

Oregon OSHA

Fire Services Advisory Committee

June 12, 2024

2:00 – 4:00 P.M.

Attendees: Cory Stengel, Heather Goodrich, Jason Jantzi, Julie Love, Kate Ryan, Mariah Rawlins, Matt Kaiser, Omar Lopez, Renee Stapleton, Rocky Hanes, Theodore Bunch, Tom Bozicevic

Meeting agenda:

- Introductions
 - Approve March 2024 meeting minutes
 - Federal OSHA proposed Emergency Response Standard, Oregon update
 - Wildfire smoke protection: EPA's Air Quality Index (AQI) 2024 update
[Key requirements: Oregon OSHA's permanent rules for protection from wildfire smoke — revised May 2024](#)
 - Emergency vs non-emergency operations
 - Roundtable (time permitting)
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- Introductions were conducted.
 - March 2024 meeting minutes were approved with no changes. Finalized minutes will be posted to the [Oregon OSHA Fire Services Advisory Committee](#) webpage.
 - **Federal OSHA proposed Emergency Response Standard, Oregon update**
 - Oregon OSHA provided a survey to Oregon stakeholders that is being used to provide comments to federal OSHA on their proposed Emergency Response rules. We will post the comments and share the raw survey data. Federal OSHA proposed to extend the rule's comment period to July 22, 2024.
 - Federal OSHA is extending the period for submitting comments by 30 days to allow stakeholders interested in the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) on Emergency Response additional time to review the NPRM and collect information and data necessary for comment.
 - The comment period for the NPRM that was published at [89 FR 7774](#) on February 5, 2024, is extended. Comments on any aspect of the NPRM must be submitted by July 22, 2024.
 - There was a hearing on June 4, 2024, Emergency Responder Preparedness Subcommittee has been developed. Oregon OSHA can send link to comments to this group if needed.
 - Member shared link to the [SDAO, Federal OSHA Proposed Rules](#) and the NVFC documents.
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- **Wildfire smoke protection: EPA's Air Quality Index (AQI) 2024 update**
[Key requirements: Oregon OSHA's permanent rules for protection from wildfire smoke — revised May 2024](#)

- The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) [updated](#) how it calculates and reports the Air Quality Index (AQI) values and went into effect for PM_{2.5}. The EPA now has a different range for AQI but the protection requirements for wildfire smoke in Oregon are the same. In the current rules, [437-002-1081](#) and [437-004-9791](#), where there is a PM_{2.5} concentration level in µg/m³, it is followed by the equivalent AQI value. The rules' requirements are based on concentration of PM_{2.5} which will not be changing. Due to this being difficult to assess, employers/employees are allowed to check local AQI.
- This is specific to wildfire smoke protection.
- AQI value for mandatory use of filtering facepiece respirators will now be 277 or higher (used to be AQI range 251-500).
- A note and link will be placed in Oregon OSHA rules.
- Updated [Key requirements: Oregon OSHA's permanent rules for protection from wildfire smoke](#)

| Previous AQI values | New AQI values <i>(effective May 2024)</i> | Wildfire Smoke standards' key requirements for exposure level using new AQI values |
|---------------------|---|--|
| 101 - 250 | 101 - 276 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assess and monitor air quality at each work location where employees are exposed 2. Provide and document employee training 3. Implement two-way communication system 4. Implement engineering and administrative controls 5. Provide NIOSH-approved filtering facepiece respirators for voluntary use |
| 251 - 500 | 277 - 848 | <p>Follow steps 1-4 above; and</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Provide NIOSH-approved filtering facepiece respirators for mandatory use by implementing a Wildfire Smoke Respiratory Protection Program in accordance with Appendix A, in the Protection from Wildfire Smoke standards |
| 501 and above | 849 and above | <p>Follow steps 1-4 above; and</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Provide NIOSH-approved respirators for mandatory use by implementing a Respiratory Protection Program in accordance with 29 CFR 1910.134 or OAR 437-004-1041 |

Employers with employees who are exposed to wildfire smoke levels for PM_{2.5} at or above 35.5 µg/m³ (AQI 101) only when engaged in a partially exempt activity or operation listed above, are required to provide information and training only on elements in subsection (4)(a) through (4)(g) in the standards, in addition to providing National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)-approved filtering facepiece respirators for voluntary use.



- The rules include a partial exemption for wildland firefighters and emergency operations that are directly involved in the protection of life or property, public safety power shutoffs, or restoration of essential services, such as evacuation, rescue, medical, structural firefighting, law enforcement, utilities, and communication. situations. Such activities are only subject to the requirements for information and training, and voluntary use of filtering facepiece respirators.
- There is training on the Oregon OSHA website for wildfire smoke protection that employers can use to help meet their needs.
- More information on [Protections from Wildfire smoke](#)

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- **Emergency vs non-emergency operations (PPE beyond emergency scenes)**
 - During Oregon OSHA consultations fire departments, the topic has come up that employers may be confused or unaware that they need PPE other than PPE they fight fire with. Examples are PPE needed for cleaning (eye protection, gloves), spraying chemicals, or mowing the lawn. Public assist calls may be vague as to what PPE will be needed. Another example is being called out to an emergency that ended up not being an emergency, or a situation goes from addressing a car accident to sweeping up glass.
 - Oregon OSHA would like a way to get the word out more broadly instead of one station at a time (possibly with a fact sheet).
 - In regards to PPE requirements, activities that are not emergencies are covered under Subdivision 2/I ([Personal Protective Equipment](#)), rather than 2/L (Fire Protection, [OAR 437-002-0182 Oregon Rules for Firefighters](#)).
 - Member: at our station, we do use PPE for cleaning toilets for example. The scenario does come up that we will finish the job for a person in distress. We caution Oregon OSHA to not get in the weeds in terms of violations.
 - Member: it is an expectation from the community. Consider this topic as risk management rather than a determined PPE fact sheet, discussion. Citizens may put themselves in risky situations if firefighters are unwilling. The focus should be the transition from an emergency to a non-emergency situation – switching the hat to what hazards may apply in the non-emergency situation.
 - Members are asked to share SOPs they may have with [Tom Bozicevic](#). A document will be discussed with this group.

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- **Roundtable**
 - Oregon OSHA had internal training with representatives from two fire service agencies to better help us conduct inspections of fire departments.
 - Oregon OSHA will be updating its 5-year strategic plan that will look at how we do our work and how it is measured. There will be listening sessions with stakeholders likely in August.
 - Member: The Governor's Fire Service Policy Council is trying to put together a collection of health and safety items.
 - Member: The Oregon Collaborative Group has been established which is a branch of the Governor's Fire Service Policy Council. Next Tuesday is the first meeting. Its work will likely cross with work of Oregon OSHA.

Next meeting is **September 11, 2024**. Please send agenda items to [Tom Bozicevic](#).