

Lake County Contractors Association

Safety News

August, 1999

Sign Up Now For 1999 Training - Just a reminder that we will be holding OSHA 10-Hour and First Aid classes every month throughout the year.

Upcoming Classes:

August 10 & 12 OSHA 10 hour Course
Noon - 5:00p.m. - Rodheim

August 31 First Aid/ CPR
8:30 - 3:00 p.m. - Henby

September 25 OSHA 10-hour Course
7:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. - Rodheim

September 28 First Aid/ CPR
8:30 - 3:00 p.m. - Henby

Steel Erection Committee Reformed – The Occupational Safety & Health Administration is reestablishing the Steel Erection Negotiated Rulemaking Advisory Committee (SENRAC) to complete recommendations on a proposed rule for steel erection activities in construction.

According to OSHA, the committee will concentrate on slippery metal deck surface provisions in the proposal. In addition, the committee will seek information, data, studies, and views from the public to assist in developing a recommendation on this issue.

It is important that the committee take a closer look at this issue because a large amount of fatalities occur in the ironworking industry during the decking process, according to SENRAC member. The committee will be composed of decking and steel manufacturers, he said.

The revived charter will allow SENRAC to continue to work for two years or until the final standard is published. Written comments regarding the committee's renewal may be submitted in quadruplicate to the Docket Officer, Docket S-775, U.S. Department of Labor, OSHA, Room N2624m 200 Constitution Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20210.

Federal One-Call Bill Claims First Victim – The vice president of a Minnesota excavating company became the first person in the nation to be charged with willful violation of a law requiring that any person engaging in excavation must first use a one-call notification system to locate any underground pipelines in the area, according to the U.S. attorney's office in Minnesota.

A grand jury charged Plummer Excavating Inc. and its vice president, with willful violation of the one-call law and violation of the Oil Pollution Act. Plummer Excavation is the first company to be charged under the one-call.

The charges come in response to a Sept. 16, 1998, incident in which a crude oil pipeline ruptured, leaking 218,000 gallons of oil into a field and a county drainage ditch, the U.S. attorney's office for the district of Minnesota said. The town of Plummer had to be evacuated because of the noxious fumes and fire hazards.

Instructions to Workers. According to the indictment, the company vice president ordered an employee to bury rocks in a field adjacent to Plummer Excavating's facility, but the company failed to obtain a one-call excavation ticket prior to digging in the field, which they allegedly knew contained underground pipelines. The indictment states that an employee of the company struck the pipeline with a backhoe and was then instructed to cover-up the pipeline.

If convicted, the company vice president faces a maximum penalty of five years in prison and a \$250,000 fine for violation of the one-call law. He also faces up to one year in prison and a \$250,000 fine for Oil Pollution Act violations. The company also faces up to \$750,000 in fines and up to five years probation for violation of the one-call law.

The pipeline operator is also planning on seeking \$1.2 million to recover the costs for the cleanup.

"Practice Rescue" Required – OSHA's new revised confined space rules, require you to observe a rescue team do a simulated rescue.

And that's just one of several new responsibilities employers must contend with, according to Michael Roop, an expert on confined space rescue.

Here are the three main requirements of the new rule:

1. Grading the rescue team

Companies are required to have a "qualified" person observe the rescue team doing a simulated rescue. And the rescue must be performed on any type of confined space employees may encounter at the site.

The rescue doesn't have to be at your worksite, however, and several companies can have representatives observe the rescue at one time.

Picking a rescuer

OSHA also added a new section to the rule just on choosing an off-site rescue team.

The new rule states clearly that it's not enough just to rely on 911 or the local fire department for any type of confined spaces. In fact, most fire departments aren't even qualified to do confined space rescues.

OSHA also says the rescue service must "agree" to provide the service. That includes showing a good faith willingness to do the rescue.

To make sure the rescue team is qualified, employers are required to review written data on the rescue services' qualifications. Here's a list of questions you'll need to ask:

- Can the rescue team provide a timely response to a rescue? OSHA suggests a response time of 15 minutes.
- Does the rescue service have the equipment needed for confined space rescues?
- Can the team provide appropriate medical care to the injured person? This includes "packaging" the injured worker so the rescue doesn't make injuries worse.

1. Getting workers involved

In addition OSHA requires companies to get employees involved in developing and reviewing confined space plans and procedures.

Any employees who work in confined spaces or are part of a rescue team need to have input on your written program.

LCCA Safety Manual Nearing Completion – We are getting closer to the completion of LCCA's new Safety Manual. This will be a complete revision of the old manual and be available in paper form or on computer disk which you can modify if you wish.

Look for it next month!

Safety Committee Plans Safety Day – The LCCA Safety Committee will be presenting a Lake County Safety Day sometime in November. The full day program will provide an update on OSHA regulation as well as practical ideas to get your safety program going.