

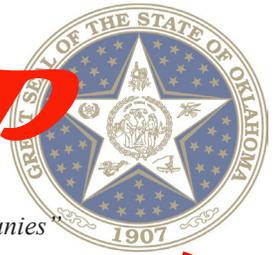
Looking SHARP

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Summer 2011

"Improving Safety & Health For SHARP Companies"



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ODOL Welcomes Commissioner Mark Costello

On January 10, 2011, Mark Costello became Oklahoma's Commissioner of Labor.



Costello

Commissioner Costello is a 4th generation Oklahoman, born and raised in Bartlesville. He attended the University of Kansas, graduating in 1980 with his undergraduate degree. He met and married his wife Cathy in 1982 and they have five children Christian, Ian, Anna Marie, Caitlin and Kolbe. They currently reside in Edmond.

Since 1984, Commissioner Costello has founded several technology based companies which have resulted in over a hundred good jobs and hundreds of millions of dollars in revenue in the State of Oklahoma. Commissioner Costello believes that his private sector business experience, gives him valuable insight necessary to administer the Labor Department's \$7.5 million annual budget in the best interests of the great state of Oklahoma and its people.

Commissioner Costello is actively working on issues of workers' compensation reform and has begun touring the State to help recognize companies who have made the commitment to a safe and healthful workplace and achieved SHARP certification status.

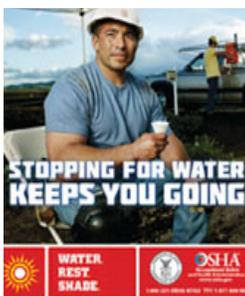
We hope all our readers will have the opportunity to join us in welcoming Commissioner Costello to the Oklahoma Department of Labor.

Heat Stress Alert!

HEAT-RELATED ILLNESS CAN BE DEADLY. Every year, thousands of workers become sick from exposure to heat, and some even die. These illnesses and deaths are preventable.

As part of OSHA's nationwide outreach campaign to raise awareness among workers and employers about the hazards of working outdoors in hot weather OSHA is providing educational resources on its web site to give workers and

employers information about heat illnesses and how to prevent them. There are also training tools for employers to use and posters to display at their work sites. Visit OSHA's web site at www.osha.gov frequently this summer to get the latest tools and resources to keep your workers safe!



Source: OSHA

To schedule a speaking engagement with Labor Commissioner Mark Costello, e-mail Liz McNeill or call 405-521-6102, toll-free state-wide at 888-269-5353 or visit our web site to download a speaker request form and fax it to 405-521-6018.

OSHA's Message: *Plan, Prevent, Protect*

Every single day, 14 workers are killed by preventable workplace tragedies – close to 100 deaths each week. In addition, tens of thousands die every year from workplace disease and more than 4.6 million workers are seriously injured on the job. 4,340 workers died on the job in 2009.

Most of these workers died one at a time, far from the headlines and nightly news, remembered only by their families, friends and coworkers. These are the daily tragedies of the American workplace.

Recently, OSHA announced its 2011 regulatory agenda. OSHA is currently working to make fundamental changes in the way employers and workers cooperate to secure safe workplaces. Priorities within the Agency have been realigned to focus on the original intent of the OSH Act and to make setting and enforcing workplace standards the central focus. OSHA has increased the number of inspectors by moving personnel into enforcement positions and utilizing stimulus funds to hire more standards writers and inspectors, including an increase in the number of inspectors in Oklahoma.

OSHA recently announced a new, targeted Severe Violator Enforcement Program that includes increased inspections of recalcitrant employers, mandatory follow-up inspections, and inspections of other work sites owned by the same employers. OSHA has increased their compliance assistance efforts as well.

By the end of the third quarter of FY-2011, OSHA had tripled the number of egregious cases (those cases with more than \$500,000 in penalties) over the previous year. OSHA also implemented administrative modifications to its penalty calculations, which have had the effect of raising OSHA penalties. These policies consider various factors, including an employer's overall safety and health program, the number of workers, and previous inspection history. The Agency's policy of reducing penalties for small employers and those acting in good faith, however, continues to be in effect.

"The intent is not to punish or react, but to require employers to plan, prevent and protect workers from

exposures to occupational hazards," says Dr. David Michaels, Assistant Secretary of Labor for OSHA, "instead of waiting for an OSHA inspection or a workplace tragedy. Under proposed standards, employers will be expected to develop and implement an effective safety and health management program, under the proposed Injury and Illness Prevention Program (I2P2) requirements. "Essentially, the I2P2 standards are a common sense proposal, where OSHA expects employers to find the safety and health hazards present in their facilities that might injure or kill workers, and then fix those hazards. This proposal would also

give workers a greater voice in the workplace, with employee involvement being a key element of the standard."

For businesses earnestly trying to comply with the law, OSHA is currently ensuring that they have the information and assistance they need to protect their workers. Compliance Assistance products and programs, such as the OSHA web site and the On-Site Consultation program, remain a critical tool in OSHA's tool bag. OSHA has indicated

that they plan to invest more in these services to ensure that it's available to help employers.

In Oklahoma, the On-Site Consultation Program is a service of the Oklahoma Department of Labor, partially funded by OSHA, our Division provided approximately 800 on-site consultations in 2010, in industries ranging from oil and gas, manufacturing, service and construction. Our services are free, thanks to a grant from OSHA and, only in Oklahoma, businesses who work with the **Safety Pays**® OSHA Consultation Division can earn a \$1,000 tax exemption, simply by having a full service safety and/or health consultation, a program offered only in Oklahoma.

For more information on our On-Site Consultation services, feel free to call us at (405) 521-6140 or visit us on the web at www.labor.ok.gov. Don't forget to ask about SHARP (Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program), as well as our WCPR (Workers Compensation Premium Reduction) program.

"The intent is not to punish or react, but to require employers to plan, prevent and protect workers from exposures to occupational hazards."

— Dr. David Michaels
Assistant Secretary of Labor, OSHA

Lead Poses Risks to Worker Health

Lead is a soft, bluish-gray metal found throughout the environment. Lead has been used for a variety of applications almost since the beginning of civilization. Lead can combine with various other substances to form lead compounds. Modern day uses of lead including manufacturing ammunition, batteries, chemical compounds, glassware, and explosives. Lead is used to prevent rust and corrosion and is used in containers and pipes. Most paints used on metal contain lead, such as the paint on bridges and automobiles. Lead is found in a variety of industries from smelting and foundry operations, to demolition and renovation, to welding and cutting, as well as oil and gas.

Although the toxic effects of lead have been known for centuries, lead exposure is still widespread in the United States. Over exposures to lead is common in certain industries, and children are especially susceptible to the effects of lead, and it is not uncommon for work-exposures to migrate home in the form of dust or residue on the skin, hair and clothing of workers, thus exposing the workers children.

Once lead gets into your body, it stays there for a long time. Even small amounts can build up over time, leading to damage to the brain, nerves, kidneys and blood cells. Lead can also cause infertility in men and harm to an unborn child. Many people with high lead levels do not feel sick, and each person may respond differently. Some of the early symptoms of lead poisoning include: irritability, muscle or joint pain, stomachache, trouble concentrating, and tiredness.

Lead overexposure is one of the most common over exposures found in industry and is a leading cause of workplace illness. Therefore, OSHA has established the reduction of lead exposure to be a high strategic priority. OSHA's five year strategic plan sets a performance goal of a 15% reduction in the average severity of lead exposure or employee blood lead levels in selected industries and workplaces.

Lead is most commonly absorbed into the body by inhalation. When workers breathe in lead as a dust, fume, or mist, their lungs and upper respiratory tract absorb it into the body. The body can also absorb lead through the digestive system if it enters the mouth and is ingested.

Although engineering and work practice controls are the primary means of protecting workers from exposure to hazardous air contaminants, source control

can sometimes prove insufficient to control exposure to lead. In these cases, airborne lead concentrations may be high or may vary widely. Respirators often must be used to supplement engineering controls and work practices to reduce worker lead exposures below the PEL. When respirators are required, employers must provide them at no cost to workers.

Respirators also must be provided upon employee request. A requested respirator is included as a requirement to provide increased protection for those employees who wish to reduce their lead burden below what is required by the standard, particularly if they intend to have children in the near future. In addition, respirators must be used when performing previously indicated high exposure or "trigger" tasks, before completion of the initial assessment.

Before any employee first starts wearing a respirator in the work environment, the employer must perform a fit test. For all employees wearing negative or positive pressure tight-fitting face piece respirators, the employer must perform either qualitative or quantitative fit tests using an OSHA-accepted fit testing protocol. In addition, employees must be fit tested whenever a different respirator face piece is used, and at least annually thereafter.

When respirators are required at a work site, the employer must establish a respiratory protection program in accordance with the OSHA standard on respiratory protection, 29 CFR 1910.134. At a minimum, an acceptable respirator program for lead must include: 1) Procedures for selecting respirators appropriate to the hazard; 2) Fit testing procedures; 3) Procedures for proper use of respirators in routine and reasonably foreseeable emergency situations, including cartridge change schedules; 4) Procedures and schedules for cleaning, disinfecting, storing, inspecting, repairing, discarding, and otherwise maintaining respirators; 5) Training of employees in the respiratory hazard to which they are potentially exposed during routine and emergency situations; 6) Training of employees in the proper use of respirators, including putting on and removing them, any limitations of their use, and their maintenance; 7) Procedures for regularly evaluating the effectiveness of the program; 8) Procedures to ensure air quality when supplied air is used; 9) A written program and designation of a program administrator; and 10) Recordkeep-



DANGER LEAD HAZARD

OSHA Focusing on Res. Construction

In the past, OSHA issued a directive that allowed the residential construction industry to utilize “alternative fall protection” measures – which many took to mean “no fall protection”. Recently, OSHA has rescinded the old directive and issued a new compliance directive that was originally scheduled to be implemented in June, however, OSHA has recently allowed a three month “phase in” period to help the residential construction contractors comply.

Despite the fact that fall protection is the #1 topic on the minds of those in this industry, its not uncommon to find that many of OSHA’s other standards are not well known in the industry, thus making this additional scrutiny all the more stressful for the industry.



To help those who are wondering where to start, here’s a basic primer on general safety and health requirements for the construction industry:

Injury & Illness prevention plan: 1926.20(b) requires the employer to implement “such programs as may be necessary” to prevent injury and illnesses and ensure compliance with the standards. Your safety plan should include: management commitment, employee involvement, hazard recognition and control, including a regular schedule of inspections, and employee training.

Other required programs may include: fire prevention plan, hazard communication plan, lockout/tagout, emergency action plan, bloodborne pathogens plan.

PPE must be provided: The employer must assess the job site and determine what hazards are present, and provide the PPE necessary to protect employees from those hazards.

OSHA recordkeeping must be kept if you have 10 or more employees any time during the calendar year. 300, 300A and 301 forms must be filled out complete and in detail.

Trenching hazards are another leading cause of fatalities in residential construction, and employers must protect excavations greater than 5’ deep before employees may enter.

Training your employees and supervisors is key to workplace safety, and working with your subcontractors to ensure safety is maintained is also vital.

Though these items are just the tip of the iceberg, so to speak, additional safety & health concerns, including the new fall protection requirements, can be addressed with an On-Site Consultation. For more information, call the Oklahoma Department of Labor at (405) 521-6140.

Source: ODOL

The Writer’s Block: The Power of Goals

by Betsey Kulakowski, CSHO



Kulakowski

I believe in the power of goals and I strive to set goals for myself and help my companies achieve theirs. Recently, as I was listening to a pod-cast this week about how to make your health goals more effective, I started thinking about how to make safety goals more effective. We’ve always talked about making goals SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, results-oriented and timely) but many of our companies still struggle not only with how to set goals, but how to make them work.

Here’s what I came up with: **1)** Goals for your safety program have to be set in manageable increments that are challenging, but “do-able”. It’s like eating an elephant, you have to do it one bite at a time. Small goals are often most productive, because you take things in small steps that keep you from getting overwhelmed.

2) Write your goals down and make them public – make them tangible – if they’re on computer, print them out and post them for everyone to see and embrace. When they are public, you can’t back down from your goals. You also aren’t in it alone if everyone shares in the goals (and everyone who benefits from the goals should share in them!)

3) Identify the “who, what, when, where, why and how” – include in the goals and action plans. Why you are doing them. Why are they of value? What are the end results? How will you get there? Who will make them happen? Where will they put you once you’ve met your goals?

4) Work on each of your program goals every day. It’s like exercise. You can’t run a marathon if you don’t train for it. But a runner doesn’t just run every day to prepare - they have to eat right, get plenty of sleep. Safety is the same way - you have to train, coach, inspect, monitor, and communicate every day to meet your goals.

5) When you meet your goals – celebrate! Then, set new goals - raise the bar - and repeat.

You’ll notice, I always say “goals” - plural - meaning more than one. I honestly believe that if you only have one goal, you have more opportunity for failure. Your goals should be set up to help you succeed. They should be written in a positive voice, which indicates a successful outcome is expected! If you believe it, you can achieve it!

Betsey Kulakowski is the founding editor of Looking SHARP and a Safety Consultant with the Safety Pays® OSHA Consultation Program. She is recognized as a certified safety and health official (CSHO) in both construction and general industry. To contact her, please call (405) 521-6145 or e-mail her at betsey.kulakowski@labor.ok.gov.

Lead *(Continued from page 3)*

ing procedures.

In addition, the construction industry lead standard stipulates medical evaluations of employees required to use respirators. If an employee has difficulty in breathing during a fit test or while using a respirator, the employer must make a medical examination available to that employee to determine whether he or she can wear a respirator safely.

For more information on lead in the work environment, visit the OSHA web site at www.osha.gov or to request a no-cost industrial hygiene survey of your facility, contact one of our industrial hygienists at the Oklahoma Department of Labor by calling (405) 521-6140.

Source: OSHA

Things That Make You Go ‘Huh?’

A rat is suspected of starting a fire at the Veterans of Foreign War building in Yakima, WA. Reportedly, investigators discovered a rat had chewed through an electrical cord. The rat apparently caught fire and ran to its nest, igniting flammable items. The fire spread quickly through the building, damaging several rooms and war memorabilia. The fire department says damage could exceed \$1 million.



Source: The Seattle Times

ODOL Launches Facebook Page



The Oklahoma Department of Labor has joined the world of social media by launching a new Facebook page! The purpose of this page is to provide quick and interactive access to the Department of Labor and the services we have to offer.

The public can see the latest news and information on upcoming events, employee recognition and news applicable to businesses and industries in the state.

Find us on facebook at: www.facebook.com/OKODOL.

Record Heat Prompts Smart Phone App

The record heat in Oklahoma has been a topic on everyone's minds this summer. Workplaces are struggling to keep workers cool, and in industries where workers must be outside, employers have been modifying their work schedules, taking liberal breaks and stressing the importance of hydration with their workers.

In response to the need to protect workers from the heat, OSHA has developed a new smart phone app to help employers cope.

The app is designed for devices using an Android platform, and versions for BlackBerry and iPhone users will be released shortly. The app, which can be downloaded for free in English or Spanish, allows users to calculate their work site heat index, determined by a combination of high temperature and humidity. Based on the heat index, the app displays a risk level to outdoor workers. With a simple click, the user can access reminders about the measures that should be taken at the indicated risk level to protect the user from heat-related illness. Users are prompted with reminders about drinking enough fluids, scheduling rest breaks, planning for and knowing what to do in an emergency, adjusting work operations, gradually building up the workload for new workers, training on heat illness signs and symptoms, and monitoring each other for signs and symptoms of heat-related illnesses.

OSHA also issued a new Web-based tool, "Using the Heat Index: Employer Guidance," that instructs employers about using the heat index to calculate and address risks posed to workers.

See the news release, in English or Spanish, for more information on both the app and the heat index visit OSHA's web site at www.osha.gov.

Source: OSHA



*"Prepare and prevent, don't repair and repent."
~Author Unknown*

Think You're Having A Bad Hair Day? Imagine How Your Stylist Feels!

It's a hazard so scary, it'll make your hair curl! Actually, it'll make your hair straight, which is why the product known as "Brazilian Blowout" is so popular. But the hazards associated with the straightening product stem from questionable contents of formaldehyde, which has been classified recently by the U.S. government as a known carcinogen.

When the straightening treatment started in Brazil, hair dressers mixed their own formulas in beakers with formaldehyde, water, keratin and other ingredients. Now available in several commercially prepared brands, the process often contains varying levels of formaldehyde. According to complaints, it has made some stylists cough and reddened the eyes of clients.

The real flap began when Oregon OSHA issued a hazard alert, after their industrial hygiene staff, following up on an employee complaint when a stylist became ill, found high levels of formaldehyde in products that were labeled, "formaldehyde-free". Michael Wood, who heads the state's Occupational Safety and



Health Administration, said in a statement, "It is clear that the levels are high enough to cause concern." In order to be considered "formaldehyde free", the product must contain less than 0.1% formaldehyde.

However, the recent lab tests by Oregon OSHA found formaldehyde levels as high as 10.8 percent in the Brazilian Blowout Solution and 11.8 percent in the Brazilian Blowout Acai Professional Smoothing Solution, both of which are labeled "Formaldehyde Free." Independent tests by Health Canada found that the products contained anywhere from 8.4 to 12 percent formaldehyde.

Oregon OSHA has taken a lot of heat from the manufacturer, as well as consumers who continue to demand the process and are willing to pay as much as \$1500 for it. However, OSHA remains steadfast in its efforts to protect the workers who are exposed to the chemicals day after day.

Source: OSHA

Looking SHARP is a quarterly publication by the Oklahoma Department of Labor, Safety Pays® OSHA Consultation Division. This publication is intended to assist employers pursuing SHARP Certification, as well as other employers, with improving safety and health conditions in their workplaces. If you have questions and/or suggestions for future issues, or if you would like to subscribe to our mailing list, contact the editor, Betsy Kulakowski, via e-mail at betsy.kulakowski@labor.ok.gov or call (405) 521-6145.

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Oklahoma Department of Labor
Safety Pays® OSHA Consultation Division
 3017 N. Stiles, Suite 100
 Oklahoma City, OK 73105



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