

Lake County Contractors Association

Safety News

January, 2000

Safety Training - This year, LCCA will be offering OSHA 10-Hour and First Aid classes from March till October. A list of classes dates will be included in the February Safety News.

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 the training 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 cost is subsidized by the LCCA Safety & Education Fund, 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.

LCCA Safety Award - Applications for LCCA's 1999 Safety Awards were sent to Contractor Members in December. If you have not received yours, just call the LCCA Office and we will get you a copy. Remember, you do not need to be "perfect" to apply or be recognized. We do expect no fatalities during the year. Since your results are measured against national averages, you are not competing with other members, but rather your results are judged against all contractors across the country.

Completed applications are due into the LCCA Office no later than the end of January. Awards will be presented at the February Membership Meeting.

OSHA 200 Annual Posting - The OSHA 200 form, with the injured employees names and other identifying dates and locations removed, must be posted during the month of February each year at every work site of the employer. **In addition, it must be kept for 5 years for inspection** by OSHA, union representatives and injured employees.

The data from the log may also be requested by the Bureau of Labor Statistics for compilation of the annual survey of illnesses and injuries in industry.

Remember: The OSHA 200 form must be completed, posted and retained even if you had no recordable incidents!

CCSC Protecting Our Future, 2000 - The Chicagoland Construction Safety Council (CCSC) is pleased to announce that Assistant Secretary of Labor for Occupational Safety and Health **Charles Jeffress** will deliver the luncheon address on February 16 at the 10th Annual Construction Safety Conference, **Protecting Our Future, 2000**. The conference, celebrating its 10th year, will be held February 15-17, 2000 at the Rosemont Convention Center, Rosemont, IL.

Charles N. Jeffress was sworn in as Assistant Secretary of Labor for Occupational Safety and Health on November 12, 1997. At the time, Secretary of Labor Alexis Herman praised him for the accomplishments that he had made as the head of North Carolina's OSHA program. His experience working with safety and other labor-related issues spanned 20 years in that state.

As head of OSHA, Jeffress is responsible for administering a broad program to reduce injuries and illnesses on the job including the development of new standards, enforcement of those in existence and education and consultation for both workers and employees.

Mr. Jeffress will also be addressing the The Advisory Committee for Construction Safety and Health (ACCSH) , who hold their winter meeting in Chicago in February to coincide with **Protecting Our Further 2000**. The ACCSH meeting will be held on Thursday, February 17 and is open to the public.

For more information about the 10th Annual Construction Safety Conference or the ACCSH meetings, please contact Gayla Bockrath, conference manager, Construction Safety Council, 4415 W. Harrison Street, Suite 403, Hillside, IL 60162; (708) 449-0200; (800) 552-7744.

Violence on Rise - Reports of workplace violence are on the rise.

The most common acts of violence include verbal threats, and pushing and shoving. Personality conflicts and problems at home are blamed for the majority of workplace outbursts.

While you can't solve all your workers' personal problems, there are still some things you can do to make sure they don't lead to a problem for the whole company.

1. Look for warning signs

Workers send up red flags when their attitudes take a turn for the worse. A sudden drop in performance, belligerent behavior, occasional threats, or a fascination with firearms could all signal trouble. In addition, recently fired workers may bear a grudge against the company and should be treated with caution.

2. Head off trouble

Supervisors and employees should be trained to recognize warning signs. If someone spots a problem, you or a supervisor should pull the worker aside to discuss it.

Potentially violent workers can be referred to employee assistance programs for counseling or anger management. There are many programs in Lake County which are available for anger management. Call LCCA for referrals.

In addition, it's a good idea to educate workers about who to contact, or where to go for help if their safety is threatened.

OSHA Inspections, Protect Yourself - Even if you don't have any violations, your company could get in hot water with OSHA if the inspection process itself isn't managed properly.

Often, how you prepare for an inspection can play a role in whether OSHA issues a citation. Here's what you need to know:

1. Be careful what you say

You may think actions should count more than words, but that's not always how OSHA sees it. Even if you fix a problem immediately, verbally agreeing that it was a problem could count against you. That's because compliance officers record all the comments you make in case they want to use them against you later.

In addition, be wary of making educated guesses. If you make a mistake, inspectors could claim you were deliberately misleading them, or you could incorrectly implicate your company for something it didn't do wrong.

2. Trust your own judgment

Remember: Just because OSHA inspectors have the right to issue citations doesn't mean they're experts on safety or loss control. Ask questions and seek verification from other sources before acting on any advice or instructions from OSHA.

Also don't be afraid to disagree with their findings. If you have good evidence on your side, you don't have to accept their conclusions.

3. Decline closing conference

Inspectors will often use the closing conference to look for an admission of fact from you that will prove their charges. If you're not comfortable with unexpected admissions, let the inspector know you don't want a closing conference.

(The American Society of Concrete Contractor's (ASCC) "How to Cope With an OSHA Inspection.")

Temporary Construction Heating - Temporary heaters, fueled by liquefied petroleum gas, or natural gas, are widely used in the construction industry. The following are some basic rules to protect against some potential hazards.

- Only units "listed" or "approved" by nationally recognized testing agencies (i.e. Factory Mutual, Underwriter's Laboratories, Bureau Mines, etc.) should be used on job sites.
- Do not operate a heater in an unventilated area. Make sure there is sufficient air flow, both for combustion and to prevent potentially harmful levels of carbon monoxide from accumulating.
- Use only heaters equipped with 100% shut off valves.
- Repairs to equipment must be made only by qualified gas technicians.
- Store and use LP cylinders in an upright position with protective collars in place.
- Full or empty cylinders not in use should be stored at ground level and protected against damage or tampering.
- Make sure cylinder valves are closed and protective caps or collars are in place.
- Maximum cylinder size should be 100 pounds of LP gas.
- Do not connect more than three 100 pound cylinders of LP gas to one manifold inside a building.
- If more than one manifold is required, separate manifolds by at least 20 feet.
- Check all cylinder connections for leaks with a suitable leak detector solution.
- Make sure cylinders are located or secured to prevent tipping. The effects of thawing of ice or frozen ground should be anticipated.
- Remember that LP gas is heavier than air and can accumulate in lower levels if a leak occurs.
- Natural gas heaters should be equipped with an automatic flame control device which will shut off the gas supply if the flame or pilot is extinguished.
- Heaters left in unoccupied areas or buildings should be checked on a regular basis.
- When the job is complete, and prior to shutting off the gas heater, the gas should be turned off at the cylinder valve so that the hose or piping is drained.

These useful rules do, however, present some severe hazards and should be used carefully by qualified personnel.

Work safely! Be considerate and aware of those people working with you and around you.