



## Of the Turning Point

This newsletter is to inform you of recent changes and trends regarding health and safety. The Turning Point is a monthly newsletter covering topics from various industries and sectors. The Turning Point will respond to your inquiries and inform you of current services and updates regarding Raising the Standard Consulting Inc.

### *OSHA issues enforcement guidance on providing and paying for personal protective equipment for general industry workers*

A new directive went into effect Feb. 10 that provides OSHA enforcement personnel with instructions for determining whether employers have complied with the agency's personal protective equipment standards.

These PPE standards require employers to provide--at no cost to workers--protective equipment, such as goggles and face shields to prevent eye injuries; earplugs and earmuffs to prevent hearing loss; and respirators to protect workers from exposure to air contaminants.

The new Enforcement Guidance for Personal Protective Equipment in General Industry\* clarifies what type of PPE employers must provide at no cost to workers and when employers are required to pay for PPE. The directive also provides guidance that allows employers to use PPE that complies with current consensus standards, and updates PPE enforcement policies based on court and review commission decisions.



**RAISING THE STANDARD CONSULTING INC.**

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### U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR UPDATES

#### **US Minerals LLC Facilities charged more than \$700,000**

*The Occupational Safety and Health Administration has issued seven citations to the U.S. Minerals LLC facility in Baldwin, Ill., for allegedly failing to develop and implement procedures to control hazardous energy, install guard rails where needed and maintain equipment.*

Penalties total \$83,000 for the citations, one of which is a 'willful' citation. OSHA describes a willful violation as one that exists as a result of an employer's "intentional disregard for the requirements of the law or plain indifference to employee safety and health." The citations emerged following an inspection that began in September 2010.

This is the second time the Baldwin facility has been cited by OSHA in less than a year. In September 2010 the government agency issued penalties totaling \$466,400 for 35 alleged health and safety violations, including willfully exposing workers to dangerously high levels of hazardous dust and failing to provide adequate breathing protection.

"U.S. Minerals' failure to develop and implement plans to control hazardous energy and prevent injuries to workers is simply unacceptable," said Thomas Bielema, OSHA's area director in Peoria, Ill., following the most recent citations. "U.S. Minerals repeatedly has been cited at this facility and others for failing to follow OSHA safety and health standards to protect workers."

As a result of the alleged conditions at the Baldwin plant last summer, OSHA initiated inspections at the Dyer, Ind.-based manufacturer's three other locations, where it issued 28 citations for U.S. Minerals' Coffeen, Ill., location; 30 citations for its Harvey, La., location; and 38 violations for its Galveston, Texas, facility.

Fines for citations at those three locations totaled more than \$779,000. OSHA also placed U.S. Minerals in its Severe Violator Enforcement Program in December 2010. As the program's title suggests, it focuses on employers with a history of safety violations that endanger workers "by demonstrating indifference to their responsibilities under the law," OSHA states. Fines for citations at those three locations totaled more than \$779,000

#### **Colorado pallet recycling facility cited for safety violations**

*The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration has cited the Ifco Systems pallet recycling facility in Henderson, Colo., with one repeat and five serious citations for improper machine guarding following an inspection. Penalties total \$67,765.*

The inspection was initiated under OSHA's site-specific targeting program that focuses on employers with high injury and illness rates. Ifco Systems is an international logistics service provider with more than 210 locations worldwide, including the facility in Henderson. The repeat citation, with a penalty of \$50,000, was issued for failing to provide adequate machine guarding on a bandsaw.

OSHA issued similar citations to Ifco Systems facilities located in Smithville, Ohio, on July 12, 2006; Columbus, Ohio, on Dec. 5, 2008; and Atlanta, Ga., on Oct. 8, 2010. The serious citations, with a penalty of \$17,765, were issued for failing to develop and implement proper lockout procedures for energy sources; a lack of proper guarding for open-sided floors; a lack of machine guarding on a table saw; and exposing employees to excessive levels of noise. The company has 15 business days from receipt of its citations and proposed penalties to comply, meet with the OSHA area director or contest the citations and penalties before the independent Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission.

# PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Hazards exist in every workplace in many different forms: sharp edges, falling objects, flying sparks, chemicals, noise and a myriad of other potentially dangerous situations. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requires that employers protect their employees from workplace hazards that can cause injury.

Controlling a hazard at its source is the best way to protect employees. Depending on the hazard or workplace conditions, OSHA recommends the use of engineering or work practice controls to manage or eliminate hazards to the greatest extent possible. For example, building a barrier between the hazard and the employees is an engineering control; changing the way in which employees perform their work is a work practice control.

When engineering, work practice and administrative controls are not feasible or do not provide sufficient protection, employers must provide personal protective equipment (PPE) to their employees and ensure its use. Personal protective equipment, commonly referred to as "PPE", is equipment worn to minimize exposure to a variety of hazards. Examples of PPE include such items as gloves, foot and eye protection, protective hearing devices (earplugs, muffs) hard hats, respirators and full body suits.

## The Requirement for PPE

To ensure the greatest possible protection for employees in the workplace, the cooperative efforts of both employers and employees will help in establishing and maintaining a safe and healthful work environment.

### In general, employers are responsible for:

- Performing a "hazard assessment" of the workplace to identify and control physical and health hazards.
- Identifying and providing appropriate PPE for employees.
- Training employees in the use and care of the PPE.
- Maintaining PPE, including replacing worn or damaged PPE
- Periodically reviewing, updating and evaluating the effectiveness of the PPE program.

### In general, employees should:

- Properly wear PPE,
- Attend training sessions on PPE,
- Care for, clean and maintain PPE, and
- Inform a supervisor of the need to repair or replace PPE.

# 10|30 hour training

**Emphasis:** The classes are prepared for presentation to workers. They emphasize hazard identification, avoidance, control and prevention, not OSHA standards and regulatory codes. The presentations are tailored to the needs and understanding of the audience. Each class is evaluated to determine the best methods of training before the class begins.

**Site-Specific Training:** We believe that the most rewarding classes for students are the ones they can relate to because the trainer uses examples, pictures, and scenarios that come from the student's work place, industry or community.

**Training Purpose:** We explain up front, that the training isn't a bureaucratic exercise. We emphasize that it may save a life & help them continue to provide for their family. We explain that safety & health add value to the company, the workplace and their life.

**Homogenous Class:** The ideal class to teach is one where students have similar positions and needs. We endeavor to conduct separate training classes for supervisors, managers, and workers as much as possible unless a combined session would assist the students in fostering a culture of teamwork. We also try to separate workers into like groups, for example, office personnel, machine operators, and maintenance staff when possible.

**Use Objectives:** At the beginning of each session we describe the skills and abilities the students should have or exhibit for each topic and relate the objectives to the students' work, whenever possible.

**Presentation Assortment:** Students learn in different manners, and get tired of one training style. Therefore we use different trainers, computer presentations, videos, case studies, exercises and graphics to make the course interesting and enjoyable. By doing this we employ the three levels of training techniques - presentation (presenting the material in a variety of ways), discussion (getting the students involved in the learning), and performance (students practice the material they learned).

**Testing:** We use quizzes and tests to ensure the student understands key objectives. We also provide students feedback on incorrect answers in an open discussion format.

## Core Values ... How essential are they?

### Are character and integrity seen as core values in your organization?

We offer specialized training in the importance of integrity for both executives and workers. Character & integrity are addressed regarding the workplace, marriage, and finances, in our training modules. Throughout this training, you'll see how important character and integrity really are and just how much they affect everything, from the safety of your workers to the financial success of your business.



Please visit <http://rtsconsulting.360training.com> to register



# The **SMART** Road to Safer Highway Construction

If you drive down Interstate highways with any frequency, you've probably noticed the growing attention to protecting workers in construction sites. From soft-sell signs in child-ish script that tell you "my Daddy works here" to stepped-up patrols by law enforcement officers, you'll see all sorts of efforts to reduce the chances that workers will have deadly encounters with passing vehicles.

Despite all that attention, you may be surprised to find out that traffic/worker incidents aren't the biggest hazard in construction sites. Understanding the real dangers and learning ways to mitigate them are important for highway crews, as well as for other companies whose workers may find themselves performing tasks around fast-moving traffic.

While media coverage may lead you to believe that deadly accidents are rampant, today's highway system is increasingly becoming safer, according to the Federal Highway Administration. In 2007 (the latest year for which such statistics were available), there were roughly 1.37 fatalities for every 100 million miles of travel, compared to 5.50 fatalities in 1966. Although that rate is lower, there is still a significant number of deaths and injuries on highways. During 2008, more than 37,000 people died and another 2.4 million were injured on American roads.

How do those overall totals compare to incidents in highway worksites? FHWA says that there were 720 work zone fatalities -- or 2.3 every day -- accounting for 2 percent of all highway fatalities. But more than four out of five of those fatalities were actually motorists who became involved in accidents within work zones, not highway workers.

Still, highway work zones are inherently dangerous places for workers, which is why such a great effort has been devoted to improving work zone markings and vehicle flow. According to the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, workers being hit by passing motorists make up less than half of the vehicle-related fatalities suffered by highway workers. Those workers are more likely to be killed by construction vehicles operating in the worksite, says NIOSH. In fact, a full 31 percent of those killed were struck by dump trucks or other construction vehicles.

Most people would assume that most fatal incidents occur during darkness, but three-quarters of highway worksite fatalities occurred during daylight hours. An even larger number (83 percent) of fatalities resulting from being struck by vehicles or mobile equipment happened during the day. One cause of many of those incidents is limited visibility around the equipment. What were those workers doing? Statistics report that 29 percent were involved in construction or repair activities, or cleaning the work area. Another 28 percent were

walking along or on the road, while 18 percent were directing traffic.

Given that record, the importance of proper safety activities when working on or around highways becomes obvious. There are many steps that companies can take to reduce the risks to their worker.

## ! **Start with a plan**

As with most worker safety activities, a comprehensive safety plan provides a solid foundation. It's important that the safety profession responsible for developing the plan have a thorough understanding of both OSHA regulations and the standards outlined in the federal Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices. The safety plan should include a hazard assessment that identifies and describes the risks workers may face, with steps and personal protective measures that can be taken to protect the works from those risks.

## ! **Provide rules and training**

The better that your workers understand the dangers, the more eager they'll be to protect themselves. Start by establishing a set of rules that are specific to the site and nature of the project, and ensure that all workers are thoroughly familiar with them and understand the consequences of noncompliance. Train workers so that they understand how to work safely around traffic. Given the high number of fatalities related to directing traffic, be sure that those responsible for controlling traffic around the site know the safest practices to follow.

## ! **Develop safer work areas**

Study the worksite to look for ways to allow workers and vehicles to move through safely. Set up specific routes for traffic flow and areas where workers can safely enter and leave the site. Be sure that all utilities are marked, and establish procedures to provide protection when equipment is backing up or otherwise moving through areas where it may come in contact with workers.

## ! **Improve visibility**

Since statistics show that most accidents happen during daylight hours, it's important to take steps to improve visibility of both workers and equipment. That includes everything from high-visibility and reflective work apparel to warning lights on trucks. If night work is to be performed, temporary lighting will both make work easier and make the workers more visible.

## ! **Keep traffic away from workers**

The more strategies you can use to separate the workers from the traffic, the safer they'll be. How much separation you'll need depends upon the nature of the worksite, as well as the average traffic speed and volume. In addition to traffic barriers, you may want to consider other devices, such as rumble strips that remind drivers that they're entering a work zone, and message signs that remind them to slow down. Highly visible law enforcement is also an excellent way to slow traffic.



## OSHA's Common Sense Regulations Support American Jobs

OSHA Assistant Secretary David Michaels issued a Feb. 15 statement on the agency's role in supporting good, safe jobs as a congressional subcommittee heard testimony on the effects of federal regulations on job creation. Michaels said, "Despite concerns about the effect of regulation on American business, there is clear evidence that OSHA's common sense regulations have made working conditions in this country today far safer than 40 years ago when the agency was created, while at the same time protecting American jobs. The truth is that OSHA standards don't kill jobs. They stop jobs from killing workers. OSHA standards don't just prevent worker injuries and illnesses. They also drive technological innovation, making industries more competitive."

*"I think we can all agree that the American economy must succeed but never at the cost of the safety or health of American workers. OSHA's goal is to ensure that everyone who goes to work returns home safely. I think we can also agree that the size of a business should not determine the level of protection that a worker receives. All workers have the same right to a safe workplace."*

*"Despite concerns about the effect of regulation on American business, there is clear evidence that OSHA's commonsense regulations have made working conditions in this country today far safer than 40 years ago when the agency was created, while at the same time protecting American jobs. The truth is that OSHA standards don't kill jobs. They stop jobs from killing workers. OSHA standards don't just prevent worker injuries and illnesses. They also drive technological innovation, making industries more competitive."*

*"Many OSHA standards cost little and easily can be adopted by employers with nominal effect on the bottom line. OSHA, by law and by practice, always looks at both the overall cost of compliance with a proposed regulation and at the expected benefits. The evidence shows that OSHA generally overestimates the cost of its standards. Congress Office of Technology Assessment, comparing the predicted and actual costs of eight OSHA regulations, found that in almost all cases 'industries that were most affected achieved compliance straightforwardly, and largely avoided the destructive economic effects' that they feared. Standards intended to protect workers from cancer-causing chemicals such as vinyl chloride and ethylene oxide were shown to not only protect workers but also to increase productivity. OSHA's trenching standard has significantly cut the death rate for construction workers, and OSHA's bloodborne pathogens standard has almost eliminated work-related cases of hepatitis B and HIV."*

*"The failure to issue sensible regulations endangers not only workers' health and safety but also hurts American competitiveness. For example, because OSHA has a weak noise standard and weak enforcement, U.S. employers have no incentive to buy modern, quieter machines, which means that U.S. manufacturers don't build them, and there are few jobs in the U.S. for engineers who could design them. A recent study by the National Academy of Engineering concludes that European manufacturers are way ahead of us in designing and building modern, quieter machinery. Today, when businesses anywhere in the world want to buy quieter equipment, they look not to the United States but to Europe."*

*"As we approach OSHA's 40th anniversary, the agency's success has been well documented. An estimated 14,000 workers were killed on the job the year that Congress created OSHA. That number had fallen to approximately 4,340 in 2009. At the same time, U.S. employment has almost doubled and now includes more than 130 million workers at more than 7.2 million worksites. Since the passage of the Occupational Safety and Health Act, the rate of reported serious workplace injuries and illnesses has declined from 11 per 100 workers in 1972 to 3.9 per 100 workers in 2008."*

*"But OSHA's job isn't over. More than 3 million workers in America are injured every year. Every day 12 workers die on the job. OSHA's commonsense regulations are helping to drive these numbers down and, at the same time, helping American businesses modernize and compete in the global economy."*

## WEB-BASED training

*Raise the safety, health, and productivity of your employees to the top of your agenda and provide training solutions that deliver real results. We provide web-based training programs for the convenience of your organization*



### HEALTH CARE EDUCATION

This module consists of 12 unique courses designed to provide participants with a well-rounded understanding of safety in the health care industry. You'll learn everything from how to recognize and prevent workplace violence to gaining basic knowledge of patient's rights and confidentiality.

### TECHNICAL, INDUSTRIAL & SAFETY SKILLS

The goal of this training is to help participants to understand the risks and take the necessary precautions for the health and safety of workers and how to prevent accidents within the technical and industrial trades.

This module is divided into 5 sub-sections:

- Canada Safety
- OSHA - Construction
- OSHA - General Industry
- OSHA - 10/30 Hour Outreach Training
- OSHA - Hazardous Waste Training

### PUBLIC SAFETY

The basis of this training covers the key components of human resources with emphasis on courses such as employment law, handling conflict and confrontation and explores successful arbitration and mediation methods. It also includes courses that aid in improving business-writing skills and offers advanced insight for analyzing financial statements.

### Hazard Communication consistently appears atop OSHA's list of most violated standards, costing businesses thousands of dollars in penalties.

*RTS Consulting Inc. has the tools to help you comply with OSHA's Hazard Communication Standard ~ and avoid citations and fines.*

## career Opportunities



We are currently seeking intermediate and senior consultants for the State of Hawaii. We require a formal education in the field of occupational health and safety with a good knowledge of the Occupational Safety & Health Administration Act.

We also require skill in program development and conducting public training sessions. We also require 3-5 years' experience working in the occupational health and safety field. If interested, please forward your resume.