The newsletter of Minnesota OSHA • January 2013 • Number 78

Safety Lines

2012 review: inspections, outreach, training, response

Each year, Minnesota OSHA (MNOSHA) Compliance conducts a review of its projected performance as defined in its performance plan, which is generated prior to the start of the federal-fiscal-year (FFY), Oct. 1.

In FFY 2012, Minnesota OSHA Compliance:

- visited 2,667 establishments and identified 4,505 hazards;
- generated safety inspection results within 25 days on average;
- generated health inspection results within 26 days on average;
- resolved contested cases within 141 days on average;
- conducted 102 outreach presentations with an average participation level of 43 people; and
- responded to approximately 4,261 phone calls and 1,795 written requests for assistance, primarily email messages, with a majority of these inquiries answered within one day.

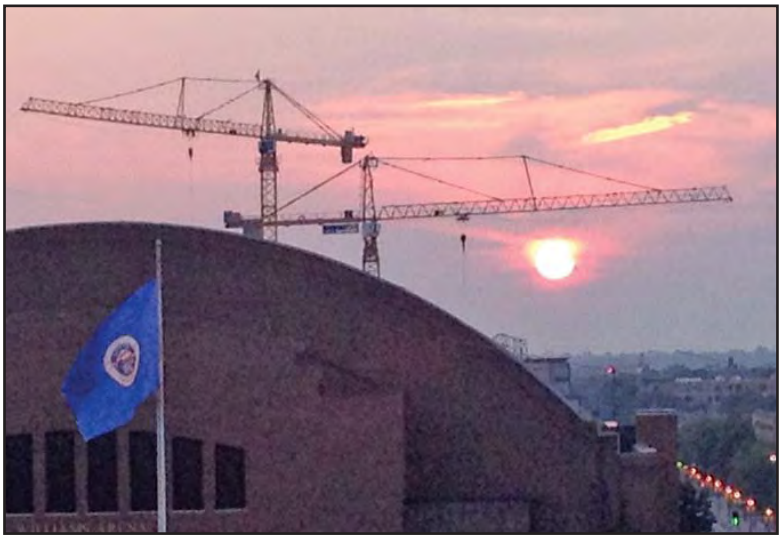
Forty-nine percent of the total employee health and safety complaints resulted in an on-site inspection with an average of 2.7 days response time. The remaining complaints were handled via the MNOSHA Compliance phone and fax system (nonformal complaints).

Minnesota OSHA Compliance continued its local emphasis program targeting window-washing operations, begun in FFY 2011, by adopting a new Minnesota law in FFY 2012 that further protects employees in the window-washing industry. The regulation is designed to increase worker protection and provide clarity for contractors that perform interior or exterior window-washing or building-maintenance operations. It applies to workers who are suspended more than 14 feet above grade; the standard does not apply to operations that are performed from grade level or from a ladder. MNOSHA Compliance conducted outreach training specific to window-washing operations, reaching 64 participants. Additionally, MNOSHA Compliance conducted 40 inspections of window-washing operations.

MNOSHA Compliance conducted inspections of high-risk construction work activities.

- Trenching – MNOSHA Compliance conducted 67 trench inspections and five outreach training sessions specific to trenching operations to more than 350 employer representatives.

- Fall protection – MNOSHA Compliance cited 190 employers for violation of residential fall-protection standards in FFY 2012 and conducted three outreach sessions to more than 200 employer representatives.



- Cranes – MNOSHA Compliance created a crane inspection team that meets quarterly to address the use of cranes in construction. They participated in specialized hands-on training to understand the nomenclature and functions of construction cranes. The team serves as mentors for other investigators throughout the division, participating in 10 construction crane inspections in FFY 2012.

- Silica – MNOSHA Compliance health investigators focused on silica inspections in the construction industry in FFY 2012. The investigators have all the sampling equipment ready so they can respond to a worksite within minutes. This allows for quick response to activities that are often short in duration.

MNOSHA Compliance continues to update and provide a variety of safety and health resources online at www.dli.mn.gov/MnOsha.asp. Included are printable handouts, information about its audio visual lending library and links to other websites where safety and health regulations and related information can be accessed.

For more information about MNOSHA's performance, the MNOSHA annual report is posted online during the first quarter of each year at www.dli.mn.gov/OSHA/Reports.asp.

How to report a workplace *accident*

Reporting to OSHA

Employers are required by law to report occupational accidents – in which an employee is killed or three or more are hospitalized – to OSHA **within eight hours**.

- ***During business hours*** – 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday – contact Minnesota OSHA Compliance by phone at (651) 284-5050 or 1-877-470-6742 or by email at osha.compliance@state.mn.us.
- ***After business hours*** call the federal OSHA 24-hour toll-free phone number at 1-800-321-6742.

For more information about Minnesota OSHA, visit www.dli.mn.gov/MnOsha.asp.

Reporting for workers' compensation

Employers are required to report a workers' compensation claim to their insurer whenever anyone believes a work-related injury or illness that requires medical care or lost time from work has occurred. If the claimed injury wholly or partially incapacitates the employee for more than three calendar-days, the claim must be made on the First Report of Injury (FROI) form – www.dli.mn.gov/WC/Wcforms.asp – and reported to the insurer within 10 days.

- ***If the claim involves death or serious injury***, the employer must notify the Department of Labor and Industry and their insurer within 48 hours of the occurrence. The claim may be reported to the Department of Labor and Industry by phone at (651) 284-5041, fax at (651) 284-5731) or personal notice. The initial notice must be followed by the filing of the FROI form within seven days of the occurrence.

Department of Labor and Industry sets five-year goals, strategies

The Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry (DLI) has conducted a review of its priorities and operations and prepared this strategic plan to guide it in carrying out its mission during the next five years.

DLI administers seven specific program areas:

- Apprenticeship
- Construction Codes and Licensing
- General Support
- Labor Standards
- Occupational Safety and Health (Minnesota OSHA)
- Workers' Compensation
- Office of Combative Sports

This strategic plan does not describe all of the agency's functions. Instead, it identifies areas where DLI staff members and stakeholders believe focus and innovation can improve the services provided by the agency.

Mindful of the need to use its resources wisely, DLI first identified the core objective of each of its units, requiring an answer to the basic question "Why is DLI's work important to the citizens of the state of Minnesota?" It then identified specific, targeted strategies to carry out each of the objectives. Finally, outcome measurements were established to determine whether DLI is successful in the strategies and initiatives it undertakes.

The following terms are used throughout this document.

Objective: The goal DLI wants to accomplish.
Strategy: Explains what DLI does to meet the objective.
Initiative: Describes how DLI will implement the strategy.
Outcome measure: Gauges DLI's success.

See MNOSHA's current five-year strategic plan:

www.dli.mn.gov/OSHA/Reports.asp

As part of its strategic planning process, DLI took a close look at the work it performs and considered how to measure the results of its efforts. In addition, areas were identified where DLI didn't currently collect the data necessary to measure success. In those situations, DLI will identify and monitor available information so appropriate baselines can be established.

DLI is committed to fair and firm enforcement of the laws it administers and to being a responsive and reliable resource for its stakeholders, including employers, workers, insurers and licensees. This strategic plan will help DLI continue to improve the services it provides. It is available on the DLI website at www.dli.mn.gov/PDF/strategic_plan.pdf.

DLI Dashboard shows agency performance indicators

The DLI Dashboard tracks the agency's progress in key areas. Stakeholders can see where the agency is on track and where it needs to improve.

View the dashboard at www.dli.mn.gov/Dashboard.asp.

Safety alerts:

swivel snaphook, harness, escape respirator, firefighter facepiece lens

By Diane Amell, MNOSHA Compliance Training Officer

Swivel snaphooks

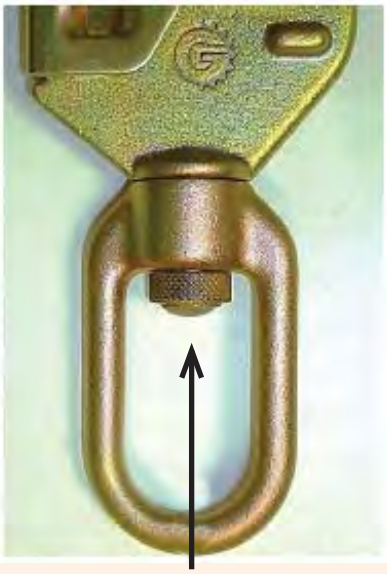
Guardian Fall Protection (GFP) has issued an inspection notification for its swivel snaphooks with a manufactured date between Aug. 26, 2011 and June 26, 2012. A snaphook failed upon initial inspection of a self-retracting lifeline. The nut that held the swivel eye to the hook backed off the hook stem and came loose. The notification applies to the parts listed below:

- MK Edge Series;
- Yellow Jacket Series;
- Daytona Series;
- 3-Way Rescue Retrieval Series;
- Aardvark Series;
- Edge Series 20-30 feet lengths;
- Rope Lifeline part #01131 6 dual length shock rope lanyard with polyplus rope with aluminum rebar hooks and high strength snaphook; and
- custom parts manufactured after Aug. 26, 2011 with swivel snaphooks.

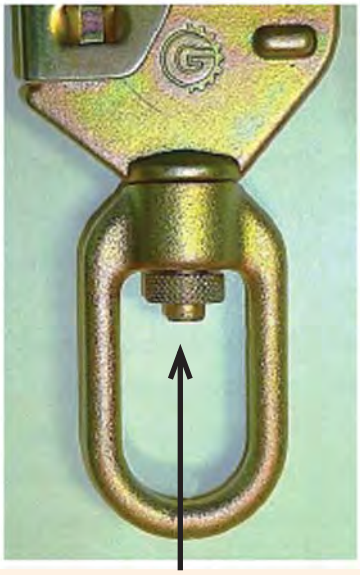
Those having the hooks should remove them from service immediately and call Guardian customer service for return and replacement. For more information see the inspection notification on the GFP website at www.guardianfall.com/inspection-notifications or call 1-800-466-6385.

Guardian Fall Protection swivel snaphooks

Normal condition

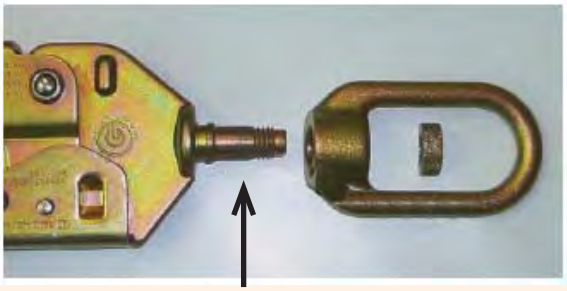


Good hook: Stem flattened in a mushroom shape. Any sort of swage means the hook is good. Nut cannot back off stem.



Bad hook: Stem protrudes straight through the nut. Stem has no mushroom shape flared over the nut. Nut can back off threaded stem.

Defective condition



Bad hook: Stem of hook body was not swaged over nut. Threaded nut is capable of spinning off the stem.

(Source: Guardian Fall Protection inspection notification)

Harnesses

Honeywell Safety Products issued a notice regarding its Miller Duraflex harnesses used as part of a personal fall arrest system. The D-ring had been incorrectly assembled into the harness, leaving it held

on only by a piece of plastic rather than the webbing. While Honeywell believes the defect to be limited to only one batch of harnesses, it encourages employers to continue to perform pre-use inspections checking for the defect and, if any defective harnesses are found, to remove them from use immediately and contact Honeywell at 1-800- 873-5242.

Honeywell Miller Duraflex harnesses

Correct

D-ring is behind the webbing

Incorrect

D-ring is only held by the plastic

(Source: Honeywell Safety Products)

Escape respirators

On April 26, 2012, three organizations – federal OSHA, the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) – issued alerts regarding the failure rate of the SR-100 Self-Contained Self-Rescuers (SCSRs, also known as escape respirators) manufactured by the CSE Corporation.

Some of the respirators have failed to generate sufficient oxygen upon start-up, which would expose employees to atmospheres immediately dangerous to life and health (IDLH) and make escape more difficult.

Testing by NIOSH and MSHA determined the failure rate was too high to meet the requirements for certification. While the majority of these respirators were found in mines, they may also be in use in underground construction, confined space entry (especially in sewer work), and

CSE SR-100 Self-Contained Self-Rescuer opened and unopened.

(Source: U.S. Department of Labor OSHA)

chemical and pulp/paper plants. Any SR-100 SCSRs in the workplace must be replaced with a different NIOSH-approved self-rescuer or another respirator suitable for emergency escape.

Firefighter facepiece lens

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) issued an alert notice July 2, 2012, regarding the thermal degradation and melting of the polycarbonate facepiece lens on self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) during structural firefighting. When this thermal degradation occurs, a firefighter can be exposed to dangerous products of combustion and superheated air, which has been attributed to the deaths of at least three – and possibly as many as seven – firefighters.

NFPA and NIOSH have attributed the hazard to three factors:

- modern buildings and furnishings tend to produce higher heat release rates than older ones, exposing firefighters to more rapid heat development and intense thermal conditions;
- personal protective equipment (PPE) has improved with time, allowing firefighters to remain in IDLH environments longer; and
- the improved PPE makes it more difficult for firefighters to detect changes in thermal conditions.

NFPA recommends the following measures be taken.

- In addition to the requirements of NFPA 1852 Selection, Care and Maintenance of Open-Circuit Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus, fire departments, academies and other emergency response organizations must require that all SCBA facepiece lenses be inspected before and after use. Any lens found to have cracks, crazing, bubbling, deformation, discoloring, gaps or holes must be immediately removed and replaced.
- Respirator training must include the limitations of respiratory protection devices, awareness that delayed recognition of thermal effects may occur and response to SCBA problems in high temperature environments.
- When determining firefighting strategies, incident commanders and firefighters should take into account the limitations of the facepiece lenses and delayed recognition of heat intensity due to PPE.
- All personnel involved with interior firefighting should know that the possibility of facepiece lens deterioration can be reduced by maintaining constant awareness of conditions, including the development of extreme temperatures/flashover conditions and evacuating.
- Upgrade or replace SCBA lenses with newer, upgraded ones as they become available.

The entire alert is online at www.nfpa.org/assets/files//PDF/CodesStandards/SCBA_Alert_070212.pdf.

MNOSHA standards update: *AWAIR list revisions adopted*

By Shelly Techar, MNOSHA Compliance Management Analyst

The list of industries required to comply with the A Workplace Accident and Injury Reduction (AWAIR) Act was amended to satisfy the statutory requirement that the list be reviewed and updated every two years.

The revision to the standard industrial classification list in Minnesota Rules 5208.1500 occurred Dec. 10, 2012. The revised list was compiled using 2010 survey data for Minnesota from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).

Employers in the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) classifications that are on the list will have six months from the date the revised list is adopted to implement an AWAIR program for their facilities.

Classifications that are not on the list may be added to the list in two years if the incidence or severity rates for the industry go above the Minnesota average rates for that year. Updates to this list will be based on the most current injury and illness data available at the time of the update.

Industries with a lost-workday case rate (lost-workday cases per 100 full-time-equivalent workers) at or above 1.9 or an incidence rate (recordable injuries and illnesses per 100 full-time-equivalent workers) at or above 3.9 were added to the list. These rates are the 2010 average rates for all Minnesota employers combined.

The AWAIR Act requires covered employers to develop a written workplace safety and health program that includes:

- how managers, supervisors and employees will implement the program;
- how the continued participation of management will be established, measured and maintained;
- the methods that will be used to identify, analyze and control new or existing hazards, conditions and operations;
- how the plan will be communicated to all affected employees;
- how workplace accidents will be reviewed (for example, defining how they will be investigated and how corrective actions will be implemented); and
- how safe work practices and rules will be enforced.

The AWAIR list is available on Minnesota OSHA's website at www.dli.mn.gov/OSHA/Awair.asp. To be added to the mailing list for notification of future Minnesota OSHA standards activity or other Department of Labor and Industry rulemaking, visit www.dli.mn.gov/Rulemaking.asp.

Free Construction Seminars

MNOSHA Compliance reviews standard, stakeholder discusses compliance practices

During Minnesota OSHA Compliance's free Construction Seminars, staff members from MNOSHA Compliance discuss and clarify construction-related regulations, plus each seminar features someone from the construction industry who shows the compliance practices used in the field and teaches attendees real-world examples of how to comply.

The two-hour sessions are a great time for attendees to join the discussion, give their perspective, ask questions and connect with Minnesota OSHA Compliance on neutral ground. Besides the topic of the day, MNOSHA Compliance also explains current issues being found in workplaces throughout the state and where it is focusing its attention for special emphasis programs.

Mark your calendars now

- Jan. 15, 2013 – Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labeling (GHS) of chemicals
- March 12, 2013 – The new crane standard
- May 14, 2013 – Electrical worksite safety

Stay tuned to *Safety Lines* and MNOSHA Compliance's Web page – at www.dli.mn.gov/OSHA/ConstructionSeminars.asp – for more complete descriptions about the topics and the presenting speakers.

Workplace cleaning chemicals, housekeeping spotlighted

By Diane Amell, MNOSHA Compliance Training Officer

Recently, several organizations have brought attention to the impact of cleaning chemicals and housekeeping as workplace safety and health issues, both as a source of possible hazards and a method of abatement.

Cleaning chemicals

Federal OSHA and NIOSH have published an information sheet and a poster regarding chemicals used in cleaning products. This issue has received greater interest in recent years due to the advent of "greener" or environmentally safer cleaners. Although these mixtures are often thought of as being less hazardous to employees, many of the green cleaning agents still pose a risk to employee safety and health.

Health problems connected to the use of cleaning products can include eye, skin, throat and respiratory tract irritation and damage, as well as headaches, dizziness and lightheadedness. Some products may cause or aggravate asthma.

The information sheet delineates the differences among cleaners, sanitizers and disinfectants (also known as antimicrobial pesticides). It also lists several factors to be considered when selecting a cleaning product, including: chemical ingredients; use and storage; ventilation; spills and splashes; skin contact; and release of mists, vapors and gases.

One point repeated throughout the information sheet and poster is the danger associated with mixing cleaners, especially those containing bleach and ammonia – chlorine gas can be released, resulting in possible lung damage and death.

Safe work practices to be followed include:

- warning employees not to mix cleaning products;
- training employees about the correct use, storage and spill clean-up procedures, including dilution and mixing;
- conducting personal protective equipment (PPE) assessments for the various mixing and cleaning tasks;
- providing employees with the proper PPE determined from the assessments, including gloves and goggles;
- checking that all cleaner containers are labeled with the product names and appropriate hazard warnings;
- assuring adequate ventilation is available; and
- providing workers with the opportunity to wash up after working with the cleaners.

The OSHA/NIOSH poster and information sheet are on the federal OSHA website at www.osha.gov/pls/publications/publication.athruz?pType=Industry&pID=401. The poster is available in several languages.

***Workplace cleaning*, continues ...**

Housekeeping issues

Housekeeping issues have also recently caught the attention of at least two other organizations.

In the December issue of its newsletter, *Process Safety Beacon*, the Center for Chemical Process Safety featured an example of a fire that started in a fiber drum full of welding debris and oil-soaked rags. The floor, pipes, structural steel and equipment adjacent to the drum were covered with previously spilled dried polymer. The drum caught fire, either from hot welding debris or spontaneous combustion of the oily rags, and quickly ignited the spilled polymeric material.

Remains of the trash drum.

Although the fire did extensive damage to the facility, no one was hurt. The fire was attributed to poor housekeeping because the fiber drum should not have been used as a trash container, it was not emptied on a regular basis and the spilled polymer, which had been permitted to collect over time rather than being cleaned up, acted as fuel.

Process Safety Beacon can be viewed in several languages via the Safety and Chemical Engineering Education website at http://sache.org/beacon/products.asp.


Fire damage in the process area.

And in a series of articles last summer and fall in *Joint Commission Perspectives*, the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations discussed the importance of keeping corridors adjacent to patient rooms clear to comply with NFPA 101 *Life Safety Code*.

A minimum width of eight feet across a corridor needs to be free of clutter, with a few exceptions such as crash carts. Patient lifts are allowed in the means of egress provided a five-foot width of clear corridor is maintained, the fire plan addresses the relocation of wheeled equipment and employees are trained about the plan. Fixed seating is also allowed in the corridor, as long as the corridor has six feet of clear width.

For more information about the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations, visit www.jcrinc.com.

Consultation Corner

Imminent danger seen, potential incident prevented

A Minnesota OSHA Workplace Safety Consultation (WSC) consultant driving through Rochester, Minn., after a consultation visit in early December noticed workers at an excavation site who were in imminent danger. The consultant stopped, intervened and prevented potential serious injury.

To access a broken water main, a trench spanning two lanes of roadway – approximately eight feet deep, with near vertical walls – had been dug, with no safeguards in use to protect the foreman and one labor worker from possible trench collapse. The constant vibration of heavy traffic adjacent to the area increased the risk of collapse.

As the WSC consultant approached, the southeast corner of the trench had a visible crack in the side and chunks of earth were falling to the bottom. The consultant asked the workers to exit the trench and they complied. A call was then made to the company's vice president, who responded by coming to the site. While waiting for the vice president's arrival, there was a partial collapse of the trench, at the southeast corner.

After arriving at the site, the company's vice president agreed a trench box was needed and one was obtained and installed in the trench before work resumed. The employer has since taken steps to prevent this situation from recurring.

The WSC consultant's response to the situation helped prevent what could have resulted in a serious injury or fatality incident. The company's willingness to promptly follow the advice and install a trench box helped avoid further injury risk during the project.

In federal-fiscal-year 2011, Minnesota OSHA (MNOSHA) Compliance's second and third most frequently cited standards in the construction

Workers in a trench without safeguards against trench collapse as the WSC consultant arrives.

A partial trench collapse occurs after workers comply with the consultant's request they exit.

A trench box is lowered into place before work on the site resumes.

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industry were “Protective system for excavations” (with 65 citations) and “Specific requirements for excavations” (with 62 citations). MNOSHA Compliance has published a Trenching and excavation safety fact sheet that's available online at www.dli.mn.gov/OSHA/FactSheets.asp.

Conference to address safe handling of patients

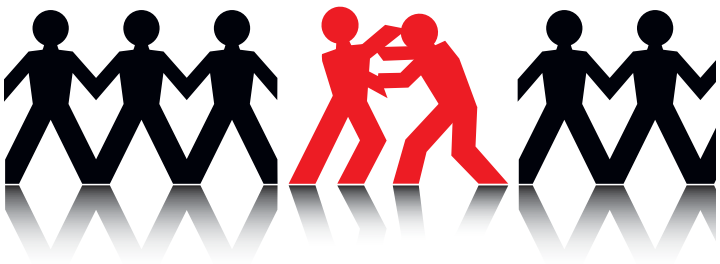
Together, Minnesota OSHA Workplace Safety Consultation (WSC) and the Minnesota Safety Council will host a second full-day Safe Patient Handling conference during the 79th Annual Minnesota Safety and Health Conference, on May 14 at the Minneapolis Convention Center.

The full-day workshop provides health care professionals, safety professionals and administrators in acute and long-term care settings with the best and most recent information about the development, implementation and maintenance of a safe-patient-handling program.

Representatives from hospitals and skilled nursing care facilities will discuss efforts aimed at promoting safe patient-handling while cultivating a healthy workplace and ensuring quality of care.

Registration and more information will be online soon at www.minnesotasafetycouncil.org.

Workplace violence prevention roundtable discussion



Workplace Safety Consultation (WSC) hosted a roundtable discussion about workplace violence prevention in health care settings, Nov. 1, at the Department of Labor and Industry (DLI). More than 60 participants listened to presentations from representatives of DLI, Hennepin County Medical Center (HCMC) and St. Cloud Hospital. The audience was encouraged to participate, asking questions and offering solutions.

Marty Williams, HCMC, stated the importance of having security and human resources working together to implement a plan for managing workplace violence prevention. HCMC has been following the plan outlined in *Workplace Violence Prevention and Intervention ANSI Standard* (ASIS/SHRM WVP.1-2011). The new standard establishes policies, processes and protocols that organizations can adopt to identify and prevent threatening behavior and violence affecting the workplace, and to better address and resolve threats and violence that have occurred. The standard also describes the implementation of a workplace violence prevention and intervention program, as well as protocols for effective incident management and resolution. The standard is available for purchase on the American National Standards Institute website at http://webstore.ansi.org.

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Karen Witzman, St. Cloud Hospital, stressed the importance of care-staff members reporting any type of incidence of violence. Too often, she said, care-staff members have accepted violent situations as part of the job versus looking at these types of events as an opportunity to investigate and to determine measures to minimize the risk for violence toward the staff. Also, more rural facilities have been experiencing workplace violence incidents, emphasizing the need to establish a plan to minimize the risk. A copy of the hospital's injury report form has been included on DLI's workplace violence prevention Web page – at www.dli.mn.gov/WSC/Wvp.asp – as an example for workplace violence prevention investigations.

Another issue discussed was the need to assess violence potential by conducting risk assessments, upon admission, and determining precautions to minimize any risk. To better inform hospital staff members of potentially violent patients, a method was developed to confidentially communicate which patients have a history of or are a risk for aggressive behavior. An unobtrusive, standard sign signifying a patient has a history of aggressive behavior is posted on the doorway to notify staff members entering the room of the potential risk. This allows for precautions to be taken, such as acquiring additional staff members prior to entering the room.

Vikki Sanders, Workplace Safety Consultation, discussed the importance of having a written plan that establishes methods for preventing and responding to workplace violence situations. Understanding and identifying the "warning signs" can help prevent a situation from escalating to a point where people get hurt. Maintaining personal conduct that is calm, focused and empathetic to the customer or client can prevent potentially violent situations from escalating. Policy models can be found online at www.dli.mn.gov/WSC/Wvp.asp.

Three videos from the event are online at www.dli.mn.gov/Wsc/Wvp_Hc_Video.asp.

Safety Grant Program awards more than $1 million

During state-fiscal-year 2012 – from July 1, 2011, through June 30, 2012 – Workplace Safety Consultation awarded 144 safety grants totaling $1,057, 574 to private- and public-sector employers. The Safety Grant Program awards matching funds up to $10,000 to employers for qualifying projects designed to reduce the risk of injury and illness to workers.

Grant applications are reviewed every two months and annual deadlines for submission are mid-month in February, April, June, August, October and December. In addition to prioritizing applications from business types in the MNOSHA strategic plan and goods-producing employers, there is currently a specific priority given for window-washing equipment, tuckpointing and other industries dealing with silica, grain-handling equipment and residential construction fall-protection equipment.

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Helpful tips

To better the odds of receiving a grant award, the application submitted should be for a project that is based on a written hazard-assessment that identifies the injury or illness risk and provides specific recommendations to minimize or eliminate the risk. The project description on the application must coincide with the written hazard-assessment for the application to be considered eligible.

One part of the application that is frequently not completed well is the anticipated return-on-investment (ROI), in section H. An important aspect of a grant project is the impact the project could have on reducing the cost of injuries and illnesses. Applicants should take some time to review the incidences and calculate the costs of existing injury and illness occurrences that relate to the hazard(s) identified in the grant project or obtain industry data about average costs of related injuries and illnesses. The data can be used to provide an anticipated cost savings and calculate the timeframe for when the project cost savings can be realized.

The Safety Grant Program application is available in three formats at www.dli.mn.gov/WSC/Grants.asp; it can be completed online and is available as a PDF file and a Word document. For further information, contact the safety grants administrator at (651) 284-5162, 1-800-731-7232 or dli.grants@state.mn.us.

MNSHARP Construction promotes safety excellence

The Minnesota Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program (MNSHARP) Construction recognizes major-construction companies where managers and employees work together to develop safety and health programs that go beyond basic compliance with all applicable OSHA standards and result in immediate and long-term prevention of job-related injuries and illnesses. Only construction projects at least 18 months in duration are eligible for participation.

To begin the process, Workplace Safety Consultation (WSC) conducts an initial full-service safety and health consultation visit to determine whether the employer qualifies for Pre-SHARP status for up to one year. During Pre-SHARP, the WSC MNSHARP team works with the employer and completes visits to the worksite quarterly or as needed with project changes. Pre-SHARP status exempts the employer from programmed, planned inspections by Minnesota OSHA Compliance; however, an imminent danger, a fatality or catastrophe, or a formal complaint can trigger enforcement activity.

At the end of Pre-SHARP status, a full MNSHARP Construction evaluation is completed. Site-specific rates are calculated and compared against the most recently published Bureau of Labor Statistics incident rates. Employers that score a two or better on all of the OSHA Form 33 indicators, have a total case incident rate (TCIR) and a days away from work, job transfer or restriction (DART) rate below the national average and have abated all items identified during the qualifying visit are then considered for complete MNSHARP Construction status. Initial certification is for up to two years; depending on the length of the project, the site can be considered for recertification. Learn more at www.dli.mn.gov/Wsc/MnsharpConstruction.asp.

Nominations for DLI safety award recipient due March 30

Arthur E. McCauley Jr.

The Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry (DLI) seeks to honor a safety or health professional who is an example of safety excellence, with the annual Arthur E. McCauley Jr., Minnesota Occupational Safety and Health Leadership Award.

The award was named for former Minnesota Safety Council member Arthur E. McCauley Jr., whose work as a safety professional encompassed the attributes of this award. McCauley was regarded for his work as a member of the Minnesota Safety Council and the Minnesota Occupational Safety and Health Advisory Council. He was known for his dedication and tireless efforts to improve the safety and health of Minnesota's workplaces.

More information and the nomination form are online at www.dli.mn.gov/OSHA/McCauleyAward.asp. Interested parties may also contact Pam McLaughlin at (651) 284-5018 or pam.mclaughlin@state.mn.us.

New data being collected for occupational injuries and illnesses

By Brian Zaidman, Research and Statistics

Approximately 4,800 Minnesota employers will receive response packets for the 2012 Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses (SOII). In Minnesota, the SOII is conducted jointly by the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and the Department of Labor and Industry (DLI). The employers participating in the survey were notified in December 2011 that their OSHA log data for 2012 will be submitted to calculate the incidence rates and case characteristics for the state and – together with employers across the country – for the nation. Employers' timely and accurate response to the survey will minimize costs and maximize the value of this vital workplace safety tool.

Notification letters were also sent to about 5,000 employers, explaining they have been selected to participate in the survey for 2013. The letter explains they need to keep an OSHA log for 2013, if they are not already required to keep one, and to report their results in 2014.

It is very important that employers that receive their 2012 survey packets begin to respond to the survey. The first task is to complete preliminary OSHA recordkeeping for the 2012 injuries and illnesses. Cases involving injured workers who are still away from work or on work restrictions will need to have estimates entered for the respective durations. Then the log totals are transferred to the log summary sheet and those totals are entered on the SOII Internet response screens.

Some employers that have had no recordable injuries and illnesses during the survey year mistakenly think they do not have to respond. However, **all participating employers are required to respond**. For many industries, the majority of work establishments have no recordable cases.

Completing the survey takes very little time if the OSHA recordkeeping requirements have been followed. For more information about how to complete the OSHA log or the log summary sheet, review the Recordkeeping 101 and 201 articles, which are available at www.dli.mn.gov/OSHA/Recordkeeping.asp.

The DLI survey team is part of the Research and Statistics unit and is barred by federal law from sharing the survey responses with OSHA. The DLI survey team can answer questions about OSHA recordkeeping, the SOII or how to report the OSHA log information. Even if an employer is not participating in the survey, the DLI survey team can answer OSHA recordkeeping questions. The team can be reached at (651) 284-5428. Questions about submitting the survey online should be emailed to BLS at idc.helpdesk@bls.gov.

OSHA answers

frequently asked questions

As part of its continual effort to improve customer service and provide needed information to employers and employees, Minnesota OSHA (MNOSHA) Compliance answers the most frequently asked questions from the previous quarter.

Q **Can carbon monoxide (CO) monitors designed for the home be used to sample for CO in the workplace?**

A No. Home carbon monoxide alarms are designed to alarm at higher quantities of CO over a longer time period. Residential alarms manufactured to meet ANSI/UL 2034 Single and Multiple Station Carbon Monoxide Alarms standards sound at:

- 70 ± 5 ppm over a time period of 60 to 240 minutes;
- 150 ± 5 ppm for 15 to 50 minutes; and
- 400 ± 10 ppm for 4 to 15 minutes.

The alarm will not sound at 30 ± 3 ppm for 30 days or at 70 ± 5 ppm for 60 minutes to minimize false alarms. This is in comparison to the workplace permissible exposure limit (PEL) of CO over an eight-hour time-weighted average (TWA) of 35 ppm in general industry and 50 ppm in construction.

Industrial or commercial CO alarms are designed to quickly detect and warn employees of hazardous levels of gas in the workplace. Many are able to log exposure during an entire workday and provide TWA concentration information and peak exposure. Meters are also available with alarms to warn employees of dangerous levels in the atmosphere.

Minnesota OSHA Compliance has prepared a fact sheet about monitoring employee exposure to carbon monoxide and about the Minnesota Rules requiring such monitoring. It is available online at www.dli.mn.gov/OSHA/PDF/fact_c_o_monitoring.pdf.

Q **Besides complying with regulatory requirements, is there any benefit to keeping an OSHA 300 Log?**

A According to a recent article by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations, the answer is yes. The commission noted the OSHA 300 Log enables employers to identify where workers are getting hurt in a facility, what tasks or jobs are associated with the highest injury and illness rates, and what abatement measures can be taken to reduce the number of injuries and illnesses.

Q **How do you calculate the work-related injuries and illnesses (WRII) incidence rate?**

A Multiply the total number of injuries and illnesses by 200,000 and then divide by the number of hours worked by all employees to get the total recordable case rate. The 200,000 is equal to the number of hours worked by 100 full-time employees annually.

Q **If a personal care assistant (PCA) employed by a home health care agency is rendering assistance in a private home and is required to clean up blood, would the PCA be required to use an approved disinfectant?**

A Yes, although the proper term is "appropriate disinfectant," which may include products approved or cleared by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) or both. The Bloodborne Pathogens standard does not distinguish between exposures at a traditional worksite and those at a client's home.

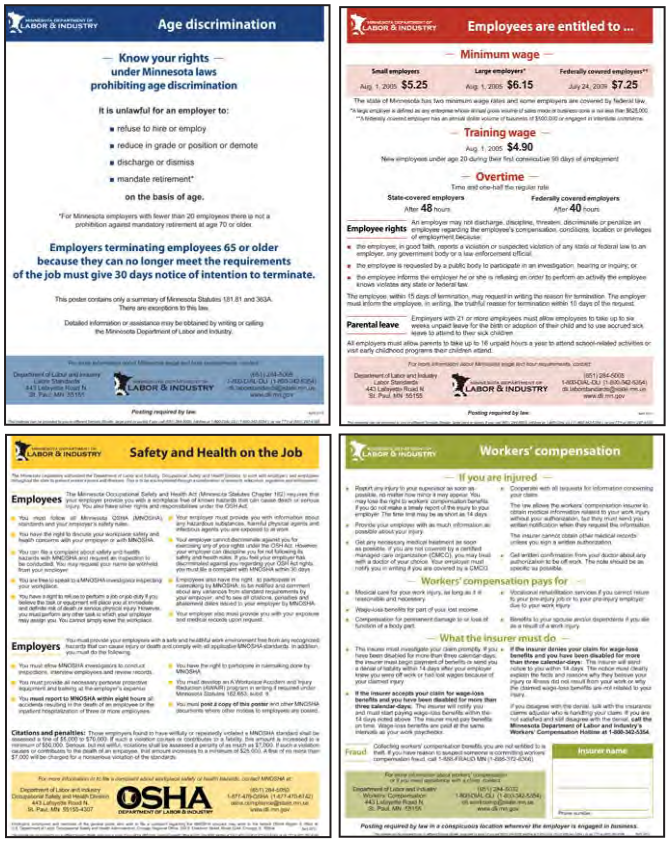
Q **If the PCA is required to use an appropriate disinfectant, can they use what the client has at their home or does the company have to provide the disinfectant?**

A The employer must ensure an appropriate disinfectant is used; it does not matter whether the employer or the client provides it. Employees should be trained to read labels, recognize appropriate disinfectants and know what to do if there is any doubt about a product.

Do you have a question for Minnesota OSHA? To get an answer, call (651) 284-5050 or send an email message to osha.compliance@state.mn.us. Your question may be featured here.

State's mandatory workplace posters simplified, translated, easier to print

The Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry (DLI) has redesigned four posters employers are required to display in a physical location where employees can easily see them.



The free mandatory posters have been given a new consistent look, the text has been simplified and each poster is available in English, Hmong, Somali and Spanish. The free posters are now also provided in a standard size and can be easily printed individually or as a four-poster pack at www.dli.mn.gov/LS/Posters.asp.

The posters provide information about safety and health regulations, wage and overtime laws, age discrimination and retirement, and what an employee should do if he or she is injured at work. DLI also makes available a poster from the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development explaining unemployment insurance benefits, as well as links to several federal government agencies that have mandatory poster requirements for employers.

Although the posters have a new look, the regulations explained within them have not changed, so employers are not required to replace their current poster set.

The posters can also be ordered at no cost from DLI by phone, U.S. mail, email or via an online form; ordering details are explained at www.dli.mn.gov/LS/Posters.asp.

SOII sauce Interesting findings from the Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses

By Brian Zaidman, Research and Statistics

2011 incidence rates, plus case and demographic characteristics available

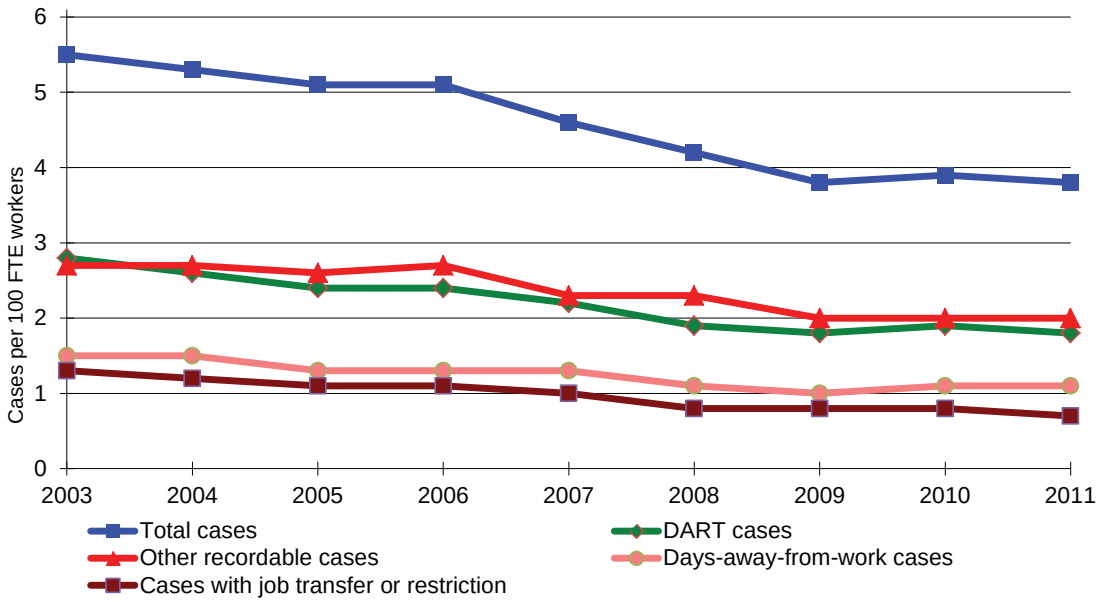
Information about OSHA recordable injury and illness rates and case counts, and about the case and demographic characteristics of injuries and illnesses with one or more days away from work (DAFW) are now available on the Department of Labor and Industry website at www.dli.mn.gov/RS/StatWSH.asp and on the Bureau of Labor Statistics website at www.bls.gov/iif.

The Department of Labor and Industry (DLI) website features tables and charts for injury and illness rates by industry and also has a set of tables with case and demographic estimates for private industry. Many other results are also available, including data for local and state government establishments, for specific industries and for occupations. These may be accessed through the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Profiles tool that is available at http://data.bls.gov/gqt/InitialPage or by emailing the DLI Research and Statistics unit at dli.research@state.mn.us.

BLS started using revised classification systems for occupation and for the injury characteristics (nature, part, source and event) for the 2011 cases, so the 2011 estimates for these characteristics are not directly comparable with earlier years.

Figure 1 shows the trend in the case incidence rates for the types of OSHA recordable cases. While the overall trend has been decreasing during the time period shown, the rates have leveled off during the past three years.

Figure 1: Injury and illness case incidence rates, Minnesota, 2003-2011



Two examples of the information available from the case and demographic characteristics are shown on the next page. Figure 2 shows the estimated number of DAFW cases by worker gender, which shows different patterns for men and women. While the number of DAFW cases for men has decreased by 33 percent since 2003, the number of women's cases has decreased by only 21 percent and has increased

during the past three years. The estimated number of cases for both men and women in 2011 remained statistically unchanged from the 2010 estimates.

Figure 3 shows the estimated number of DAFW cases by worker age. The estimated number of workers age 16 to 34 years old increased in 2011 for the first time during the time period shown. Conversely, the estimated number of workers age 55 and older decreased for only the second time during this period.

Figure 2: Number of DAFW cases by gender, all ownerships, Minnesota, 2003-2011

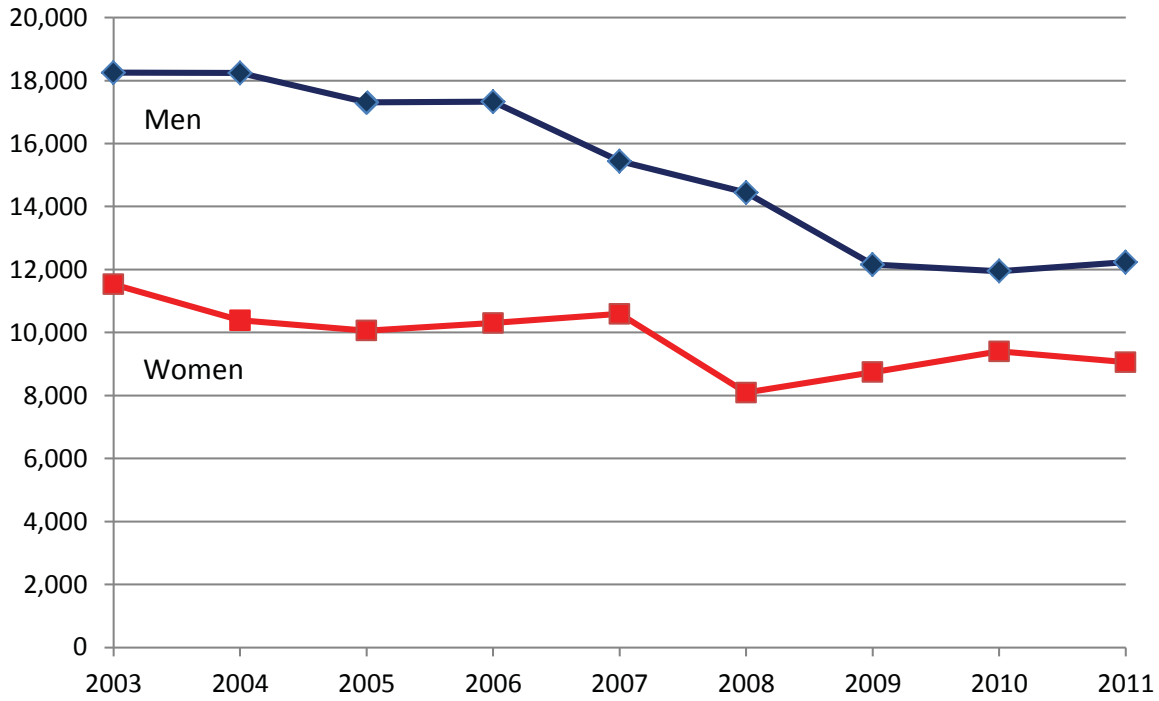
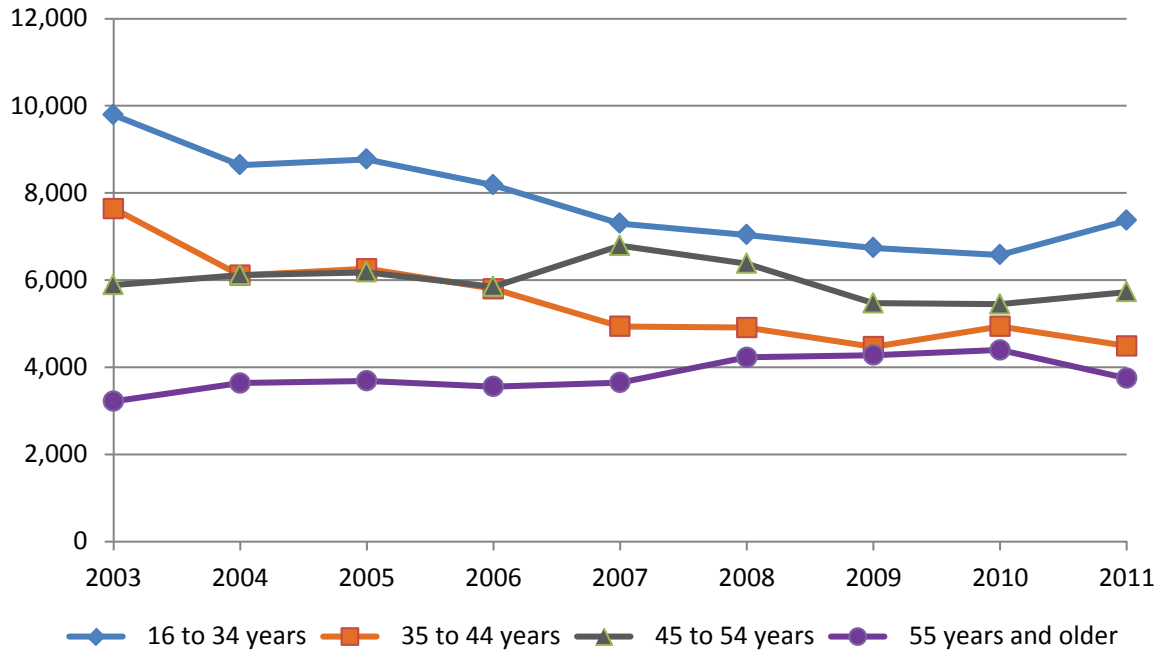


Figure 3: Number of DAFW cases by age of worker, all ownerships, Minnesota, 2003-2011



Minnesota's newest MNSHARP Construction worksites

Two **Mortenson Construction** worksites were recognized in early December by the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry for their achievement as Minnesota Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program (MNSHARP) Construction worksites. The two worksites are Mortenson's University of Minnesota Biomedical Discovery District Project in Minneapolis and its Radisson Blu Project in Bloomington, Minn. Both projects are scheduled for completion in March 2013.

MNSHARP Construction is a Minnesota Occupational Safety and Health Administration program that recognizes major-construction companies where managers and employees work together to develop safety and health programs that go beyond basic compliance with all applicable OSHA standards and result in immediate and long-term prevention of job-related injuries and illnesses. Only construction projects at least 18 months in duration are eligible for MNSHARP Construction.

Learn more about MNSHARP Construction on the Department of Labor and Industry's website at www.dli.mn.gov/Wsc/MnsharpConstruction.asp.

Mortenson Construction
University of Minnesota Biomedical Discovery District Project

Mortenson Construction
Radisson Blu Project

www.dli.mn.gov/Wsc/MnsharpConstruction.asp