

Health and Safety

RESOURCE

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OREGON
GOSH
SAFETY & HEALTH

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Resource

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

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Don't miss.....

Education:

Workshop classes are held either in person or virtually, but not both on the same day. All registered participants will receive a confirmation email. For virtual workshops, instructions on how to join will be provided two weeks before the workshop. A minimum of five registrants is needed for each workshop.

Register and attend

Using the [secure online registration portal](#), you can find and register for a variety of workshop topics.

For more information, visit the [classroom workshops page](#).

Find more information about education resources by visiting [Oregon OSHA's education and training page](#).

Mark your calendar for these workplace safety and health conferences:

Northwest Safety and Health Summit by Region X VPPPA
May 13-15, 2025 • Portland

Blue Mountain Occupational Safety and Health Conference
June 2-3, 2025 • Pendleton

Central Oregon Occupational Safety and Health Conference
Sept. 15-16, 2025 • Bend

Southern Oregon Occupational Safety and Health Conference
Oct. 14-16, 2025 • Ashland

Western Pulp, Paper, and Forest Products Safety and Health Conference
Dec. 2-5, 2025 • Portland

Mid-Oregon Construction Safety Summit
Jan. 26-27, 2026 • Bend

Cascade Occupational Safety and Health Conference
March 3-4, 2026 • Eugene

To receive conference registration materials, exhibitor information, or sponsorship information, contact the Conference Section:
oregon.conferences@dcbs.oregon.gov | 503-947-7411 | osha.oregon.gov/conferences



Did you know?

Oregon OSHA has issued a [hazard alert](#) about what workers should know about avian flu caused by the H5N1 influenza virus.

Avian influenza is a viral infection that can infect dairy cattle, wild birds, poultry flocks, and other animals in the United States. Commonly referred to as bird flu, avian influenza is caused by [influenza A type viruses](#), but the disease varies in severity depending on the influenza variant and the species affected.

The hazard alert includes steps to protect yourself when working with animals. It also provides information about Oregon OSHA requirements – for agriculture and other employers – addressing personal protective equipment, hazard assessment, and respiratory protection. ●



Quotable

My role is to influence influencers to exercise their influence. The GOSH Conference is a critical gathering of those influencers. I'm eager to share my concerns and strategies for creating a new preparedness culture so that we can make a difference together.

- **Steve Eberlein**,
resilience director at Ethos Preparedness, who delivered the keynote presentation – addressing the importance of preparing for earthquakes – during the 2023 GOSH Conference



Datapoints

GOSH 2025 by the numbers

 **SESSIONS**

173

 **TOPIC TRACKS**

19

 **EXHIBITORS**

99
AND GROWING

 **SPEAKERS**

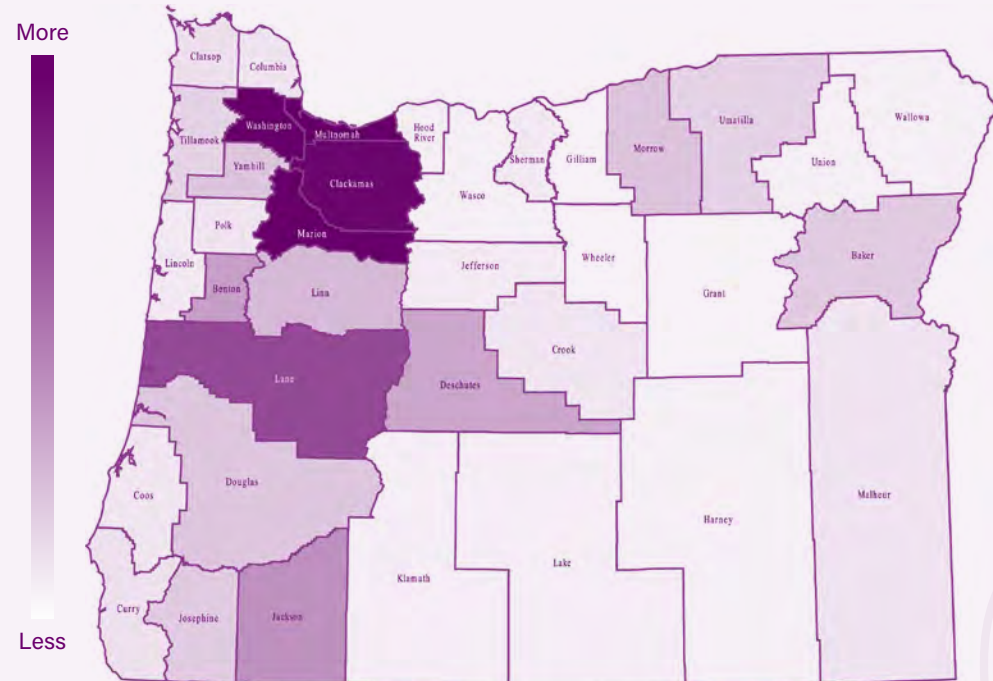
MORE THAN
200

GOSH 2023 — Number of attendees

#	Top states	Attendees
1	Oregon	1,186
2	Washington	114
#	Top 10 cities	Attendees
1	Portland	378
2	Salem	135
3	Hillsboro	68
4	Eugene	49
5	Beaverton	35
6	Corvallis	34
7	Tigard	34
8	Vancouver	34
9	Bend	28
10	Medford	25

GOSH 2023 grand total	1,326
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Attendee heat map



Thank you!

The following businesses and organizations have generously donated funds or services so we can continue to make the Oregon Governor's Occupational Safety and Health Conference as affordable as possible.

Diamond



Platinum



The GOSH Conference is a joint effort of the American Society of Safety Professionals (ASSP) Columbia-Willamette Chapter and Oregon OSHA, a division of the Department of Consumer and Business Services.

Gold



Silver



Bronze

Anadyne • Associated General Contractors
General Sheet Metal • KPA • Life Safety Corporation
Oregon Institute of Occupational Health Sciences, OHSU
Pacific Excavation • Propel Insurance • SHARP Alliance
Smart Safety Solutions • Work Right
Washington Audiology Services



Connect and learn at the Northwest's largest safety, health event

By Aaron Corvin

The GOSH Conference is open for registration

Everyone from safety and health professionals in the field to employers of all types and workers on the front lines will find inspiration, energy, and practical knowledge at the 38th biennial Oregon Governor's Occupational Safety and Health Conference.

The conference – to be held March 3-6 at the Oregon Convention Center in Portland – is [open for registration](#), and **now is the time to take advantage of early bird prices. The deadline to do so is Feb. 14.** More information about [the cost](#) to attend GOSH is available.

GOSH is the largest workplace safety and health conference in the Northwest, offering more than 170 workshops and sessions to gain up-to-date knowledge that can be transformed into strengthened safety and health programs.

It will address everything from fall protection, hazard identification, and industrial hygiene, to communication and training, prevention of workplace violence, the key components of a strong safety culture, and more.

It will bring people together, too. "There's so much energy when people from across the region and state attend," said Sharell Lien, conference coordinator for Oregon OSHA. "We love bringing safety and health-minded people together."

The conference is a collaborative effort by Oregon OSHA, the Columbia-Willamette Chapter of the American Society of Safety Professionals, and labor and businesses in Oregon and southwest Washington.

Providing the event's [keynote presentation](#) is Sally Spencer-Thomas, co-founder and president of United Suicide Survivors International. A clinical psychologist and award-winning mental health advocate, Spencer-Thomas is the lead author on the National Guidelines for Workplace Suicide Prevention. Her Tuesday, March 4, presentation – "You Can't Fix Your Mental Health With Duct Tape: Why Burnout Mitigation, Mental Health Promotion,

Addiction Recovery, and Suicide Prevention are Health and Safety Priorities” – will go to the heart of why mental health in the workplace matters.

The conference will again feature the Columbia Forklift Challenge, inviting trained forklift drivers to compete in an obstacle course to highlight their skills – and the importance of forklift safety. [Registration is now open](#) for the forklift event.

Meanwhile, the [2025 GOSH Awards](#) will honor organizations and people who make exceptional contributions to workplace safety and health. Award nominations are closed, but the Wednesday, March 5, awards ceremony and luncheon offers an opportunity to meet award recipients and show your support for them.

And helping move the March 3-6 GOSH Conference forward are many [exhibitors](#) and [sponsors](#).

Oregon OSHA encourages everyone from safety committee members and emerging environmental health and safety professionals to quality control supervisors, labor advocates, and employers across industries to gather for a variety of learning opportunities at GOSH.

Topics for improving workplace safety and health include:

- Agriculture/pesticides/cannabis
- Communication and training
- Construction

- Emergency response and preparedness
- Environmental and hazardous waste
- Ergonomics
- General industry
- Health care (ergonomics, safety, health issues in health care)
- Industrial hygiene
- Motor vehicle safety/transportation
- Occupational health/medicine
- Organizational development and culture building
- Regulatory/legal issues
- Risk management
- Safety committees/meetings
- Safety and health management/leadership
- Utilities
- Total Worker Health and wellness promotion; includes mental health awareness
- Workers' compensation/claims management
- Workplace violence prevention/security

Learn more about the conference – including registration, exhibits, travel and lodging, and other information – by visiting the [GOSH website](#).

Get connected to GOSH updates by [signing up to receive emails](#). ●



Exhibitors

[3M Personal Safety Division](#)

[ADAPT Industrial Athletics](#)

[AED Brands](#)

[Airflow Systems Northwest Inc.](#)

[ALTA Consulting LLC](#)

[Anadyne](#)

[ASSP Columbia-Willamette Chapter](#)

[ATI Physical Therapy](#)

[Atwood Prior Inc.](#)

[Board of Certified Safety Professionals](#)

[Bradley Corporation](#)

[Brady Corporation](#)

[Bulwark Safety Systems LLC](#)

[Butterfield Testing Solutions](#)

[Canopy](#)

[Cestusline](#)

[CleanSpace Technology](#)

[Columbia Southern University](#)

[Commercial Business Furniture](#)

[Construction Contractors Board](#)

[Department of Consumer and Business Services, Small Business Ombudsman](#)

[Edge Construction Supply a div. of NEFCO](#)

[Ergodyne](#)

[Evergreen Safety Council](#)

[Fastenal](#)

[Favor Your Feet](#)

[Finelines NW](#)

[Future Industrial Technologies](#)

[GEW LLC](#)

[Glove Guard LP](#)

[Harris WorkSystems](#)

[HexArmor](#)

[Honeywell](#)

[IceAlert, Inc.](#)

[Impacto Protective Products](#)

[Industrial Scientific Corporation](#)

[Integrity Safety](#)

[Interscan](#)

[Intrepid Industries Inc.](#)

[Ironclad Gloves](#)

[Justrite Safety Group](#)

[KPA](#)

[Larson Davis](#)

[Life Safety Corporation](#)

[Lines For Life](#)

[Majestic Glove](#)

[Mallory](#)

[Martor USA](#)

[Milwaukee Tool](#)

[Mountain Pacific Sales](#)

[MSA Safety](#)

[Myers Industries](#)

[National Safety Apparel](#)

[National Safety Inc.](#)

[Occupational Orthopedics](#)

[Occupational Safety and Health Continuing Education at the University of Washington](#)

[Oregon Department of Human Services](#)

[Oregon Division of Financial Regulation/DCBS](#)

[Oregon Employment Department](#)

[Oregon Institute of Occupational Health Sciences, OHSU](#)

[Oregon OSHA](#)

[Oregon State Association of Occupational Health Nurses](#)

[Preferred Worker Program](#)

[ProtectEar USA](#)

[Protective Industrial Products](#)

[Providence Medical Group](#)

[Ready America](#)

[Ritz Safety LLC](#)

[Rose City Laboratories LLC](#)

[Safe Surface Northwest LLC](#)

[Safety Northwest/Heartlink CPR](#)

[SAIF Corporation](#)

[Schmalz Inc.](#)

[SHARP Alliance](#)

[SightProtect by EssilorLuxottica Prescription Safety Eyewear](#)

[Simple Green](#)

[Smart Safety Solutions LLC](#)

[SmartCells Anti-Fatigue Solutions](#)

[State of Oregon, Building Codes Division \(BCD\)](#)

[Superior Glove](#)

[SureWerx](#)

[The Master Lock Company](#)

[The Street Trust](#)

[TPR Industrial](#)

[Tucker-Weitzel](#)

[WA State Dept. of Labor and Industries](#)

[Washington Audiology Services, Inc.](#)

[Work Right NW](#)

[WorkSource Oregon - Regional Business Services](#)

[ZOLL Medical Corporation](#)

Oregon GOSH: How Oregon's governors shaped its history

By Ellis Brasch

The Oregon Governor's Occupational Safety and Health Conference began 80 years ago, with organizers laser-focused on a no-frills gathering.

Safety was the topic – “health” had not yet entered the picture – and nothing was to distract from it. There would be no evening banquet.

The idea was simple: Bring people together for an educational forum dedicated to preventing industrial accidents. And the September 1944 event came with a no-frills title: “First Annual Oregon Industrial Safety Conference.”



Gov. Earl Snell

Source: *The Beaver* (1944), Oregon State University yearbook. Retrieved Jan. 21, 2025, from oregondigital.org/concern/documents/zk51vh18n

Seventy-nine people attended the conference, including Gov. Earl Snell. Although the conference's title had yet to take on the distinguished provenance of the governor's office, the attendance of Oregon's 23rd governor had set a precedent for the unique brand of safety and health conference to come.

Today, Oregon GOSH is the largest safety and health conference in the Northwest. The biennial event attracts nationally known speakers, offering more than 170 workshops and sessions and more than 125 booths showing the latest safety and health products and services. The four-day event – held at the Oregon Convention Center – features an awards ceremony and luncheon recognizing workplace safety and health leaders in Oregon. And past conference attendance has exceeded 2,500 people.

Over the years, as the conference has grown, its topics have changed to meet new challenges. And Oregon's governors have each put their particular stamp on the event, delivering their own unique messages on behalf of workplace safety and health.

The Oregon Industrial Safety conferences drew more attendees each year, but a governor was absent until 1947 when Gov. John Hubert Hall spoke to 228 attendees of the fourth annual conference at the American Legion Hall in Salem.

In 1949, Gov. James Douglas McKay officially made the Oregon Industrial Safety Conference the Governor's Industrial Safety Conference. The event was held Nov. 30 and Dec. 1 at the Masonic Temple in Portland. The publication, *Safer Oregon*, noted: “The sponsorship of this conference by Oregon's Governor Douglas McKay ... marks the beginning of an active participation in the work of Industrial Accident Prevention by a top administrative official.”

Seven hundred people registered for the free conference and 572 people attended – the largest turnout ever for an Oregon safety conference.

As a result of the 1949 conference, McKay established Oregon's first Industrial Safety Advisory Committee, which brought together business and labor leaders to address workplace safety issues statewide.

McKay presided over the next three conferences. The big issue at the 1950 conference was rearmament – the U.S. effort to build up West Germany after World War II; as a result, “industrial accident trends ... after a long period of gradual decline” were increasing. McKay also recommended establishing smaller regional safety conferences across the state.

More than 900 people attended the 1951 conference; McKay addressed the opening session and urged the participants to think of safety as a cooperative community project.

McKay also delivered the keynote address at the fourth annual Governor's Conference in 1952; however, newcomer Tom Lawston McCall – former assistant to McKay, political commentator on KGW, and future Oregon governor – was master of ceremonies during the Thursday evening banquet.

The fifth Governor's Conference received national attention in 1953 when at least 12 states announced that delegates were coming. Oregon's 26th governor, Paul L. Patterson, addressed the opening assembly.

The sixth annual Governor's Conference drew a record 1,125 attendees in 1954. In fact, the Masonic Temple couldn't hold everyone, and it was necessary to secure more conference rooms in the nearby First Congregational Church and the art museum. Gov. Patterson attended and credited industry-, labor-, and state-government officials for their accident-prevention work.

The Governor's Conference took the year off in 1955; it was the first year since 1944 that a statewide conference had not been held. Instead, plans were made to hold 26 regional conferences over the next three years. The new plan called for the Governor's Conference to be held in alternate years, along with the regional safety conferences.

Oregon's 28th governor, Robert D. Holmes, gave the opening address at the seventh Governor's Conference on May 16, 1957, at Portland's Multnomah Hotel, declaring, "We must double and triple our efforts to educate the public in

safety as industry has been educated. There is no way we can legislate common sense or prudence." Coincidentally, S. M. Purdy, supervisor of safety and training at Portland Gas and Coke Company, had just finished a lecture on natural gas, the "magic fuel." He had also planned a safe-use demonstration of the gas, but abandoned the idea "due to potential fire hazards."

Gov. Mark O. Hatfield was the featured speaker at the 1959 Governor's Conference in April at the Masonic Temple, where he gathered with guests at the evening safety banquet to listen to The Trebles, a quartet from Pacific University who sang four songs.



The ninth Governor's Conference happened the following year – 1960 – at a new venue: the Marion Motor Hotel in Salem. "Education in accident prevention" was the theme, and Hatfield delivered the opening address, noting "Oregon has one of the finest safety programs in the nation."

The next three Governor's Conferences returned to the alternate-years format: 1962, 1964, and 1966. Hatfield gave the opening address at the 1962 Conference, telling attendees that the goal of Oregon's safety program is to accomplish its mission "in a friendly and fair manner using the consultative approach, expanded educational activities, special industry programs, and ... better public relations." At the 1966 gathering – Governor's Conference No. 12 – the theme was "Reaching for maximum industrial safety" and there was a good reason for Hatfield to feel pleased about the event. He could tell conference-goers that the "fatality figure" was 92 in 1965, an all-time low, and the "injury frequency" per million hours worked had dropped from 45 in 1960 to 36.

The 13th Governor's Conference would not take place until February 1969 at Salem's Marion Motor Hotel. Gov. Tom McCall, who had

been in office for nearly three years, delivered the opening address on Friday, reflecting on the conference theme, "Safer days through changing ways."

Nine years later, Gov. Bob Straub opened the 1978 Governor's Conference at the Hilton Hotel in Portland. But there was some tension in the air from the union picket line that was blocking the entrance. Straub refused to cross the line, but eventually made it to the speaker's podium in the auditorium. Nine more years would pass before another governor – Neil Goldschmidt – attended a Governor's Conference. Goldschmidt and Portland mayor, Bud Clark spoke at the conference's popular Hoot Owl Breakfast at the Lloyd Center Red Lion Hotel in 1987.

Twenty-two years later, Ted Kulongoski – the last governor to attend the Governor's Conference – spoke at GOSH 2009 at the Oregon Convention Center. "As we look forward to the future," he said, "we face new challenges to join the old. Sustainability, nanotechnology, new manufacturing techniques, and changes in the composition of the workforce will demand creativity and genuine commitment to workplace health and safety." ●

**2009
GOSH
CONFERENCE**

**Registration
Program**

**OREGON GOVERNOR'S
OCCUPATIONAL
SAFETY & HEALTH
CONFERENCE**

**Safety and
Health
in Action:**
*Making a Difference
in Today's Workplace...and Beyond*

*HealthCare
Ergonomics
Conference*

See pages 8 and 9 for information

MARCH 9-12, 2009

OREGON CONVENTION CENTER
PORTLAND, OREGON

The GOSH Conference is a joint effort of the American Society of Safety Engineers (ASSE) Columbia-Willamette Chapter and the Department of Consumer & Business Services Oregon Occupational Safety & Health Division (Oregon OSHA).

ASSE Oregon OSHA

The Oregon Governor's Occupational Safety and Health Conference: What to know before you go

By Ellis Brasch

The [Oregon Governor's Occupational Safety and Health Conference](#) (GOSH) offers an educational forum where employers, safety and health professionals, safety committee members, line supervisors, manufacturers, and distributors can gain state-of-the-art knowledge and skills to improve their workplace safety and health programs. GOSH is possible only because of Oregon OSHA's collaboration with the Columbia-Willamette Chapter of the American Society of Safety Professionals and the support of GOSH sponsors and other partners.

When is it? March 3-6, 2025

After Feb. 14, 2025, fees to attend GOSH increase:

- Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday breakout sessions are \$210 per day.
- Pre-conference workshops (half day) on Monday are \$100 each.
- Onsite registration incurs an additional \$50 service fee.

Where is the conference held?

The [Oregon Convention Center](#)

For more information: [GOSH website](#)

Conference schedule

Monday, March 3, 2025:

- 1-4 p.m. Pre-conference workshops (Cost to attend \$90)

Tuesday March 4, 2025: (Cost to attend \$185)

- 7:30 a.m.-3 p.m. – Exhibit hall open
- 8:30-9:45 a.m. – Opening and keynote
- 9:45-10:30 a.m. – Break and exhibits
- 10:30-11:45 a.m. – Breakout sessions
- 11:45 a.m.-1:15 p.m. – Lunch (included with Tuesday registration fee)
- 1:15-2:30 p.m. – Breakout sessions
- 2:30-3 p.m. – Break and exhibits
- 3-4:30 p.m. – Breakout sessions

Wednesday, March 5, 2025 (Cost to attend \$185)

- 7:30 a.m.-3 p.m. – Exhibit hall open
- 8 a.m.-3 p.m. – Columbia Forklift Challenge
- 8:30-9:45 a.m. – Breakout sessions
- 9:45-10:30 a.m. – Break and exhibits
- 10:30-11:45 a.m. – Breakout sessions
- 11:45 a.m.-1:15 p.m. – Awards ceremony and luncheon (included with Wednesday registration fee)
- 1:15-2:15 p.m. – Designated exhibit time
- 2:15-4:30 p.m. – Breakout sessions

Thursday, March 6, 2025 (Cost to attend \$185)

- 8:30-10 a.m. – Breakout sessions
- 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m. – Full-day workshops
- 10-10:30 a.m. – Break
- 10:30 a.m.-noon – Breakout sessions
- Noon-1 p.m. – Lunch (included with Thursday registration)
- 1-3 p.m. – Breakout sessions ●



Ask OSHA | Oregon OSHA

Does Oregon OSHA allow workers to wear watches with breakaway bands on the job?

Oregon OSHA's Personal Protective Equipment rule prohibits employees from wearing "rings, wristwatches, earrings, bracelets, and other jewelry which might contact power driven machinery or electric circuitry." The requirement also applies to

breakaway watchbands; these bands can still get caught in moving or rotating parts and become entangled or pulled into the point of operation on a machine or the workpiece. For example, metal lathe operators could be pulled into the rapidly spinning parts of the lathe if their loose clothing or jewelry gets caught in the moving parts of the machine. Refer to OAR 437-002-0134(6), Work Clothing, for more information about the requirement. ●



Short take

Owens Corning site achieves ongoing VPP status

By Aaron Corvin

Owens Corning Foamular Insulation LLC in Gresham continues to demonstrate its stellar commitment to workplace health and safety as the company has achieved approval for its ongoing status as a Star site under Oregon OSHA's Voluntary Protection Program (VPP).

The members of the VPP evaluation team that conducted the on-site evaluation of the Owens Corning facility were: Oregon OSHA staff members Cory Stengel, health consultant (team leader); Luis (Benny) Benitez, safety consultant (backup team leader); Alexia Gamboa, safety consultant; and special government employees Brett Luton and Matthew Buckelew.

The site in Gresham produces rigid foam insulation through a process of extrusion, cooling, edge trimming and cutting to length, and printing, packaging, and warehousing. Hazards include chemical, electrical, fire, explosion, and physical hazards associated with machinery.

"All elements of the site's safety and health management system met the high quality expected of VPP participants," according to the report of the evaluation, which occurred from July 29 to Aug. 1, 2024. Those elements include: management leadership and employee involvement; worksite analysis; hazard prevention and control; and safety and health training.

The facility's total case incidence rate (TCIR) is 2.24, 34 percent below the 2021 Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) average for the industry, which was 3.5. And the facility's days away from work, restricted activity or job transfer (DART) rate is 2.24, 6 percent below the 2021 BLS average for the industry, which was 2.33.

Moreover, there has been no work-related deaths or Oregon OSHA inspection activity at the site in the past eight years. "The plant has been a VPP site since October 2018," the evaluation report noted, "and this facility continues to maintain an excellent relationship with Oregon OSHA."

VPP encourages companies to effectively protect workers by going well beyond minimum safety requirements. The process of becoming a VPP company includes a formal application, approval, and inspection exemption. The benefits of becoming a VPP company include: up to 80 percent fewer workday injuries than expected of an average site of the same size and

industry; reduced workers' compensation costs; recognition in the community; and improved employee motivation to work safely.

Oregon OSHA encourages employers to learn more about the program and to submit an application. For more information about VPP, contact Mark Hurliman, Oregon OSHA voluntary programs coordinator, 541-539-8385 or mark.e.hurliman@dcbs.oregon.gov. ●



Ashtyn Baldas, right, the environment, health, and safety leader for Owens Corning Foamular Insulation LLC in Gresham, addresses the facility's status as a Voluntary Protection Program Star site. Second from right is Chad Thomsen, plant leader.



Incident Alert!

Company Exterior cleaning

Hazard..... Walking-working surface with an unprotected side or edge 4 feet or more above a lower level

Employee Exterior cleaner

Incident date Feb. 14, 2024

Oregon OSHA fined an exterior cleaning company for three violations, including a violation for failing to protect a 29-year-old employee who died after falling from the roof of an apartment building.

How the incident happened

After a short meeting with the business owner at 8 a.m., two employees drove a company truck to the apartment building, surveyed the property, and reviewed their assignments. It was about 45 degrees outside and raining.

At 9 a.m. the two employees decided that one would begin cleaning the gutters on the second-story roof, and the other would clean the gutters on the first-story roof. One employee set up a 28-foot ladder and climbed it to the second-story roof to install roof anchors for the employer-provided personal fall protection system. The 29-year-old victim climbed another ladder to a recessed part of the first-story roof above the entry door. After about 10 minutes, the employee on the second-story roof heard the sound of equipment striking the ladder that the victim used to climb to the first-story roof. When he turned around and looked down he saw the victim lying motionless on the ground. He immediately descended his ladder and called 911. Responders rushed the victim to a nearby hospital where he succumbed to his injuries.

The compliance officer's findings

1. The employee was not protected from falling 4 feet or more to a lower level.

Oregon OSHA's [general industry walking-working surfaces rules](#) require each employee on a walking-working surface with an unprotected side or edge 4 feet or more above a lower level to be protected from falling.

- The employee fell 8 feet, 3 inches, to a concrete pathway.
- The lack of fall protection likely caused or contributed to the employee's death.
- There are a number of methods to protect against falls; one of them could have been to install a fall protection anchor on the second-story roof. Such an anchor, with the addition of fall protection equipment, could have protected the employee while he was working on the first-story roof.

2. The company did not provide effective fall protection training to the employee.

- The employee did not use fall protection when he was working on a roof 4 feet or more above a lower level.
- The company's owner did not know the height at which general-industry employees are required to use fall protection. The owner said that he



The employee fell 8 feet, 3 inches, while he was cleaning gutters on the first-story roof. (Source: OTIS, Image 0816)

and his employees never wear fall protection on a single-story roof unless the pitch was steep and ground conditions, such as, rocks were present.

3. **The company had personal fall protection equipment available for the two employees but did not ensure that the employees used it.**
4. **The company failed to report an inpatient hospitalization to Oregon OSHA within 24 hours.**

The company had not been inspected by Oregon OSHA before the incident, and the owner was not aware of the reporting requirement; he learned about the requirement only after notifying his workers' compensation insurance company about the incident. The workers' compensation insurer told the owner to contact Oregon OSHA immediately, which he did.

Violations

1. The company did not ensure that employees on walking-working surfaces with unprotected sides or edges that were 4 feet or more above a lower level were protected from falling with guardrail systems, safety net systems, or personal fall protection systems. [29 CFR [1910.28\(b\)\(1\)\(i\)](#), Duty to have fall protection and falling object protection, protection from fall hazards, unprotected sides and edges.]
2. The company did not train each employee in the nature of the fall hazards in the work area and how to recognize them; the procedures to be followed to minimize those hazards; the correct procedures for installing, inspecting, operating, maintaining,

and disassembling the personal fall protection systems; and the correct use of personal fall protection systems and equipment. [29 CFR [1910.30\(a\)\(3\)](#), Training requirements, fall hazards.]

3. The company did not report inpatient hospitalizations, loss of an eye, and either amputations or avulsions that result in bone loss, to Oregon OSHA within 24 hours after occurrence of a work-related incident or employer knowledge of the event. [OAR [437-001-0704\(4\)](#), Reporting fatalities and injuries to Oregon OSHA.]

Raising the priority of mental health in the workplace

By Angie Marsh



GOSH keynoter will address emotional well-being, suicide prevention

When clinical psychologist Dr. Sally Spencer-Thomas talks of readiness for work, she sees mental health at the forefront.

"You can have steel-toed boots, but still fall in a hole and get injured — the same thing is true with emotional well-being," she said. "A worker may be advised to 'seek therapy,

but crisis response needs to meet people where they're at. It belongs at the top of the hierarchy of controls; eliminating conditions that threaten well-being."

Thus, the expanded title of her keynote for the Oregon Governor's Occupational Safety and Health Conference: "Why Burnout Mitigation, Mental Health Promotion, Addiction Recovery, and Suicide Prevention are Health and Safety Priorities."

"Those in this field are positioned to help; a cornerstone of health and safety is changing behavior and mindset," she said.

Spencer-Thomas, who will deliver her keynote on Tuesday, March 4, has dedicated her career to suicide prevention, mental health awareness, and resilience-building. She combines academic expertise with deeply personal motivation: She lost her brother to suicide. This drives her passionate advocacy for suicide prevention and mental health support systems.

"When my brother died, I found a big missing link: First-responders are siloed," she said. "While they tried peer support programs early on, they were crisis-oriented, and didn't look upstream, at the root cause of anguish."

Keynote speaker to conduct GOSH breakout session

In addition to her keynote presentation on Tuesday, March 4, from 8:45 to 9:45 a.m., Dr. Sally Spencer-Thomas will conduct a breakout session at 1:15 p.m. The session, "Up on the High Wire – Mental Resilience During Tough Times," will address what it means to be emotionally fit and psychologically hardy.

Participants will be able to make a case for comprehensive upstream mental health; define mental resiliency and positive psychology; and articulate the four approaches to resiliency – be bold, belong, be well, and believe.

As a co-founder and president of United Suicide Survivors International, she has pioneered peer-based programs, workplace mental health resources, and targeted support for groups at higher risk of suicide. She's also the lead author on the National Guides for Workplace Suicide Prevention (workplacesuicideprevention.com), which outlines how a workplace mental health and suicide prevention program can have a lasting impact: It should be comprehensive, sustainable, and strategic. This is done through a three-pronged approach:

1. Upstream:

Build protective factors that prevent problems from happening in the first place by promoting life skills, community, and mental health/suicide prevention literacy.

2. Midstream:

Early and effective intervention that identifies problems early in the course of their development, and offers the opportunity to course-correct environmental hazards and efficiently connect people who are suffering to qualified supports.

3. Downstream:

Safe and compassionate responses to the aftermath of mental health and suicide crises that follow best practice guidelines help reduce the impact of suicide, suicide attempts, and other mental health crises while promoting dignity and empowerment for all impacted.

Source: [Quick Start Guide, National Workplace Suicide Prevention](#)

What's also shaped Spencer-Thomas' work is the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) research in the last decade about suicide rates by industry. Occupational patterns show the role of work-related stress, exposure to hazardous conditions, and economic insecurity. The reports identify high-risk groups: farming, fishing, forestry, construction, and extraction industries.

"I've worked more and more within the construction industry; it's full of problem-solvers and high-functioning teams. They don't need 20 years of evidence-based outcomes; they're willing to try and test these ideas and practices offered today," she said, noting that their approach can also be mirrored by the other high-risk groups. "They've told me: 'Let us be the ones to change our workplaces. Let's see where the gaps are.'"

Spencer-Thomas is also an author, with works including "Guts, Grit, and the Grind," a [mental health resource series](#). Her emphasis on proactive support systems has helped shape numerous initiatives, such as [ManTherapy.org](#), a public-private partnership aimed at "men who don't see themselves as depressed or troubled, who think they're just busy, challenged, and overly stressed. But these are what we call 'double jeopardy' men: They have a lot of risk factors and are the least likely to reach out for help," she said. In a welcoming tone, the website offers a free tool that "cuts through the clutter about getting help," she said.

She has received awards for her contributions to suicide prevention and mental health advocacy, and continues to push the boundaries of mental health advocacy, working to reduce stigma, increase access to care, and build communities where people can find hope and support. Her efforts continue to make an impact on the field of mental health and suicide prevention.

"The construction industry has a motto of 'not another life to lose,' which I find inspiring," she said. "I'm grateful and hopeful." ●

