

Executive Safety Update

The Monthly News Bulletin of the Construction Safety Center

Vol. 17, Issue 4 – October 2009

EPA Certification For Lead Removal Underway

Hundreds of contractors have already become EPA Certified Renovators in anticipation of the Agency's Lead-Safe Renovation, Repair and Painting Rule, which will take effect in April, 2010. The Environmental Protection Agency is urging all contractors who perform renovation work and are affected by this rule to get trained as soon as possible.

By April, 2010, all companies who disturb lead paint as part of their renovation work in pre-1978 homes, schools, and other buildings must be EPA-certified. These jobs must be supervised by a certified renovator who has completed an EPA accredited one-day training course. Furthermore, it will also be necessary for employees to receive on-the-job training.

Even contractors with previous training and certification must be trained and certified under this new program. In some cases, a shorter "refresher" course may be adequate for certification.

All contractors must be trained and certified by April, 2010. Certification training courses are available now. The EPA warns that contractors may have difficulty finding an accredited training course as the deadline date nears. The EPA's website lists over 50 accredited trainers at <http://epa.gov/lead/pubs/trainingproviders.htm>.

The EPA advises checking the website regularly, as providers will be added. Onsite training is available from selected trainers. Individual certification as a "certified renovator" is awarded upon completion of the required training. This certification is valid anywhere in the country.

As state and tribal programs are authorized, the Agency will work closely with the certified renovators and authorized state or tribe to ensure a smooth transition in enforcing this new rule.

Both individuals and contracting firms must be certified. Firm certification is simple: complete a short application and submit it with a fee to the EPA. The application is available on <http://www.epa.gov/lead/pubs/firmapp.pdf>.

The EPA will start processing applications in October, in the order they have been received.

Reprinted from the September/October 2009 issue of Monitor!, a publication for the Finishing Contractors Association of Chicago, Chicago PDCA, and the Painting and Decorating Contractors Industry Advancement & Promotional Fund. Their website is www.chicagopdca.org.

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Editor in Chief: Tom Broderick
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Construction Safety Council Receives Quarter of a \$ Million for Susan Harwood Grant

The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) recently awarded more than \$6.8 million in Susan Harwood Training Grants to 30 recipients, encompassing labor unions, employer associations, colleges and universities, and other nonprofit organizations. The training grants cover a two-year period.

"Safe jobs are our priority," said Secretary of Labor Hilda L. Solis. "Providing workers and employers the knowledge and tools they need to ensure safe working conditions is the best way to prevent workers from getting injured or killed on the job."

The Susan Harwood Training Grants support workplace safety and health programs that educate workers and employers in industries with high hazard and fatality rates, workers with limited English proficiency, hard-to-reach workers and supervisors, and small business employers. The grants support training programs that address hazards in both construction and general industry, such as crane safety, fall protection, combustible dust, and emergency preparedness and response (pandemic influenza). The agency received a record number of 345 applications this year.

This year the Department of Labor awarded a Susan Harwood grant to the Construction Safety Council in the amount of \$250,000 to develop a comprehensive training program in "Health hazards" that will apply industrial hygiene concepts in plain English and Spanish, to the health hazards found on most construction sites, including those found industrial, commercial, residential, heavy highway, tunnel, and demolition areas. The health hazards will include chemical, physical and biological exposures.

The National Center for Health Statistics report that in 2000 alone, approximately 20,000 people, including construction workers were hospitalized with a diagnosis of asbestosis. Airborne silica and other particulate exposure can cause chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). Another study conducted at three Department of Energy sites from 1996 to 2006, where over 10,000 chest x-rays and pulmonary function tests of current or former construction workers were administered, indicated between 11.7% and 38.8% (depending on trade) had findings of asbestosis or silicosis. These data only hint



The Challenge Pilot Program has been designed by the Occupational Health & Safety Administration to meet the needs of employers wanting to improve their safety and health management systems and expedite their effort to attain VPP status by providing a "roadmap" to guide them through the process. The "roadmap" refers to the defined set of Challenge stages that Challenge Participants progress through. Employers will receive recognition from OSHA for incremental progress while formalizing procedures and methods currently used by many corporations that have multiple VPP sites.

[Click here for more information](#)

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at the depth of the problem of health hazards in construction.

In addition to the 2009 Susan Harwood grant award, the tremendous success of the Focus Four program training module, a 2007 Susan Harwood grant program, resulted in the Council receiving a rare third year extension to continue the work in Focus Four training for Hispanic and Polish construction workers. The training module was designed to be used by small construction companies, and community groups who work with the target populations. For more information on the Focus Four Program, call 800-552-7744, ext 202.”

The quality education and training programs receiving grants are designed to prevent work-related injuries, illnesses and deaths by providing the knowledge and tools that workers and employers need to identify and correct workplace safety and health hazards. This grant program is a crucial component to OSHA's efforts to provide workers with training about job hazards and their rights. It also provides employers with information about unsafe working conditions and their responsibilities under the Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Act of 1970.

The training grants are named in honor of the late Susan Harwood, a former director of the Office of Risk Assessment in OSHA's health standards directorate, who died in 1996. During her 17-year tenure with the agency, Harwood helped develop OSHA standards to protect employees exposed to bloodborne pathogens, cotton dust, benzene, formaldehyde, asbestos and lead in construction.

Editor's Note: A complete list of the 2009 Susan Harwood Training Grants recipients is posted at http://www.osha.gov/dte/sharwood/2009_grant_recipients.html.

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Preparing Workplaces for H1N1 Influenza is Focus of Upcoming OSHA Forum

Public health officials are concerned the H1N1 (swine) influenza virus has begun its fall return and will likely cause widespread illness. To help employers prepare for the potential impact this virus could have on their workplaces, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration is presenting a forum, "Workplace Preparedness: How Small Businesses Can Prepare for H1N1 Influenza," Sept. 30, 2009.

Expert panelists will discuss the differences between seasonal and pandemic influenza and explore work practices that employers can adopt to prevent the spread of the virus. Panelists will also examine strategies for assessing workplace exposure, communicating risks to workers and planning for a more severe influenza pandemic. Additionally, participants will receive guidance on continuing operations if a business experiences staff absenteeism.

"The H1N1 virus could have a major impact on the nation during the flu season," said acting Assistant Secretary of Labor for OSHA Jordan Barab. "Planning is critical, and this forum underscores the importance of employers taking the necessary steps to protect workers from this threat."

The forum will be held from 1 p.m. - 3 p.m. in the Department of Labor's Frances Perkins Building auditorium. Panelists include representatives from OSHA, local health departments and industry. Those interested in attending can contact Russell Jones at jones.russell@dol.gov or 202-693-2532, or Charlene Crawford at crawford.charlene@dol.gov or 202-693-2165.

OSHA's Office of Small Business Assistance annually hosts a series of small business forums that foster a more direct dialogue between OSHA, the small business community and federal government entities regarding safety and health management issues.

Under the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, OSHA's role is to promote safe and healthful working conditions for America's men and women by setting and enforcing standards; and providing training, outreach and education.

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OSHA Revises Enforcement Policies for Fall Protection During Steel Erection

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration recently revised the steel erection compliance directive for the agency's Steel Erection Standard to change two enforcement policies related to tripping hazards and installation of nets or floors during steel erection.

One of the revised policies addresses the standard's requirement that employers install a floor or net within two stories or 30 feet, whichever is less.

The other policy states that employers must comply with the requirement that steel studs, known as shear connectors, be installed at the worksite. Shear connectors bind concrete to the steel.

"Falls are the leading cause of death among construction workers," said acting Assistant Secretary of Labor for OSHA Jordan Barab. "We are intent on reducing the number of injuries and fatalities in the construction industry and believe these policy revisions will help us attain that goal."

Bureau of Labor Statistics 2007 data show that 1,204 fatalities occurred in the construction industry, 447 of which resulted from falls. The steel erection standard sets forth requirements to protect workers from the hazards associated with steel erection activities when constructing, altering, and repairing single and multi-story buildings, bridges, and other structures where steel erection occurs.

Under the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, OSHA's role is to promote safe and healthful working conditions for America's men and women by setting and enforcing standards, and providing training, outreach and education. For more information, visit www.osha.gov.

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U.S. Labor Department's OSHA begins National Emphasis Program on recordkeeping to determine accuracy of worker injury and illness data

WASHINGTON - The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) is initiating a national emphasis program (NEP) on recordkeeping to assess the accuracy of injury and illness data recorded by employers.

The recordkeeping NEP involves inspecting occupational injury and illness records prepared by businesses and appropriately enforcing regulatory requirements when employers are found to be under-recording injuries and illnesses.

"Accurate and honest recordkeeping is vitally important to workers' health and safety," said acting Assistant Secretary of Labor for OSHA Jordan Barab. "This information is not only used by OSHA to determine which workplaces to inspect, but it is an important tool employers and workers can use to identify health and safety problems in their workplaces."

The inspections include a records review, employee interviews, and a limited safety and health inspection of the workplace. The NEP will focus on selected industries with high injury and illness rates.

At the request of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions and the House Committee on Education and Labor, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) issued a study on the accuracy of employer injury and illness records. This NEP will help OSHA work cooperatively with the GAO. It also complements the Labor Department's Bureau of Labor Statistics' (BLS) efforts to investigate factors accounting for differences between the number of workplace injuries and illnesses estimated by BLS and those estimated by other data sources.

Under the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, OSHA's role is to promote safe and healthful working conditions for America's men and women by setting and enforcing standards, and providing training, outreach and education. For more information, visit <http://www.osha.gov>.



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