

Oregon OSHA Fire Service Advisory Committee January 11, 2018 Meeting Minutes

Attendees:

John Derr- Portland Fire and Rescue
Ray Dirling- Grant's Pass Fire
Eriks Gabliks- DPSST
Jason Jantzi- SDAO
Brian Stewart- Clackamas Fire

Cory Stengel- Oregon OSHA
Trena VanDeHey- Oregon OSHA
Heather Case- Oregon OSHA
Renée Stapleton- Oregon OSHA

Attendees by phone:

Russ Deboodt- Crook County Fire and Rescue
Dave Phillips- Black Butte Ranch Fire

Meeting called to order at 1:05 p.m.

Opening Remarks

Trena let the group know that Tom has moved to a different position within Oregon OSHA and will no longer be heading up the advisory committee. She is looking to fill the position Tom left and until then she will be running meetings. The group calendar invitations have been sent out for each meeting for the year, April 12, July 12, and Oct 11 in the future.

The group approved the October 12, 2017 meeting minutes, with a suggestion that a typo be corrected referring to forest activities, which will be corrected before the meeting minutes are posted online.

Old Business

Internal Training

Trena notified the group that Oregon OSHA's internal training team has redesigned their internal training, and are working on including firefighting in there. At a later point in the meeting, DPSST offered their facilities for any Oregon OSHA training. Additionally, DPSST extended invitations to Oregon OSHA compliance officers to attend firefighter trainings put on by DPSST.

Membership

The group discussed ongoing membership in the advisory committee. As they were going over the list, the group mentioned that Chief Moore has taken on the task of reaching out to different organizations identified on the list for members. He was not present at this meeting, but will update at a later date.

The group introduced themselves

Bump Testing 3 way gas meters

The group discussed an update for information on the use of gas meters. Some in the group had spoken to Tom outside of the committee regarding this issue. One of the take-aways from that discussion was to not always look to other departments. They should apply their practices to their specific situation, because different departments may use different brands and have different manufacturer's recommendations.

Representatives from Oregon OSHA emphasized to pay attention to the manufacturer's recommendations when choosing equipment and maintaining that equipment, as that is where most compliance officers will start when looking to employer compliance.

The group then discussed equipment inspection generally. Some members of the group presented a common situation to Oregon OSHA representatives, where they inspect equipment, put it out for use, and then it does not get used for a while, is that ok? OSHA stated that we would first look at the manufacturer's recommendations and then move to look at identification of a hazard. OSHA can weigh these factors and speak to manufacturers as well. OSHA emphasized that, as with any violation, it is important to keep in mind OSHA still has to prove there is a hazard.

New Hazard Alert: Rhabdomyolysis

The group reviewed the final draft for the hazard alert for Rhabdomyolysis. Oregon OSHA asked the group to look over the final layout and let them know of any corrections or suggestions. They specified that this hazard alert will go up on the website, it is not up yet, but it should go up soon.

New Business/Discussion

Regulatory Update

Oregon OSHA presented rulemaking updates to the group. The first was an update on Oregon OSHA's Walking-Working surfaces rules. This rulemaking was adopted May 16th and rules began being effective on November 1, 2017. The group received an outline created by Oregon OSHA showing all rule changes and which sections they are located in, as well as a timeline of effective dates for specific rules. The group went over the key changes and the unique circumstances for fire fighters. Oregon OSHA clarified times when the Walking-Working surfaces would have to be followed, and times (such as emergency operations) where fall protection and other Walking-Working surfaces rules would not have to be followed. Representatives from Oregon OSHA emphasized that any maintenance roof work on the firehouse would be subject to the Walking-Working surfaces rules.

The group was reminded that if any employers have standard operating procedures that reference OSHA codes (both federal and Oregon initiated), the references may now be incorrect, as multiple sections were gutted and redone under the same rule numbers.

The group was also notified of Oregon OSHA's latest penalties rulemaking, adopted December 22, 2017, effective January 1, 2018. This resulted in an increase in minimum and maximum penalties for violations as well as added a new size reduction tier. The group was directed as well to check out the updated penalties table on Oregon OSHA's website.

The group was told about Oregon OSHA's ongoing permissible exposure limit (PEL) updates, including manganese and lead. Manganese is becoming a longer process than originally

expected, as there is lots of concern among members of the welding industry. This rulemaking could potentially be addressing overexposure rather than just changing the PEL number. Lead- the group is looking to Washington and California who are also revising their lead rules. This rulemaking too has morphed into looking into exposure and blood lead levels rather than just changing the PEL number.

Crook County Fire and Rescue

Crook County Fire and Rescue presented an executive summary handout of an SCBA training incident internal report. The group went over an account of this incident which happened during a standard and approved training involving fire evolutions at Crook County's training annex building. After testing, it was determined that the SCBA bottle contained low oxygen levels and that there was some ambient nitrogen in the bottle which caused a dilution of oxygen when it was filled and sent back for service. The department has made many changes since this incident, including refilling all bottles, and creating new protocol regarding placing bottles back into service after filling with an outside company. Additionally, the department used this as a reminder to employees to observe and check one's partners when out, and be aware of members who may be acting out of the norm.

Other group members as well as representatives from Oregon OSHA thanked Crook County Fire and Rescue for being willing and open to sharing this information with the group, as well as the steps they took to prevent this incident in the future. The firefighter was fine after treatment in the hospital. Crook County Fire and Rescue also highlighted their relationship with Oregon OSHA consultation which allowed for quick testing of the oxygen levels in the bottles. The group asked and encouraged Crook County Fire and Rescue to give this handout to the president of the a health and wellness group for Oregon firefighters, as well as post this on a 'near miss' firefighter website which is run nationally.

Finally, the group suggested that Oregon OSHA make a hazard alert regarding this situation, as other industries that used bottled air could benefit from this as well. Representatives from Oregon OSHA stated they would work on this.

Lessons Learned/What to Produce

The group discussed what, if any, documents or items Oregon OSHA should produce, and what the subject of those items should be. The group requested some sort of document that offers a brief overview of what people in fire stations could expect during an OSHA inspection. Representatives from Oregon OSHA stressed that this list could not be all inclusive, and the group understood. The group thought this would help de-mystify the inspection process and help create awareness among fire safety professionals. This document could also help communicate to employers that Oregon OSHA can help people be successful.

The group wanted people to remember consultation is available. The group stated that because of their unique industry and unique rule set, it would be nice to have more industry specific publications. They would like these documents to be made more in a partnership or perhaps a collaborative effort with the advisory committee. There is also a difference in the way rules are applied currently between rural and urban fire stations, so it could help to have publications from Oregon OSHA as guidance. The group was in support of collaborating on future publications.

Overnight Hospitalizations and Fatalities

A handout was passed out to the group containing all of the overnight hospitalizations and fatalities reported to Oregon OSHA in the first quarter of fiscal year 2018. Previously, the group had requested information across all industries as this will better inform the group. This handout also includes amputations and loss of an eye, regardless of hospitalization. This also gives the group a perspective as to what Oregon OSHA staff are seeing beyond the fire services industry.

The group went over the handout, and asked Oregon OSHA what it does in the case of suicides. Representatives of Oregon OSHA emphasized that suicides are reportable, but if it is a clear suicide it is not likely to be looked in to in the manner of inspecting the workplace. Deaths and injuries usually have to have a direct connection to a workplace hazard in order for an inspection to occur. However, Oregon OSHA staff will still ask questions of the employer to ensure all the information is obtained.

Roundtable:

The group went around the table and discussed some things that have been coming up in their fire stations/workplaces and what they are working on. These included:

- Equipment runs/apparatus checks- the group was concerned that findings from these checks were staying in specific departments only, and not even being communicated to everyone within the same station. The group suggested perhaps equipment checks (or observing equipment checks) could be the job of the safety committee to ensure information gets more widely disseminated. Also the group discussed management staying connected to these findings to help dissemination and workplace culture. Other members of the group also remarked that this is a widespread problem through the state and the country.
- Near misses with apparatus and equipment. Some members are dealing with discrepancies over what near misses to report among their crew members. This group spoke to their safety committee to give reminders to crew.
- One group member is looking at their driving policy and revamping it, including examining whether it is effective and looking at it with an idea to breed transparency, with “smart failures”, as well as encouraging reporting.
- The group discussed discouragement from reporting in general with regards to safety issues, including incentive programs (and what kinds are less likely to discourage reporting), and drug testing, including when and how that can be used to not discourage reporting. Renée emailed the group Oregon OSHA’s fact sheets on incentive programs and drug testing.
- One group is having issues with their SCBAs regulators freezing up, and they are working with MSA on that issue. The group stated lots of other departments are also having or have had issues with this.
- One member group is examining the 48/96 shift schedules. This includes the effects on sleep deprivation. They are looking at studies and research for guidance. The group reminded them that Oregon OSHA also has a consultant who is well versed in the research of the effects of sleep deprivation and suggested that as a resource.
- Firefighter physicals. Some members of the group are looking at how to best educate doctors in their area regarding firefighter health issues, and physicals for incoming firefighters especially. There was some discussion of reviving a program where a travelling doctor could move throughout the state only seeing firefighters. The group agreed that a lot of doctors need basic education on the required form they need to fill out during physicals.

- Ohio cancer article. The group discussed an article titled “Unmasked” out of Ohio, which looked at the higher rate of cancer among firefighters, and how to help reduce the rates of cancer. This article was particularly beneficial because it also included more cost-effective ways to implement changes at the workplace that will also reduce cancer risk, rather than only highlighting very expensive changes that could be made. One method highlighted was changing out hoods after a fire, before mop up is being done. This article included research from other sources on reduction in risk. Additionally the group discussed the bill recently passed in Ohio that states that if a firefighter gets cancer (under certain circumstances), it is presumed to be as a result of their job. The group also discussed the shift in workplace culture regarding fire safety and cancer prevention. Awareness campaigns seem to be working, especially among newer firefighters.
- DPSST spoke about their building of multiple awareness campaigns, including some good trainings they’ve been able to offer regarding cancer prevention.

Meeting adjourned 3:11 p.m.

Next Meeting:

When: Thursday, April 12, 2018, 1:00 PM

Where: DPSST Building, 4190 Aumsville Hwy SE, Salem, OR 97317