opportunities to learn about safety committees and meetings in Medford, Salem, and Wilsonville.

As to online training, Oregon OSHA has [translated into Spanish three courses](#) – Accident Investigation, Hazard Investigation, and Safety Meetings and Committees – and housed all of them in a central location: the new [Safety Committee Suite webpage](#). The courses are as follows:

- **Accident Investigation** teaches you the fundamentals of conducting a workplace accident investigation, including securing the scene, collecting facts, and conducting interviews.
- **Hazard Identification** walks you through the types of workplace hazards, correcting hazards, conducting safety and health inspections, and writing an effective safety inspection report.
- **Safety Committees and Meetings** delves into the safety committee and meeting requirements for your business, including the number of committee members, how often to meet, and functions to perform as a committee member or while attending a meeting.

Completing the three courses that make up the suite satisfies the basic requirements for training safety committee members. Oregon OSHA urges employers to blend the training offered by the Safety Committee Suite with policies and practices that are specific to their workplaces. This will increase the effectiveness of the training and help ensure all requirements are met.



Staying on task

So, you've got your safety committee or meeting up and running, with people trained and ready to go.

But how do you keep these regular gatherings focused and meaningful? What follows are tips, courtesy of Jones and Teeter:

- Make sure there's an agenda, Jones said. Then, resist the temptation to put everything on it. "If you put everything on it," he said, "then chances are you're not going to get it all done. Make your agenda realistic." Keep minutes, Teeter said, and include last month's minutes with each new agenda. That way, he said, people can stay on top of things.
- Limit your meetings to no longer than an hour-and-a-half. "If you have a big laundry list of items, and you're on item three of 20 at an hour-and-a-half," Jones said, "you're going to lose (people)." Teeter said it's important to keep time and stay on task. "When your time runs out, call it," he said. "Let people get back to their jobs."
- When it's time to discuss action items, Teeter said, make sure those items are well thought out. That means avoiding "elephant-size" tasks, he said, and instead pursuing projects in small, measurable steps. For example, instead of saying you need to build an entire eye-and-face-protection program next month, approach the project in phases. Start by calling a vendor and asking about eye protection options.
- Avoid letting safety committee meetings fall into a lecture format, with one person doing most of the talking, Teeter said. Instead, delegate responsibility to safety committee members for such things as quarterly walkthroughs and incident reviews. You may want to break out safety committee members into teams, Jones said, with specific responsibilities such as fall protection or hazard communication. When people are responsible for certain items, according to Teeter and Jones, they'll speak up and share information with others.

"Get everybody responsible for these things," Teeter said. "It's actually a committee, not a lecture." ●



Construction Corner: Seven ways to prevent falls at your site

For many in the construction industry, equipment is the first thing that comes to mind as a means for preventing falls. But fall protection is more than just equipment. Here are seven ways to prevent falls at your site.

1. Make fall protection part of your safety program and ensure that everyone has a role to play in preventing falls

Effective safety programs have managers and employees who are committed to safety and involved in keeping the site hazard free.

2. Enforce safe practices with on-the-job supervision

Effective supervisors know how to motivate employees and, when discipline is necessary, they know how to apply it fairly. Essential tasks for supervisors:

- Verify that employees have been trained and can safely perform their work.
- Periodically review the safety performance of each employee.
- Instruct, retrain, or discipline employees who are not working safely.
- Closely supervise new employees after they have been trained.
- Require employees to demonstrate they can work safely before permitting them to work independently.

3. Prepare a safety policy

Does your company have a written safety policy? It should. A written policy reflects commitment to a safe and healthful workplace, summarizes management and employee responsibilities, and emphasizes the importance of the safety program. Keep the policy brief, commit to it, and enforce it.



4. Designate competent and qualified persons

The competent person

- Is responsible for recognizing hazards that cause falls and warning workers about the hazards
- Trains employees to recognize fall hazards and follow safety procedures
- Serves as the monitor when a safety-monitoring system is used as a fall-protection method
- Determines – when safety nets are used – if the nets meet Subdivision 3/M requirements
- Inspects a personal fall-arrest system after it arrests a fall and determines if the system is damaged
- Evaluates any alteration in a personal fall-arrest system and determines if it is safe to use

The qualified person

Supervises the design, installation, and use of horizontal lifeline systems and fall-restraint and fall-arrest anchors.

5. Plan to prevent falls

Consider factors such as the following to help you plan your job:

- Which areas of the project are most likely to have fall hazards? What can you do to prevent falls from happening?
- What tasks could expose employees to fall hazards?
- Are walking and working surfaces structurally sound and stable?
- How will employees access and move about the structure to do their jobs? Will they move horizontally, vertically, or in both directions?
- Will guardrails and covers for holes meet Subdivision 3/M requirements?
- Are there existing anchors for arrest and restraint systems? Do they meet Subdivision 3/M requirements?
- Have employees been trained to use ladders properly?
- Will other contractors' employees be exposed to falls after your employees finish their work? Who is responsible for ensuring that fall protection, such as guardrails and covers, are replaced if they have been removed to finish a job?



6. Train workers about fall protection

Don't assume your employees know how to protect themselves from falls. They may not be familiar with fall hazards at a new job site or know how to protect themselves until you train them.

Employees must be trained before they begin tasks that could expose them to falls and before they use fall-protection equipment. They must know how to recognize fall hazards and follow safe practices.

Put it in writing: You must document in writing that employees have been trained and that they know what fall-protection systems or methods to use, how to use them, and when to use them, regardless of their experience. Include their names, training dates, and the trainer's signature.

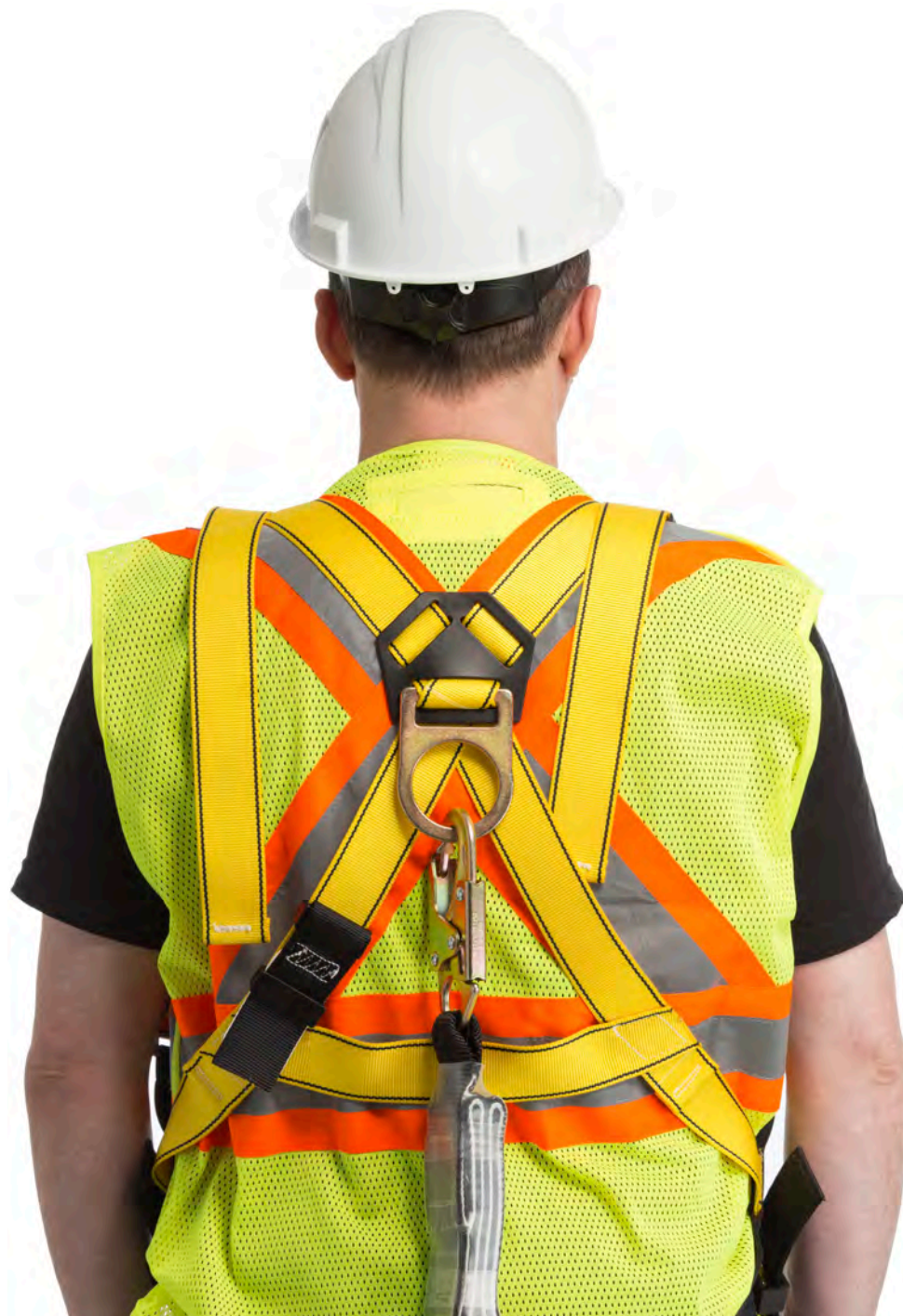
Employees must be retrained for any of the following reasons:

- They don't recognize fall hazards.
- They don't understand the procedures that control the hazards.
- Changes in the workplace or the fall-protection systems or methods make previous training obsolete.

7. Use equipment that prevents falls from happening

When possible, use equipment such as guardrails, covers, and restraint systems that will eliminate employees' chances of falling.

If it's not possible to eliminate fall hazards, protect workers if they do fall. Use equipment that will minimize the risk of injury if a worker does fall. Options include personal fall-arrest systems and safety nets. Also, develop a rescue plan that tells employees how to respond if something does go wrong. ●



Ask



Our safety committee would like to put together an accident investigation kit so that all the items we need to conduct an investigation are ready when we need them. Can you suggest a list of essential items?

Give your safety committee members a pat on the back; that's an excellent idea. You don't want to lose an opportunity to gather important facts because you don't have a pencil or camera at hand. This list includes useful items for conducting an accident investigation at any workplace:

- ✓ Camera (a disposable or single-use camera is useful if a cell phone camera is not available)
- ✓ Clipboard and pencil
- ✓ Paper (graph paper and waterproof paper are also useful)
- ✓ First-aid kit
- ✓ Flashlight
- ✓ Personal protective equipment (such as appropriate gloves, safety glasses, and high-visibility vest)
- ✓ Incident report forms and a list of common interview questions to ask witnesses, victims, co-workers
- ✓ Plastic bags and other containers for storing samples
- ✓ Drawing template
- ✓ Straight edge
- ✓ Tape measures (a few different sizes can be useful)
- ✓ Items to secure scene (such as caution tape and cones)
- ✓ A duffle bag or other container to store these items

Remember that your safety committee members must be trained in accident and incident investigation principles and know how to apply them. Also, make sure that those who conduct the accident investigation know where to find the kit when they need it. ●

Short take

Phillips 66 business groups achieve VPP Star status

The Phillips 66 Co. Portland Lubricants Plant and Portland Terminal have met the high bar required to become Star sites under Oregon OSHA's [Voluntary Protection Program](#) (VPP).

The program encourages companies to effectively protect workers by going well beyond minimum safety requirements. To be considered for VPP recognition, a company's safety and health management system must excel in all areas, including management leadership, employee involvement, worksite analysis, hazard prevention and control, and safety and health training.

The two Phillips 66 business groups "work in harmony and have an excellent safety and health program," according to an examination by the VPP onsite

evaluation team. The team included Brian Hauck, senior health compliance officer; Gary Robertson, senior safety consultant; and Russ Reasoner, senior health consultant. They were joined by VPP special government employees Ray Illingsworth of Marvin Wood Products and Allen Hall of Thermo Fisher Scientific.

The team found "abundant evidence that there is continued management leadership and meaningful employee involvement throughout Phillips 66."

The benefits of becoming a VPP company include up to 80 percent fewer work-day injuries than expected of an average site of the same size and industry; reduced workers' compensation costs; improved employee motivation to work safely; and recognition in the community.

For more information, contact Mark E. Hurliman, Oregon OSHA VPP/SHARP program manager, 541-776-6016 or mark.e.hurliman@oregon.gov. ●



Short take

Forest Grove-based company graduates SHARP

Woodfold Mfg., Inc. has graduated from Oregon OSHA's [Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program](#) (SHARP). The program encourages employers to become self-sufficient in managing workplace safety and health issues.

Woodfold, based in Forest Grove for more than 60 years, makes custom-crafted accordion and roll-up doors, and hardwood shutters for residential and commercial installations. The company had made extensive ergonomic

improvements to various parts of its work process. As part of its continuous improvement under SHARP, the company designed and built equipment to alleviate ergonomic risks in one of its assembly processes.

Woodfold, a 100 percent employee-owned company, has 47 workers.

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

An employer becomes a graduate when it completes five years of SHARP. ●



Short take

GOSH 2019 roundup

This year's Oregon Governor's Occupational Safety and Health (GOSH) Conference in Portland attracted 1,455 attendees. The March 4-7 event – the largest of its kind in the Northwest – featured 160 workshops, more than 200 speakers, an awards luncheon, and exhibits from more than 125 organizations.

Keynote speaker Dale Lesinski, vice president of DiVal Safety, kicked off the conference on Tuesday with "Safe 4 the Right Reasons" – a persuasive argument that, to make workplaces truly safer, employers need to focus on the values most important to their employees and offer a benefit that appeals to their values and beliefs.

Lesinski emphasized the point by asking the audience to think of four people who depend on them to work safely. Most people, he said, don't think of themselves – and that's a problem. The need for a safe workplace must resonate personally with every employee. Safety is a critical issue, not for the sake of the employer, but for the employees and their families. For that reason, we always need to remember those four people who depend on us to be safe.

Businesses and individuals honored for safety and health excellence

At the awards luncheon, 15 businesses and individuals were honored for outstanding contributions to the field of workplace safety and health. Award winners included a trade association, safety and health innovators, safety and health professionals, safety committees, wellness advocates, and employer safety programs.

Association Award



West Coast Chapter of The International Association of Foundation Drilling

Innovation Awards



Boise Cascade, Willamina Veneer



Snyder Roofing

Labor Representative Award



Barry Moreland, safety director for the National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA), Oregon-Columbia Chapter and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Union #48 (IBEW)

Safety and Health Professional Awards



Chuck Easterly,
director of the SAIF
Safe and Healthy
Workplace Center



Rick McMurry,
health and safety
director, MHA Resources



Scott Knutz,
environmental, safety,
and health supervisor,
Les Schwab Tires

Safety, Health, and Wellness Advocate Awards



Andrew Hall,
guest care manager,
Portland Rescue Mission,
Burnside Shelter



Judi Croft,
safety services team
supervisor, SAIF



Kathy Nishimoto,
chief operating officer,
Duckwall Fruit

Safety Committee and Team Awards



Oregon Construction
Safety Summit



Duro-Last,
Western District Safety Committee

Workplace Safety Program Awards



BMWC Constructors



Boise Cascade Co.,
Western Oregon Region

The goal of the GOSH conference is to provide an educational forum for employers, safety and health professionals, safety committee members, manufacturers, and distributors. Oregon OSHA partners with the Columbia-Willamette Chapter of the American Society of Safety Professionals, labor organizations, and businesses in Oregon and Washington, to sponsor GOSH. ●

Short take

Columbia Forklift Challenge tests drivers' handling skills

Thirty forklift drivers from across the Pacific Northwest had a chance to show their skills at the biennial Columbia Forklift Challenge, which has become a signature event at the GOSH Conference. This year's event required drivers to demonstrate a full complement of forklift-handling skills and perform a few moves that would test even the best drivers.

Oregon OSHA Training Specialist Craig Hamelund, who played a key role in organizing the event, said, "We try to set the course up with drills that closely simulate real world tasks, but also try to have a little fun."

The drills included traveling with loads, maneuvering through a slalom course, stacking and unstacking pallets, and attempting to knock over a set of 10 pins with a bowling ball.

Nine drivers and seven three-person teams competed for \$1,500 in prize money. All contestants had to complete a 20-question test on safe forklift driving before beginning the event. Drivers' test scores were combined with their scored course results to determine the winners.

Congratulations to the 2019 Columbia Forklift Challenge winners!

Individual driver competition

1. **Chris Evans** (Boise Cascade, Elgin), who also won the event two years ago
2. **Elias Cobb** (ABC Roofing), in his first competition
3. **Andy Ibbottson** (Preferred Freezer), also a past winner of the event

Team competition

Chris Evans, Shane Largent, Casey Largent (Boise Cascade, Elgin)

Reflecting on this year's Columbia Forklift Challenge, head judge Rob Vetter said, "The thing that stays with me most from these events is the ease in which some of the competitors, who are top-notch operators, are able to consistently demonstrate a blend of high-level operational proficiency with excellent safety habits. It's something that lots of people have told me is not possible, but I know it is because I see it here all the time." Vetter is general manager and director of training at Ives Training Group (Blaine, Wash.)

Sponsors of the 2019 Columbia Forklift Challenge were Ives Training Group, Pape Material Handling (Tigard), Cascade Corporation (Gresham), Norlift of Oregon (Milwaukie), Boeing (Gresham), City of Portland Water Bureau, United Pacific Forest Products (Scappoose), and the Blue Mountain Safety & Health Conference partners (Pendleton). ●



Short take

April 28: Why it's important

Forty-nine years ago, the AFL-CIO declared April 28 as Workers Memorial Day to honor workers who died on the job. It was 1970 and an estimated 14,000 U.S. workers had died that year, “exposed to the hazards of the industrial age.” Congress had just passed the Occupational Safety and Health Act, which became effective on April 28, 1971, the official birthday of OSHA and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH).

Following the precedent set by the AFL-CIO, the Canadian Union of Public Employees and the Canadian Labor Congress, in 1985, set April 28 as an annual day of remembrance for Canadians who died on the job. Six years later, in 1991, Canadian parliament passed legislation that made April 28 Workers’ Mourning Day.

By 1996, the international trade union movement had established April 28 as the International Commemoration Day for Dead and Injured Workers and the effort to commemorate fallen workers became a global phenomenon. In 2003, the International Labor Organization – a United Nations agency – became involved in the April 28 campaign and created the World Day for Safety and Health at Work and World Day Against Child Labor to end child labor. The ILO set ambitious goals of ending all forms of child labor by 2025 and making all working environments safe by 2030.

Today, the number of U.S. workers who have died on the job has dropped by more than 60 percent from the 14,000 in 1970 – a number that is still too high because most workplace injuries and illnesses are preventable. April 28 serves as a reminder that this number is not acceptable and much more work needs to be done to make workplaces safer.

This year’s event will take place on Friday, April 26, at the Fallen Workers Memorial outside the Labor and Industries Building, 350 Winter St. NE, on the Capitol Mall. ●





Safety Notes

Incident Report

Incident: Crushed by heavy equipment

Company: Seller of new, used, and rebuilt tractor parts

Worker: Mechanic

What happened?

An anonymous complaint about an unreported inpatient hospitalization helped a compliance officer investigate an incident in which a worker fractured his pelvis.

How did it happen?

The employee was an experienced mechanic who had been with the company for 15 years. He and two co-workers were taking a break about 3 p.m. when their manager told them that they needed to go to the storage yard and tow a John Deere 624J front-end loader into the shop to remove the rear axle, which had just been sold to a customer.

The three workers walked to the storage yard to look at the loader and determine what they would need to tow it to the shop. It would not be an easy task because the loader was missing the front axle, which had been sold to the same customer who wanted the real axle.

What could lift the front end of the 624J and tow it to the shop? The workers decided to use a larger John Deere loader – a 644E – for the task. Their plan was to raise the front of the 624J with a chain rigged to the 644E and then pull it to the shop.

One of the workers said he would get the 644E and a chain. The employee and the other worker went to the shop to retrieve more tools after deciding that



The John Deere 624J front-end loader after the front and rear axles had been removed.

they would need to disconnect the 624J's driveline. They made the decision because they assumed that the 624J's emergency hydraulic brake was set and they knew that the emergency hydraulic brake locked the driveline, preventing the machine from moving.

The front of the 624J – where the axle had been – was raised and supported by the bucket, which was attached to the 624J's hydraulic arms and was flat on the ground. The employee grabbed a couple of wrenches and slid under the front of the loader; he had only about 19 inches of clearance, but he was small and had enough room to work.

One of the co-workers walked around the loader to secure the hoses and electrical wiring. The other returned with the 644E loader and was thinking about where to position it. When the employee removed the last bolt and nut that held the yoke of the driveline together, the loader lurched backward and the frame dropped 11 inches, pinning him to the ground. He could not move or breathe and he was losing his vision. Then, he lost consciousness.

The co-worker heard a "thud" and noticed that the front of the loader had dropped. He saw the employee's lifeless lower body and yelled at the 644E driver to bring the loader around and lift the 624J off the injured employee. Then, he called 911.

As soon as the 624J was lifted off the employee, the co-worker grabbed his legs and pulled him out from under the loader.

The employee regained consciousness, then started to talk and move his fingers and toes, but he was in severe pain. Emergency responders arrived in about six minutes and took him to a nearby hospital. However, he needed further treatment and was taken by helicopter to a larger hospital about 100 miles away. After surgery, he remained in an induced coma for six days and stayed in the hospital for another 11 days before he was moved to a rehabilitation facility to be closer to his family.



The employee was lying under the 624J front-end loader (where the wood planks are now); when he removed the last bolt and nut that held the yoke of the driveline together, the loader lurched backward and the frame dropped 11 inches, pinning him to the ground.

Findings

- The company had not developed a procedure to block and secure the front-end loader to control the hazardous energy.
- The company had not developed a job safety analysis for removing axles from front-end loaders.
- The company did not report the inpatient hospitalization. Management assumed that the company's workers' compensation carrier would report the incident.

Violation

- 437-002-0221(13)(d), *Equipment Design and Construction*. Loads suspended in slings or supported by hoists, jacks, or other devices, shall be blocked or cribbed before workers are permitted to work underneath.
- 437-001-0704(4), *Reporting requirements*. You must report in-patient hospitalizations, loss of an eye, and either amputations or avulsions that result in bone loss, to Oregon OSHA within 24 hours after occurrence of the work-related incident or employer knowledge (reported to you or any of your agents) of the event. ●

Going the Distance

Company:

Les Schwab Tires Inc.

Environmental, Safety, and Health Supervisor:

Scott Knutz

Operations/facilities/workforce:

Les Schwab Tires is an independent, privately-owned company operating more than 480 retail stores in eight western states. Founded in 1952 with one tire shop in Prineville, the company has grown to a billion dollar enterprise with more than 7,000 employees. The company buys, warehouses, transports, and sells a variety of products and services, including passenger and industrial tires, brakes, alignments, and batteries.

Responsibilities/hazards addressed:

Knutz has been with the company for 34 years in a variety of positions, including a tire center technician, store manager, and safety supervisor. His current responsibilities include interacting with various state and federal environmental agencies, and OSHA offices across eight states. He manages the documentation, training, and inspections these agencies require. He's also developed and updated safety programs, standardized a new employee training program for powered industrial trucks, created a storewide hazardous waste stream program, and implemented a computer-based safety data sheet platform for retail and nonretail stores.

"Your employees in the trenches are often the most helpful when looking to solve a problem," according to Scott Knutz, environmental, safety, and health supervisor for Les Schwab Tires Inc. "Don't be afraid to recognize that the solution is often found by insight from those who do the work."



It's great to be recognized in your field of work, but it wouldn't have been possible without a great staff!

The technology in the vehicles we service is changing at a staggering pace. These changes present challenges in equipment selection, maintenance, and training. My team and I focus on ensuring our processes and procedures are not only up-to-date, but streamlined and made safe by design. Safety is our priority and we build it into each and every area of our business.

What are some things you always do to promote safety where you work, and what are some things you never do?

We always promote the idea that the two most important essentials of our business are our employees and our customers. We cannot provide world-class customer service without a safe and healthy workforce.

We promote safety training at the retail level by utilizing a store safety binder that provides industry-specific safety topics to our employees each month. Additional safety training is provided through the company intranet hub.

Whenever we observe a safety process or behavioral error, we make sure not to belittle or criticize. We see an error as an opportunity to teach and mentor and review our safety programs to ensure we've provided the right training and direction to the employee.

What is some advice you'd give to those looking to improve safety and health at their workplace or for others seeking a career in this field?

I'd encourage people to remember that while safety is serious business, it's *people business*. Your employees in the trenches are often the most helpful when looking to solve a problem. Don't be afraid to recognize that the solution is often found by insight from those who do the work.

Our business is constantly changing and our safety programs must evolve to stay ahead of the hazards that exist. Strive to stay in tune with the most innovative equipment, products, training deliveries, and procedures available. In my experience, I've learned that by working together, organizations can create safer and more efficient ways to perform tasks that have been done the same old way for decades. ●

"I'd encourage people to remember that while safety is serious business, it's people business."

- Scott Knutz, environmental, safety, and health supervisor