



TM

Lake County Contractors Association Safety News

October, 2004

Safety Training –For information on classes scheduled, or to register on-line go to <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 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.

Safety Day Planned - The LCCA Safety Day is **Friday, October 8**, and it is not too late to register! The seminar will be held at Midlane Country Club located on Yorkhouse Road, just west of Delany. The seminar will feature speakers on Fall Protection, Scaffolds and Lift Safety and several vendors will host an expo of safety products. To register, just go to <http://www.lcca-il.org/events>

Safety Webpage Launched - The LCCA Safety Committee is pleased to announce the launching of the new Safety Page on the LCCA Website. The webpage is in the "Members Only" section of the website and includes many features including:

- A Hot Topics page to highlight current safety issues.
- "Ask the Expert" bulletin board where LCCA Safety Professionals will answer your questions about safety issues.
- Order any LCCA video for your safety meetings. Titles and descriptions will be included.
- Training schedules, course descriptions and training requirements.
- An archive of Safety News to find past articles that might be of interest.
- Toolbox Talks that can be downloaded as you need them.
- Links to many safety websites that can provide valuable information.

The entire web page has undergone a facelift and if you have not visited the new, improved website, do so soon. Go to <http://www.lcca-il.org/> to see what is new. The Members Only password was changed on July 1. The new password has been sent to all LCCA Members who renewed this year. If you have any questions on the website or the password, call the LCCA Office.

Excavator Coupler Warning – Safety information bulletins alerting contractors to hazards associated with a bucket release device used on hydraulic excavators was released by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration Sept. 1.

The agency is urging employers using quick couplers on excavators to inspect the devices and take appropriate measures to prevent unintended bucket releases, which can result in death or serious injury. Since January 1998, eight workers have died in incidents involving the unanticipated release of excavator buckets, the agency said. A total of 15 such incidents have been recorded in that time, OSHA said.

Quick couplers are after-market devices that have been popular in recent years because they enable contractors to make rapid changes to their equipment. For example, a large bucket is often used to do the bulk of the digging on a job but a smaller one can then be attached to work in tighter areas.

Manufacturers of quick couplers have recognized the hazard of the bucket or other attachments being unexpectedly released from the quick couplers and, in most cases, have provided users with a retrofit locking pin, which is manually inserted to prevent unintended releases, OSHA said.

Fatal Job Site Accident. Prompting the bulletin was a 2003 Wisconsin accident in which a contractor was installing water mains and laterals. A worker entered the excavation to install a pipe while the equipment operator changed buckets using a quick coupler. When the excavator was swung to continue digging, the bucket became detached from the coupler and slid into the lateral excavation, striking the employee and killing him.

An OSHA investigation revealed that a locking pin had not been manually installed on this coupler to prevent accidental release of the attachment.

Agency Recommendations. OSHA makes the following recommendations to employers using hydraulic excavators with quick coupling devices:

- Inspect all quick couplers to determine if they are subject to unexpected release hazards. Determine whether a manually installed locking pin and installation procedures have been provided by the manufacturer.

- If necessary, obtain and install retrofits recommended by the manufacturer, including positive locking pins and other devices that need to be manually installed.
- Consider using newer models of quick couplers that have been specifically designed to prevent the unintended release of attachments.
- Follow the manufacturer's recommendations for maintenance and inspection of the quick coupler to prevent a malfunction of the quick coupler that could cause an unintended release of the attachments.
- Train workers in the proper use of quick couplers.

Pertinent safety and health information bulletins are available at <http://www.osha.gov/dts/shib/index.html#2004> on the World Wide Web.

Suspension Trauma – Fall arrest systems save lives, but workers who remain suspended for lengthy periods of time in safety harnesses following a fall can develop a condition known as “orthostatic intolerance” – the pooling of blood in veins due to force of gravity and the lack of movement.

Orthostatic intolerance includes symptoms such as light-headedness, palpitations, tremulousness, poor concentration, fatigue, nausea, dizziness, headache, sweating, weakness and occasionally fainting during upright standing.

OSHA has developed a safety and health bulletin, available at www.osha.gov, that describes the signs and systems of the condition, outlines recommendations for preventing such occurrences, and discusses worker training and rescue.

Forklifts on Construction Sites - This past January two companies were fined a total of \$83,200 following the investigation of a fatal forklift accident in Alabama.

A Bob Smith Construction employee, who had not received training, was instructed to drive a leased forklift to a bridge construction site. When an on-coming vehicle approached, the forklift driver veered causing a tire to run off the road. The forklift driver, who was not wearing a safety belt, was thrown from the seat and crushed by the forklift, which fell to the bottom of a 20-foot-deep ravine.

OSHA issued one willful citation with a proposed penalty of \$44,000 to Bob Smith Construction for allowing employees to operate powered industrial trucks without proper training. Company officials were aware of OSHA's training requirements and had a copy of the agency's training guide for powered industrial truck operators. The company also received a proposed penalty of \$5,600 for failing to conduct regular inspections of equipment.

R & M Equipment Rentals received three serious citations with proposed penalties of \$10,150, for failing to: provide training to its employees, who by contract should have operated the leased forklifts; failure to tag the forklift as “out-of-service” after it had been identified as needing repairs; and

failure to obtain the manufacturer's approval before modifying the equipment. Other citations and penalties were issued following a complaint investigation at the rental company's site.

In response to incidents like these, OSHA has initiated a Local Emphasis Program (LEP) in Illinois for Powered Industrial Trucks used in construction. All serious complaints and referrals alleging conditions that may be violations of the powered industrial truck standard will be inspected.

Once the complaint inspection has been completed, the inspection will cover the four focus construction hazards: fall, struck by, crushed by and electrocutions. The inspection will also involve reviewing the OSHA 300 data for the previous three years and an evaluation of the employer's safety and health program.

Lately, OSHA compliance officers have seen several serious hazards involving forklifts on construction sites. Most of these involve improper lifting of employees on forklifts.

The requirements for the use of lifting and hauling equipment for material handling in construction such as rough-terrain forklifts are set out in 1926.602(c). In addition, OSHA's construction standards for scaffold (Subpart L of 29 CFR Part 1926) contain requirements that protect employees working on platforms elevated by forklift trucks.

Under 1926.602(c)(1)(vi), the designs of all industrial trucks used by an employer are required to meet the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) B56.1-1969, Safety Standards for Powered Industrial Trucks.

Other construction standards contain requirements to protect employees working on platforms. In Subpart L, the standard for scaffolds, the term “platform” is defined as “a work surface elevated above the lower levels.” Therefore, 1926.451, 1926.452 and 1926.454 of OSHA's standards for scaffolds would be applicable for capacity, construction, access, use, fall protection and training.

Note that, under 1926.451(c)(2)(iv), the standard states that front-end loaders and “similar pieces of equipment” shall not be used to support scaffold platforms unless specifically designed by the manufacturer for such use.

If the owner's manual for the equipment is silent in the regard, the employer must determine if the front-end loader was designed for such purposes. The standard places the obligation on the employer to ensure that this type of equipment is used to elevate personnel only where the manufacturer has designed it to do so. The employer would have to either find out from the manufacturer that it was designed for the use (where that information is unavailable) or obtain a certification by a certified professional engineer that the equipment was so designed.