



# Lake County Contractors Association Safety News

February, 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](http://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.

**Construction Foreman Gets Jail Sentence** – Last month we reported on the foreman of a Michigan concrete construction company who was sentenced to a year in jail and three years probation for a jobsite fatality.

The supervisor, James Morrin, Jr. was directing trucks into an area with overhead lines and one driver was killed when his bed touched a line. The name of the company was the J.A. Morrin Concrete Construction and the supervisor was the owner's son!

**Safety Awards Presented This Month** – LCCA's 2002 Safety Awards will be presented at the February Membership Meeting. As of the writing of this newsletter, 39 members had submitted applications. The meeting will be on Thursday, February 27 at the Country Squire Banquets in Grayslake. If you would like to attend, just register on the LCCA website at [www.lcca-il.org](http://www.lcca-il.org).

**CCSC Safety Conference February 11-13** – The 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Construction Safety Conference is approaching fast! The conference, entitled “**Building A Safer Nation,**” is sponsored by the Construction Safety Council. It will be held on **February 11-13** at the Donald E. Stephens Convention Center in Rosemont, IL.

The Council is pleased to announce that **Assistant Secretary of Labor – OSHA, John L. Henshaw** will kick off this exciting event.

As Assistant Secretary of Labor for Occupational Safety and Health, Henshaw heads the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). He has more than 26 years' experience directing environmental, safety and health programs in the chemical industry. Most recently he served as director of environment, safety and health for Astaris LLC, a joint venture between Solutia and FMC Corporation. Previously, he had a similar position for Solutia and Monsanto.

Henshaw received his master's degree in environmental health administration and industrial health from the University of Michigan in 1974 and his undergraduate degree from Appalachian State University. He served as president of the 12,000-member American Industrial Hygiene Association from 1990 to 1991 and chaired the AIHA Foundation's endowment campaign in 1996.

He has served on the EPA National Environmental Laboratory Advisory Board, on the University of Michigan and St. Louis University advisory boards, the Registrar's Accreditation Board and the joint RAB-ANSI (American National Standards Institute) board for environmental programs. Henshaw is a Certified Industrial Hygienist and a Registered Occupational Hygienist.

Mr. Henshaw will be presenting at the opening ceremonies on Tuesday, February 11 beginning at 7:30 a.m.

A complete agenda and other information on the conference may be found at [www.buildsafe.org](http://www.buildsafe.org). If you would like more information, please contact CCSC at (800) 522-7744.

**Chicago Passes Scaffold Ordinance** – The City of Chicago has approved an ordinance to establish minimum training standards and operational safeguards for anyone working with scaffolds. The ordinance was a result of the swinging scaffold collapse at the Hancock building that killed three people last year.

The ordinance requires any individual who erects, maintains, and uses scaffolds to complete a relevant safety course and adhere to accepted engineering practices and safety requirements specified by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI). In addition, it establishes procedures for scaffolding operation during inclement weather and limits use.

A permitting system is also established for all scaffolds in the central business district for building taller than 40' and all buildings greater than 80'. Fines up to \$10,000 per day are also provided.

**Target Expensive Injuries** – With all your safety responsibilities, it can be tough to know where to focus your injury prevention efforts where they'll have the most impact.

New evidence shows that overexertion injuries may be a good place to start.

According to Liberty Mutual's 2002 Workplace Safety Study, overexertion injuries cost \$10.3 billion per year in workers' comp - nearly four times the cost of repetitive motion injuries.

**Many people at risk** - Overexertion injuries can be caused by a wide range of motions, including:

- Lifting
- Lowering
- Holding
- Carrying
- Pushing
- Pulling, and
- Throwing.

That means employees involved in any type of material handling are at risk.

Of course, mechanical lifting aids such as lift tables or forklifts can greatly reduce injury risks. But there are some things you can do to protect workers without spending a lot on equipment.

**1. Use the big toe test** - A one-second mistake, such as trying to lift a load that is much heavier than it looks, can lead to a lasting back injury.

Remind workers to check the weight of each load before they try to move it. A good rule to remember: If they can't easily move the item by pushing it with their toe, they shouldn't try to lift it by themselves.

**2. Size up lifting buddies** - When people need help moving an object, pairing with someone who's about the same height is the best way to avoid injury. That will ensure the weight is more evenly distributed and reduce the chance of the load shifting and injuring someone.

At your next safety meeting, ask everyone to find a permanent lifting buddy who's about the same size. That way, there will be no question about who they should turn to when they need help.

**Discipline in Writing** - Disciplining employees for violating safety rules has always been an essential part of any safety program, but so far OSHA had never spelled out how discipline should be administered.

OSHA recently successfully argued in a court case against a Massachusetts company that discipline must be in writing. If the discipline wasn't written down, it might as well not exist,

The firm was fined \$42,000 after an accident that left an employee with a head injury. The worker, who was in the wrong place at the wrong time when he was injured, had been repeatedly told to stay out of the dangerous area. But the company didn't have proof that it enforced its own safety policy by disciplining workers who broke the rules.

**Warnings weren't enough** - In this case, the company had repeatedly warned workers to stay clear of an area where heavy material was being rigged and raised out of a hole. In spite of these warnings, an employee lingered in the area while a load was being lifted. The rigging didn't hold and the man was impaled through the head with a cross-brace.

When OSHA investigated, it fined the company for failing to ensure people kept clear of suspended loads. The company fought the citation, arguing that it had repeatedly warned workers to stay clear of rigged loads and that the incident was due to unpreventable employee misconduct.

But the court said the company's warnings were inadequate. Worse, it said the company didn't go far enough to enforce its own safety rules because it didn't note safety infractions in employees' personnel files.

**Document, document, document** - To protect your company from a similar situation, your best defense is a paper trail that documents all your safety efforts, including warnings.