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October 2, 2009 Lunch Meeting 12 Noon

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October Speaker

Our speaker is Mr. Keith McDonnell, Project Executive with Bovis Lend Lease. Keith has worked in the construction industry managing projects world-wide. He will be sharing with us his experience with safety and health cultural issues, including employee education, in countries where occupational safety and health is rarely even addressed.

Bovis Lend Lease is one of the world's leading international project management and construction companies which operates in over 30 countries. They have managed several large scale private and public projects in the Los Angeles area, including some for the Los Angeles Unified School District. Bovis Lend Lease has been recognized by Cal/OSHA as a Voluntary Protection Partnership – Construction participant for its excellence in safety and health management at their California construction sites. Cal/VPP Construction companies are considered workplace safety and health leaders within their industry.

Call for cell phones

If you are attending the meeting, can you bring any discarded cell phones and donate them to the K-9 dog training project that the Chapter is sponsoring. Your donation of any cell phone will help and you can receive a receipt to use for tax write off.

A BIG Thank You

Last month, Sue Bonner with Earthquake Management provided us with a grand prize raffle item of an emergency preparedness kit. It was won by Jared Williamson.

President's Message

As another summer ends and we enter fall, I am reminded of change. In the occupational safety and health field, there is always change. Many employers are aware of at least some Cal/OSHA requirements, but unless active in trade associations or organizations such as ours, they are often unaware of changes or the adoption of new regulations. At our last meeting, someone asked me how a new regulation was recently adopted by Cal/OSHA and no one knew it was coming?

Cal/OSHA is a public agency, therefore there are no surprises. Rulemaking is often a slow process. An important place to periodically visit on the Internet is the California Occupational Safety & Health Standards Board (OSHSB) webpage (www.dir.ca.gov/oshsb) to keep up to date with Cal/OSHA regulations.

On the OSHSB webpage, you will find proposed, emergency, and approved Cal/OSHA regulations. Under the proposed and emergency sections, you are able to review the proposed text of changes to existing regulations and potentially new regulations that may affect your industry. Here you will find the reason for the proposed change or new regulation along with the proposed text of the regulation. You will also find notices which provide you the date, time and location of the Standards Board meetings where the regulation will be discussed and where you have the opportunity to put in your two cents as an employee or an employer. There are a few items currently under consideration which may be of interest to many of you, including changes to the heat illness prevention, fixed ladders, and airborne contaminants regulations.

You will also find approved or adopted regulations on the OSHSB webpage. Did you know there are new regulations addressing Aerosol Transmissible Diseases and Aerosol Transmissible Diseases – Zoonotics (effective August 5, 2009)? Did you know there were changes to the High Visibility Apparel (safety vest) regulation effective August 22, 2009? Did you know there's a change to the Medical Services and First Aid regulation that is becoming effective September 26, 2009? It's important in our field to stay current. Fortunately, the Internet allows us easy access to keep up to date.

I hope to see you at our October meeting. Remember, students currently enrolled in the security or the occupational safety & health certificate programs at CSUDH only pay \$10.00 for the lunch. And, as always, we always welcome donations for our raffle prizes to fund our scholarships.

Dan Leiner
Chapter President

Machine Guarding

OSHA regulations require the use of machine guards to keep hands, feet, and other body parts away from machinery's dangerous points of operation and power trains (29 CFR 1910.211-222). Here's a brief rundown on machine safeguards to help ensure that your employees get the training they need to work safely with machines and prevent amputations and other horrible, disabling accidents.

Machine guards ward off danger. Guards provide physical barriers that prevent access to hazardous areas. They must be secure and strong, and workers should not be able to bypass, remove, or tamper with them. Guards should not obstruct the operator's view or prevent employees from working. There are basically four kinds of guards:

- *Fixed:* Includes fences, gates, and protective covers for blades, presses, and all moving parts.
- *Interlocking:* Disengages the machine's power source when opened or removed.
- *Adjustable:* Provides a barrier that can be adjusted to many different operations.
- *Self-adjusting:* These barriers move according to the size or position of the work piece.

Leave safety to your devices. In addition to machine guards, there are also safety devices that keep employees away from danger areas during machine operation. Safety devices must allow safe lubrication and maintenance and not create hazards or interfere with normal machine operation. In addition, they have to be secure, tamper-resistant, and durable. Machine safety devices include:

- *Presence-sensing devices*, which cause a machine to stop working when a body part enters a certain danger field
- *Safety trip controls*, which stop a machine automatically if a worker falls against a pressure-sensitive bar
- *Restraints*, which use cables attached to a worker's hands and to a fixed point behind the worker to prevent hands from coming too close to the machinery's moving parts
- *Pullback devices*, which pull the operator's hands away during the dangerous part of the operation (for example, when a slide or ram is descending)

Training in the danger zone. Safety training sessions should emphasize the need to:

- Recognize machine hazards and the potential for serious injuries such as amputations
- Understand the need for machine safeguards and how they protect employees
- Check to see that guards are in place at all required points before turning on a machine
- Realize that removing, bypassing, or tampering with machine guards exposes employees to serious injuries, including amputations
- Report any problems with the operation of machine guards to their supervisor right away
- Refrain from using a machine without required safeguarding or when safeguarding is not operating properly
- Feed and operate machines correctly using hand tools when appropriate to keep hands away from the danger zone during cycling
- Clear jams or make running adjustments safely
- Clean and maintain machinery properly, replacing guards and making sure they are in place before using machine
- Follow lockout/tagout procedures when machine guards must be removed for maintenance or repairs

And finally, remind them of the AUTO rule:

If you can reach -

Around, Under, Through, and Over an existing machine guard ... **STOP!** You are in danger—the guard is not effective!

Do employees have a role in safety rules?

In the old-style model for safety programs, top management made and enforced safety rules (based largely on OSHA requirements), and employees were expected to follow the rules. A simple, straightforward system—but not one that did much to encourage teamwork, cooperation, or a sense of individual responsibility for safety. Today, many organizations recognize the importance of employees "buying in" to the safety program. It's no longer enough for employees just to follow the rules; they should feel that they are an integral part of the program, with a meaningful role in identifying potential safety problems and actually improving safety.

Is "empowerment" a buzzword or a reality?

"Empowerment" is a popular human resources term, but it can be meaningless without a real commitment to back it up. Five reasons that so-called "employee empowerment" efforts fail:

1. No commitment or support—saying you want to "empower employees," but not really meaning it.
2. Misunderstanding what "empowerment" means—believing it means "having input," when it really means having the ability to make decisions that bring about change.
3. Lack of clarity—not letting employees know what the boundaries are: what they have and do not have the authority to change.
4. Micromanagement—allowing employees to make decisions, but then requiring that each decision be approved by a higher authority.
5. Second-guessing—allowing employees to make decisions, but then criticizing them or making further changes to "improve" the results.

Give employees the power to be safer. Keeping in mind the above list of ways to take the "power" out of "empowerment," try to identify opportunities to introduce meaningful ways for employees to create safer environments for themselves and their co-workers. Possible ideas include:

- Implement a formal "safety suggestion" system, by which employees may report potential hazards and suggest corrective action. (Make sure that all such suggestions are responded to.)
- Assign employee safety teams the responsibility for identifying and correcting hazards in specific areas. (Let their corrective actions stand, even if you think they could still be improved.)
- Publicly acknowledge and applaud good safety suggestions and any actions taken by employees to identify hazards and improve safety.

Eye Strain Prevention

Eye strain is a very common problem. Whether it is from working on a computer, watching TV, driving or any number of other activities, your eyes can become fatigued and lose focus.

Serious eye strain can cause a number of other problems from short term head and neck aches to long term conditions like Myopia. With that in mind, here are 5 simple tips to help prevent eye strain.

1. Take Breaks

The best way to prevent eye strain is to not use them as much. With your eyes that may be difficult to do. Luckily your eyes use more than one set of muscles. That means you can relax one set while using another. Shift your focus from near to far on a regular basis. Shift focus from up close to at least 20 feet away.

2. Reduce Glare

Reducing glare will dramatically reduce the strain on your eyes. Use non-reflective interfaces whenever possible. Like reading from paper instead of a computer screen. When you have to use a screen make sure it is at a 90 degree angle from any direct light source.

Use indirect or reflective lighting whenever possible. Try switching your monitor or TV to a flat screen technology. They are not as reflective.

3. Adjust Contrast

Ensure there is good contrast with what you are looking at but reduce contrast for periphery. More contrast makes edges more discernible so the eyes don't have to focus as much. But too much contrast with the surrounding area will cause strain through your peripheral vision.

Keep overall lighting levels at a moderate level so there is good contrast around you but glare does not become a problem. Use task lighting to aid eyesight at specific tasks.

Adjust the contrast setting on monitors and screens to the best effect.

4. Adjust Color

Use full spectrum lighting. Lighting, like sunlight, that covers the visual spectrum makes things easier to see. Adjust the color setting on monitors and screens. Some even allow you to adjust the color temperature. Use a combination of florescent and incandescent lighting.

5. Strengthen Your Eyes

Eye strain is actually the strain of the muscles controlling the eyes. Strengthening these muscles with a series of eye exercises will go a long way to preventing eye strain.