Lake County Contractors Association
Safety News
June, 2005

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.

Planning Safety Meetings? Think of LCCA!

About this time of year, many companies begin planning for a return to work – and the annual safety meeting. If so, remember that LCCA can be of help. We have an extensive list of safety videos available for loan. Call LCCA to get a list or just log on to the LCCA Web Site at *www.lcca-il.org* for the complete list.

We can also help with A/V equipment. LCD projectors, laptop computers, screens, slide projectors or overhead projector. If you need it and we have it, you can borrow it!

Fall Protection Seminar Planned

Do you have an effective Fall Protection Program? Employers are required by OSHA to train employees who might be exposed to a fall on a construction site. **Don't let a fall accident happen on your watch!**

LCCA, in cooperation with Abbott Laboratories and OSHA, will host a Fall Protection Safety Seminar June 22 at the Greenbelt Cultural Center. The seminar will run from 11:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. and include lunch. If you wish to attend this FREE seminar, contact Terry at the LCCA Office as soon as possible. We can only accommodate a limited number and we are almost full.

OSHA Safety Training Course in Spanish

Training in basic workplace safety and health will be offered in Spanish through a project co-sponsored by OSHA and participating state agencies and universities in the Chicago area, the U.S. Labor Department announced.

"This is a significant opportunity for employers who discover that portions of their workforce might respond better to instruction provided in Spanish," said Gary Anderson, OSHA area director in Calumet City. "It matters because we need to leave no stone unturned in combating the problem of workplace injuries among Hispanic workers." Anderson noted that while injury and illness rates in the private sector dropped by over one-third in the decade between 1992 and 2001, the rates increased for Hispanic workers.

The training is a Spanish-language version of OSHA's successful ten hour general industry course, and will be offered August 2 – 3, 2005. The course will be held at the UIC School of Public Health, 2121 West Taylor Street, Chicago. For more information call (773) 907-4367.

The course will cover a variety of safety and health instruction, including: an introduction to OSHA; walking, working surfaces; means of egress and fire protection, electrical safety and personal protective equipment; machine safeguarding; lockout/tagout issues; introduction to industrial hygiene; blood borne pathogens; confined space hazards and many others. Cooperating with OSHA in offering the training are: The National Safety Education Center at Northern Illinois University; the Great Lakes NIOSH Center at the University of Illinois at Chicago; Harry S. Truman College of Chicago; and the On-Site Safety and Health Consultation Program of the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Security.

OSHA May Revise Excavator Quick Release Locking Device Bulletin

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration is considering revising a safety information bulletin issued in 2004 on quick-release coupling devices on excavators, officials at OSHA and a manufacturing association said March 7.

The agency is considering information supplied by manufacturers and an industry association to be sure the bulletin is factually correct, but is not changing its substance, the spokesman said March 8.

Russ Hutchison, director of technical and safety services for the Association of Equipment Manufacturers, said a revised version of the bulletin, originally issued in August 2004, is in the draft stage and has been reviewed by industry groups that objected to the original version.

Quick couplers are after-market devices that have been used on hydraulic excavators for several years and are increasingly popular because they allow contractors to quickly make attachment changes on hydraulic excavators.

The bulletin, which discussed the need to inspect quick release couplers to prevent accidental disengagement of an excavator's bucket or other attachments, suggested the use of a manual locking pin to secure buckets and attachments. But it did not mention automatic locking devices that are available on the market. These can engage and disengage attachments without the operator having to get out of the excavator.

"The way it is written is implying that a manual locking pin is the only safe secondary system," Hutchison said. Secondary locking systems provide the same backup protection as manual locking pins, he said.

Ventilated Grinder Reduces Exposure to Silica Dust

Using a ventilated grinder can reduce silica dust exposures for workers removing old mortar from masonry, one of the dustiest jobs in construction, the co-author of a report on engineering controls said Feb. 17 at the CCSC Safety Conference.

Initial laboratory tests and field trials on construction sites in Iowa, Minnesota, and the St. Louis area, have been encouraging, said Bill Heitbrink of the Department of Occupational and Environmental Health at the University of Iowa.

Exposure levels were measured while workers used specially equipped hand-held grinders – the tool's grinding disc was partially enclosed by a hood or shroud and connected with a hose to an industrial vacuum cleaner, he said.

While Heitbrink and co-author Scott Collingwood caution that their study is not complete and that even the best equipment does not completely eliminate the hazard, field trials showed that the equipment greatly reduced silica dust levels during tuckpointing.

Previous research has shown that tuckpointing without dust controls subjects workers to silica levels that are 100 times higher than the recommended exposure limit developed by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health and 50 times the permissible exposure limit set by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

"Silica dust released during tuckpointing is notoriously difficult to control," according to the ventilated grinder study. But employers cannot rely on the addition of this engineering control to completely protect workers. Using a ventilated grinder must be part of a comprehensive silica control program that includes exposure monitoring, equipment maintenance, adequate respiratory protection, and worker training.

The recommendations include some cautions:

- Some of the vacuum cleaners tested during the trials clogged quickly and showed a sudden and steep drop in their ability to capture dust.
- Proper work practices are crucial for effective dust control.
- The equipment does not work well on uneven surfaces or on masonry with a lot of missing mortar.
- Workers still need to wear respirators while tuckpointing with the ventilated grinders.

The good news, according to the researchers, is that workers can wear a less cumbersome respirator when a vacuum is attached to the grinder than those typically required for tuckpointing without dust control.

For a ventilated grinder to work properly, "You probably need to use a pretty good vacuum cleaner," Heitbrink said. A basic system to provide ventilation for a single grinder would cost a minimum of $1,200 for the hood and vacuum, he said.

"The real practical problem is maintaining adequate air flow during mortar removal," said Heitbrink, who was a public health service officer with NIOSH before joining the university.

According to the report, "The ideal vacuum cleaner is one equipped with a pressure gauge, which the worker can monitor to determine when the flow rate is too low to be effective."

In addition to reducing exposures, the ventilated grinder gives the worker a clearer view of the work surfaces and employees spend less time on clean-up, Heitbrink said.

OSHA Issues Recordkeeping "Frequently Asked Questions"

OSHA has issued the first set of new recordkeeping frequently asked questions. The FAQs, which will be added to Chapter 5 of CPL 02-00-131/CPL 2-0.131, cover the following:

- Definition of a "company parking lot,"
- Professional sports teams exemptions,
- Injuries occurring before employees clock in,
- Recordability of work-related stress,
- Terrorist attacks,
- Second provider opinions,
- Broken teeth,
- Cap of 180 days for restricted work,
- Musculoskeletal discomfort,
- Smallpox vaccinations,
- Which baseline is used to determine a recordable Standard Threshold Shift (STS),
- Electronic posting of the annual summary, and
- Several other issues that could lead to confusion where recordkeeping is concerned.
-

To view the FAQs, visit http://www.osha.gov/recordkeeping/clarifications-recordkeeping.html.