



Lake County Contractors Association

Safety News

May, 2003

Safety Training – For scheduled classes, check the enclosed 2003 Safety Training Reservation Form. For more information or to register on-line go to www.lcca-il.org/events. The easiest way to get your employees trained is to let us schedule a class specifically for you. We will make sure the content is tailored to your employees and your industry.

Call Lisa Grosskopf at the LCCA Office for all your safety training needs.

REMEMBER: If you have ten or more (or will pay for 10 students) we will bring the training to your office, or a site of your choice, or hold your class at the LCCA Office.

First Aid, CPR, OSHA 10-Hour, Excavation Competent Person, Power Line, Confined Space, Respiratory Safety/Silica, Scaffold User or Competent Person, and much more are available for you. Since the LCCA Safety & Education Fund subsidizes the cost, the price is hard to beat.

Training dates are subject to our instructors' schedules, so if you want a particular date, call the LCCA Office as soon as possible.

IUOE 150 Skills Verification - The Operating Engineers Local 150 Apprenticeship and Skill Improvement Program has developed a website (www.asiplocal150.org) for members, contractors and the public to view information regarding the apprenticeship and skill improvement program. One can find links to safety issues, employer's skills verification, the different types of equipment and their controls, class training schedules, district union meeting schedules, phone numbers, hours of operation and a map to the Training Site.

You may also check the skill level of any of your employees on the website. To access individual records:

1. Select the Skills Verification tab on the web page.
2. Read the Disclosure statement and accept the terms.
3. Enter your Contractor ID number (Local 150 Health and Welfare ID number) as the User ID.
4. Enter the word "Password" as your password.
5. Click the Login button.
6. You will then be prompted to enter a unique password of your own. This will become your new password from here on.
7. Once logged in, enter the SSN of the member you wish to find and depress the search button.

In the event you lose or forget your password, you may contact the Local 150 Apprenticeship and Skills Improvement Program Office at (815) 436-4150.

NIOSH to Study Lift Practices - The use of aerial lifts account for 2 to 3 percent of all construction worker deaths each year, and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health plans to launch a four-year study into the issue, according to the Center to Protect Workers' Rights.

"An average of 26 construction workers die each year while working in all types of aerial lifts," according to Michael McCann, director of safety and ergonomics with CPWR. "A total of 207 deaths on lifts have been recorded from 1992 to 1999," he said.

According to NIOSH, "The growing popularity of boom-supported lifts could lead to increased numbers of deaths if preventive action is not taken. "NIOSH plans a field-and-laboratory-based study to use engineering tools and methods to redesign equipment and improve work practice controls to prevent fatalities and injuries associated with aerial lifts," according to Christopher S. Pan, the NIOSH researcher who will lead the study.

Researchers are concerned that as lifts become larger and more popular they are being used for purposes not intended by the manufacturer, such as lifting workers and loads that exceed a lift's capacity. On scissor lifts-that can be elevated to heights of up to 50 feet, workers who perform pulling or pushing activities "can exert horizontal forces that the scissor lift is not designed to withstand," NIOSH said. Overturns of scissor lifts mostly occur while the lift is elevated over 15 feet, and especially while the lift is being moved.

McCann is hoping the NIOSH study can look into engineering issues such as device stability and control standardization. One idea for an engineering control directed at stability would be to limit the speed at which an aerial lift could move when the bucket is elevated, McCann said. Doing so would motivate operators to lower the lift when they are moving beyond a few feet and reduce the chance that a moving lift tips over.

Another idea is to examine how the lifts are directed. "A lot of the problems are design problems," McCann said. "No two aerial lifts have the same set of controls."

Often a contractor will rent several different models of lifts for use on a single construction site, which limits the chance that a worker will be trained in how to safely operate each of them. McCann said one fatality has been attributed to a worker's confusion when moving between two lifts in which the control buttons for moving the device forward and backward were the reverse of what he was accustomed to.

Aerial Lift Accidents - Because of a lack of information on how many workers in various trades use aerial lifts, it is not possible to say which trade is most at risk. However, electricians had the most deaths, at 25 percent of lift related deaths from 1992 to 1999, followed by construction laborers at 15 percent and electrical power installers and repairers at 13 percent. Painters accounted for 8 percent of the deaths and carpenters 5 percent.

Boom lifts accounted for almost 70 percent of the aerial lift deaths from 1992-99. The most common cause of death while working in a boom-supported lift was electrocution with 62 fatalities.

Other hazards for workers in these lifts include being ejected from the bucket after being struck by vehicles or falling objects. The lift can fall over, and workers also face the threat of being caught in or between objects such as the bucket edge and roof joists, the center found.

Bucket trucks operating on a road are at risk of being struck, which can eject a worker or, if hit hard enough, knock the entire vehicle over, he said. In one case, a vehicle was on the roadside with the bucket extended across the road when it was struck by a large truck that could not clear the boom.

Scissor lifts accounted for more than 25 percent of aerial lift deaths. Hazards include being ejected when the device was struck by an object, or falling out of the lift after leaning on railings or when chains or guardrails have been removed. One way to protect workers from being ejected or falling over the side would be to require that lifts have a lanyard anchor installed in the middle of the platform.

Scissor lifts are being used in place of ladders and are now being made narrow enough to go through doorways. The problem with that trend is that the higher a narrow lift goes, the less stable it becomes.

OSHA requires workers to be trained in the operations of each lift, prohibits lift modification without written permission of the maker, and does not permit an aerial lift to be driven with the lift extended unless it is designed for that purpose.

Assured Equipment Grounding Conductor Program - Green is this quarter's color for contractors following the assured equipment grounding conductor program. As of April 1, 2003, contractors should be using **Green** tape when marking cords.

The assured equipment grounding conductor program simply requires you to test new or repaired power tools and extension cords before first use, after any suspected damage, and all electrical tools and cords at the three-month intervals, marking the cords with colored tape to indicate the month tested. In addition, all cords and power tools must be visually inspected before each use, and a written description of the program and test records must be kept on file at each jobsite.

Tool Company Recalling Electric Sanders - A tool company is recalling about 350,000 electric sanders because pieces of the sanders could break apart and hit consumers during use. Makita U.S.A. Inc., of La Mirada, California, has received 13 reports of pads coming apart, including three minor injuries from pieces of the pad striking consumers, the Consumer Product Safety Commission said Thursday.

The recalled sanders have model numbers BO5000 and BO5001 and are blue with the name Makita printed in large white letters. Sanders with the letters PUR on the pad are not included in the recall. Home centers, hardware stores and industrial suppliers nationwide sold the sanders from April 1992 to February 2003.

Consumers can return the sanders to the nearest Makita factory service for free repair. You may contact the company at 1-800-462-5482 for more information.