

OSHA—AMENDED STEEL ERECTION STANDARD

WASHINGTON - The Occupational Safety and Health Administration has added a note to its Steel Erection standard informing employers of certain Federal Highway Administration requirements, to better protect workers and motorists during highway bridge construction.

This added information will help prevent tragedies like the 2004 incident in which a 100-foot-long, 40-ton steel bridge girder fell from an overpass under construction in Golden, Colo., crushing an SUV passing underneath and killing the family of three inside. The falling girder could just as easily have struck and killed the construction workers who were building the bridge had they been there at the time; therefore, OSHA is amending its Steel Erection standard to notify employers of FHWA regulations that could save the lives of workers constructing highway bridges.

In many cases, the FHWA requires that a Registered Engineer prepare plans for any temporary braces or supports used to stabilize structures such as bridges during highway construction. The National Transportation Safety Board determined the company erecting the bridge contributed to the fatal 2004 incident by failing to follow this requirement.

Adding notification of FHWA requirements to the Steel Erection standard is considered a technical amendment because it does not impose any additional compliance burden on employers and therefore does not require a public comment period before going into effect. For additional information see the notice in the Federal Register.

OSHA—NEW TRAINING EMPHASIZES WORKERS' RIGHTS

WASHINGTON - "Introduction to OSHA," a new training component emphasizing workers' rights, is required content in every OSHA 10- and 30-hour Outreach Training Program class. OSHA developed the information in support of the Secretary of Labor's goal of strengthening the voice of workers.

This information affects hundreds of thousands of workers who complete Outreach Training Program classes each year, and more than 50,000 authorized OSHA Outreach Trainers. It focuses on the importance of workers' rights and advises them of their right to

- safe and healthful workplaces
- know about the presence and effects of hazardous chemicals
- review information about injuries and illnesses in their workplaces
- receive training
- request/file for an OSHA inspection and participate in the inspection
- be free from retaliation for exercising their safety and health rights

"For too long workers have avoided making claims of unsafe work conditions out of fear of losing their jobs," said Assistant Secretary of Labor for OSHA David Michaels. "We are confident that this new training will embolden workers to speak up when they find work practices that endanger their lives and the lives of their co-workers."

During the 10- and 30-hour outreach training program classes, OSHA trainers will cover topics on whistleblower rights and filing a complaint, and will provide samples of a weekly fatality and catastrophe report, material data safety sheet and the OSHA Log of Work-Related Injuries and Illnesses. Trainers can obtain test and answer sheets from their authorizing training organization.

The OSHA Outreach Training Program is a voluntary program that seeks to teach workers about their rights and how to identify, reduce, avoid and prevent job-related hazards. The program includes 10- and 30-hour courses in construction, general or maritime industry safety and health hazard recognition and prevention that is taught through a network of OSHA-authorized trainers. Over the past three years, nearly two million students have received training through this program.

DO YOU KNOW THE WARNING SIGNS OF HEAT STROKE?

Temperatures are on the rise—and as summer arrives, it's crucial to remember heat can kill.

Heat stroke is a big safety risk for folks working outdoors.

Drinking more water doesn't mean you can go at your normal pace. It takes your body time to adjust to the heat. It's best if you start working at a slower pace and gradually build up to your regular working pace.

Don't think you have adjusted to the heat if you're not sweating, it could be the first symptom of heat stroke. Other symptoms include red, hot and dry skin, and a rapid pulse.

Heat stress has obvious signs, like blurred vision and nausea.

Drink water often even if you're not thirsty. Sipping small amounts of water often is the only way to stay truly hydrated.



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Jack Endryck, Managing Director
1.800.344.1841

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(NEBS) 585.586.1564

MONTHLY TOOLBOX TALK

HOUSEKEEPING

Good housekeeping is the first “law” of accident prevention and should be a primary concern of supervisors, foremen, and the entire workforce. Good housekeeping is the orderly arrangement of tools, storage facilities, supplies, materials, and waste. It will help you be more effective and improve accident rates, employee morale, and customer relations. Poor housekeeping often results in unsafe conditions. Many accidents which were attributed to other causes were actually caused by unsafe conditions which resulted from poor housekeeping. Accidents that fall into the category of “slips, trips, and falls” are some of the most common accidents in our business. A very simple way to prevent many of these accidents is by practicing good housekeeping. Practicing good housekeeping is not rocket science. All you need to do is take the extra few seconds or the extra two steps to put things where they belong. In the long run, you’ll save steps because you won’t have to avoid scrap and waste, and you’ll know right where to look for the tools or parts you need.

Proper housekeeping requires trash to be disposed of promptly and properly.

Put lunch scraps, paper cups, drink cans, rags, and other refuse in dumpsters. The waste from lunch and other foods can cause not only trips and falls, but pest problems also. Put garbage in trash cans after you have finished eating. Don’t leave it around to clutter up the job or to attract animals, rodents, and insects. Your employer should provide enough waste disposal containers so that they are accessible and don’t overflow. It’s especially dangerous to leave glass bottles lying around. They’re not only a tripping hazard, but broken pieces could cut someone. Keep work areas and walkways clean and clear. When you unpack materials or equipment throw away cardboard boxes, paper wrappings, and packing materials so they don’t create a fire hazard. Don’t smoke around trash containers and make sure you dispose of smoking materials safely. Keep flammable liquids in properly covered storage containers. Place flammable rags in a tightly closed metal container that is emptied daily.

Good housekeeping reduces accidents and improves efficiency.

Keep forms and scrap lumber with protruding nails clear from work areas. It’s a good practice to remove nails as you strip forms or dismantle crated equipment. Loose cords and air lines become

tripping hazards when they run across walkways, aisles, and stairways. Make sure that cords and lines are properly located, even if you didn’t put them there in the first place. Keep floors free of slippery spots – clean up spills, especially grease, oil, and paint right away. If you are cleaning up hazardous materials, follow the manufacturer’s recommendations. Each member of the crew has a responsibility to ensure good housekeeping in all phases of his or her work. The ultimate goal is to provide an added measure of protection and safety for everyone in the area. The expression, “A place for everything and everything in its place,” is very appropriate to our discussion. For instance, place tools in the proper storage bins. Dispose of cardboard and other packing materials immediately. Clean up spills promptly. Keep aisles and passageways clear. Stack material securely and in an orderly fashion.

When it comes to housekeeping, once a day, or once a week is not enough.

Remember that housekeeping is a continuing process in which all workers must participate throughout the workday. Don’t leave cleanup for the end of the shift. It’s easier and safer to do your job when you don’t have to step over and reach around scrap and debris. And, as we have been stressing, a clean job means a safer job. Good housekeeping pays off. It’s easier to work in a clean area than in a cluttered junk pile. No one expects a spotless site, but you can easily tell a site that is well maintained from one that is not. The way things look during construction can speak volumes to the owner. Keep the site clean and orderly to tell the owner that you care and that you are doing a quality job. Anyone who looks at our job can tell that it is run and staffed by professionals, who know what they are doing and take pride in their work. Good housekeeping starts the first day on the job and doesn’t end until the owner takes possession. Do your part and set a good example. Keep your work area picked up and orderly. Report any problems or concerns to your supervisor.

**Good housekeeping is up to each one of us.
A CLEAN job is a SAFE job!**