



Lake County Contractors Association

Safety News

July, 2002

Safety Training - Scheduled classes will continue through the summer. Check the enclosed 2002 Safety Training Reservation Form for more information. This year we are not only listing LCCA programs, but the Chicagoland Construction Safety Council's training classes also. 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.

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 Gloria at the LCCA Office as soon as possible.

OSHA Offers Two New Publications - Updated publications on bloodborne pathogens and electrical hazards are available to assist employers and workers in maintaining safe and healthful work environments, according to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

Controlling Electrical Hazards, OSHA 3075, is an up-to-date overview of basic electrical safety, OSHA electrical safety standards, and information employers need to comply with those standards. The booklet provides guidance for employees who work with electricity directly, such as engineers, electricians, electronic technicians and power line workers, as well as the millions of people who deal with electricity indirectly in the course of their everyday work.

A newly revised *Bloodborne Pathogens* fact sheet explains what bloodborne pathogens are, protections offered by OSHA's Bloodborne Pathogen standard, and steps employers can take to protect their workers.

Both publications are available electronically on OSHA's website at www.osha.gov/OshDoc/Additional.html. In addition, hard copies of *Controlling Electrical Hazards* are available through OSHA's Online Publications Order Form and from the OSHA Publications Office at (800) 321-OSHA.

OSHA'S Heat Stress Card Offers Tips - Working in hot environments can be dangerous, but taking simple precautions can prevent many heat-related deaths and injuries.

Workers in many industries including construction face conditions that make them especially vulnerable to safety and health hazards. Higher summer temperatures increase those risks.

The combination of heat, humidity and physical labor can lead to fatalities. In 2000, 21 workers died and 2,554 others experienced heat-related occupational injuries and illnesses serious enough to miss work. Additional illnesses may be under-reported if workers and employers are not familiar with the warning signs.

"We want to help employers and workers learn how to reduce illnesses and fatalities related to heat," said John Henshaw, Assistant Secretary of Labor for Occupational Safety and Health. "Education and training can save lives."

The two most serious forms of heat related illnesses are heat exhaustion (primarily from dehydration) and heat stroke, which could be fatal. Signs of heat exhaustion or heat stroke need immediate attention. Recognizing those signs -- dizziness, nausea, weakness, dry, pale skin or hot red skin, seizures, mood changes - and taking quick action, can make a difference in preventing a fatality.

OSHA's Heat Stress Card lists tips and precautions that can prevent many heat-related deaths and injuries. Available in English and Spanish, this laminated fold-up card is free to employers to distribute to their workers. It offers a quick reference about heat-related injuries, including warning signs, symptoms and early treatment:

How to Protect Workers

- Train all workers to recognize and treat the signs of heat stress. Be sure all workers know who has been trained to provide first aid. Also train supervisors to detect early signs of heat-related illness and permit workers to interrupt their work if they become extremely uncomfortable.
- Consider a worker's physical condition when determining fitness to work in hot environments. Taking certain medications, lack of conditioning, obesity, pregnancy, and inadequate rest can increase susceptibility to heat stress.
- Work in pairs - use the buddy system. They can keep an eye on each other.
- Help workers adjust to the heat by assigning a lighter workload and longer rest periods for the first 5 to 7 days of intense heat. This process needs to start all over again when a worker returns from vacation or absence from the job.

- Encourage workers to drink plenty of water -- about 1 cup of cool water every 15 to 20 minutes, even if they are not thirsty, and to avoid alcohol, coffee, tea, and caffeinated soft drinks that dehydrate the body.
- Encourage workers to wear lightweight, light-colored, loose-fitting clothing. Workers should change their clothes if they get completely saturated.
- Use general ventilation and spot cooling at points of high heat production. Good airflow increases evaporation and cooling of the skin.
- Alternate work and rest periods, with rest periods in a cooler area. Shorter, more frequent work-rest cycles are best. Schedule heavy work for cooler times of the day and use appropriate protective clothing.
- Monitor temperatures, humidity, and workers' responses to heat at least hourly.

OSHA's Heat Stress Card in English or Spanish is available on OSHA's website. For copies of the laminated card, available without charge, call OSHA Publications (202) 693-1888 or write to: U.S. Department of Labor/OSHA, OSHA Publications, P.O. Box 37535 Washington, D.C. 20013-7535.

OSHA Publishes *Todo Sobre La OSHA* – Spanish Version Of “All About OSHA” – A new Spanish language publication, *Todo Sobre La OSHA -- All About OSHA* -- will help Spanish-speaking employees understand more about safety and health in the workplace, according to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. The publication is a translation of *All About OSHA*, a 61-page booklet that covers job safety, employers' duties and workers rights, and offers extensive information on how to make workplaces safer.

"We are concerned about the high rate of injuries and illnesses among Hispanic workers, and we are doing everything we can to reduce that trend," said John L. Henshaw, Assistant Secretary of Labor for Occupational Safety and Health. "Outreach is an important part of our effort to reduce injuries and illnesses in the immigrant communities."

This Spanish version manual is part of OSHA's growing outreach to Spanish speaking workers -- including a recently launched Spanish language web site www.osha.gov/as/opa/spanish/, new data collection efforts to track non-English-speaking employees and employers, and Spanish language options for OSHA's 800 number 1-800-321-OSHA.

Todo Sobre La OSHA (All About OSHA) lists OSHA offices throughout the country, describes employer and employee responsibilities, legal rights, the inspection process, and provides guidance for consultations. The manual offers an overview of OSHA and its mission, and provides a list of resources for employers and workers.

"Most employers and workers want to do the right thing," said Henshaw. "Our job is to help them understand what needs

to be done and why safety and health is important for their well being. By offering more resources in Spanish, we hope to encourage a wider use of our materials, leading to worker protection, fewer injuries and fewer fatalities."

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, in 2000 the fatality rate for Hispanic employees climbed by more than 11 percent, while deaths for all other groups declined. As a result of this unacceptably high rate, in August 2001, OSHA established an ongoing task force to reach across language barriers to employers and workers. This task force is exploring ways to improve communications, and to offer Spanish speaking employers and workers access to a range of information that can help make their workplaces safer.

The new Spanish-language manual can also be ordered through OSHA's Publications department at (202) 693-1888.

Cell Phone Safety – The General Services Administration (GSA) set a new policy for cellular telephone use. While the policy only affects federal agencies and their employees, it demonstrates one approach to cellular telephone safety. According to the new policy, federal agencies should:

- Always keep your hands on the wheel and eyes on the road;
- Place your phone where it is easy to see and reach. Know how to operate your phone.
- Use a hands-free microphone.
- Use the speed-dialing feature.
- When dialing manually without the speed-dialing feature, dial only when stopped.
- Never take notes while driving. Use an electronic scratchpad if necessary.
- Let your wireless network's voice mail pick up your calls when it's unsafe to answer the car phone.
- Use 9-1-1 (a free call) to report crimes, emergencies, or accidents.

Over 110 million people use wireless phones in the United States. A recent National Highway Traffic Safety Administration survey found that 54 percent of motor vehicle drivers in the U.S. usually have a wireless phone in their vehicle. Federal and state policymakers have been weighing the benefits of wireless phone use in vehicles against the growing evidence of their potential to increase distraction and risk.

If you do not have a policy on cell phone use, maybe it is time to consider one. (*Ideas Of The Week*, J.J. Keller & Associates)