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SafetyWorks! Newsletter for a Safer Workplace, Spring/Summer 2006

Maine Department of Labor

Maine Bureau of Labor Standards

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SafetyWorks! Training Institute Opens in Fairfield

Leading the way in safety and health, the Maine Department of Transportation and the Maine Department of Labor have teamed up to open a safety and health performance-based training facility. The partnership between these two State agencies could very well be the first in the Nation. The SafetyWorks! Training Institute held its first class at the new facility, day one of a 30-hour 1926 Construction Safety Training on February 14, 2006.

The site has over forty acres of land that can be developed to create areas for "hands on" training opportunities. For example, there will be trenches dug to show class participants the proper way to slope a trench, where spoil dirt piles should be located, proper use of trench boxes, and proper means of egress from a trench. Classroom lecture can only teach so much. Having an actual trench to look at will give more meaning to what the class has learned and demonstrate the basis behind the OSHA regulations.

Future plans for the SafetyWorks! Training Institute are to have properly erected scaffold display, fall protection scenarios, an ergonomically correct office workstation, and more. Both agencies are excited by all the possibilities for teaching safety and health.
What You Need to Know to Hire Kids Today
Anne Harriman, Director, Wage & Hour Division

With spring comes the rush of teens looking for summer jobs. Early work experiences can be rewarding for young workers with great chances to learn important work skills such as responsibility, punctuality and how to be a team player. These work experiences will guide them throughout their lives.

The State child labor laws attempt to strike a balance between education and safe and limited work experiences. Although the hourly limitations are less during the summer months, restrictions were kept in place to ensure that our young people have some time to enjoy the summer with friends and family.

The following are some important highlights that we want employers, parents and working youth to remember as we go into Maine's busiest youth employment season.

Work Permits—Anyone under sixteen must have an approved Work Permit before going to work. Once the job is promised, the minor applies at the Superintendent of Schools in his/her city or town. Apply early to avoid the rush.

Hazardous Jobs—In Maine, there are safeguards in place so that youth will not be working in jobs where they can be seriously injured. For example, minors under 18 may not drive a motor vehicle as part of their job—not even to run an errand. They must also be 18 to work alone in a business that is primarily dealing with cash.

Hours of Work (During Summer Only)

Minors under 16 may work up to 8 hours a day; 40 hours a week; between the hours of 7 A.M. and 9 P.M. and may NOT work more than 6 days in a row.

Minors who are 16 or 17 may work up to 10 hours a day; 50 hours a week; between the hours of 5 a.m. and Midnight and may NOT work more than 6 days in a row.

Please visit our website at www.maine.gov/labor/ or call our Customer Service Unit at (207) 624-6400 for more information on the Child Labor Laws or hazardous jobs for minors.

New Employer Tools From the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics
Theodore E. Bradstreet, Planning & Research Associate II

The US Bureau of Labor Statistics has developed two “employer friendly” on-line tools to familiarize and assist employers with the process of calculating their own incidence rates and generating profiles. These tools will allow more focused access to Bureau of Labor Statistics data than the previously available on-line options. The incidence rate calculator is located at: http://data.bls.gov/IIRC/?data_tool=IIRC

It displays the state/industry rate for comparison with the individually calculated rate and presently has comparison data available for 2003 and 2004. More years will be added as the data become available. Required inputs for incidence rate calculation are the total employee hours for the year in question and one of four choices of injury and illness counts: total, days away only, job transfer/restriction only, or both days away and job transfer/restriction (DART rate). For comparison data, a choice of year, NAICS (National American Industrial Classification System) supersector and industry and state/ownership combination must be made. The NAICS categories are expressed verbally, so one need not know the codes. For most states and territories, the following ownership categories are available: all ownership, private, state and local government, state only, and local only. The profile generator is located at: http://data.bls.gov/GOT/servlet/StartProfile?data_tool=Profile

It has data for 2003 only, and the smallest unit for which a profile is generated is a state and 3-to-6 digit NAICS industry. The program will generate three types of profiles: case and demographic numbers, case and demographic incidence rates, and annual survey summary numbers and rates. “All U.S.” may be selected as well as states and territories, so comparison with national data is possible by running additional profiles. Ownership types are selected separately from states but are the same five as for the incidence rate calculator. In addition to the usual characteristics of injury/illness, the additional demographic characteristics of gender, specific age, and race/ethnicity are available for selection for some profiles. Only one characteristic and sub-characteristic may be selected for a given profile: e.g., age group and 55-64. Output for some profiles includes the additional characteristics of number of days away from work, day of the week, time of day, and hours worked.

For help with incidence rate calculation or profiles using pre-2003 data, contact the Maine Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Standards, Technical Services Division, 45 State House Station, Augusta, ME 04333, or by telephone at (207) 624-6440.

Visit our web site at www.safetyworksmaine.com
WANTED
ONE COUNTY EMPLOYEE

The Board of Occupational Safety & Health currently has a vacancy for the County Employee representative position.

This position would represent all County Employees regarding workplace safety & health issues raised before the Board of Occupational Safety & Health. Candidates must be a current employee of a County Office.

Interested parties should send their letter of intent and résumé to: Dawn McKenney, Clerk of the Board of Occupational Safety & Health, 45 State House Station, Augusta, Maine 04333-0045. For more information, call (207) 624-6498.

Congratulations!! to United Technology for “Getting in SHAPE”

United Technology of Bangor is Maine’s first Public Sector employer to be awarded the Safety & Health Award for Public Sector Employers (SHAPE). United Technologies has developed and implemented an effective safety and health program. United Technologies will be exempt from routine safety and health compliance enforcement inspections for one year.

Several other communities are currently working with Safety-W orks! consultation to receive SHAPE.

If you would like to learn more about SHAPE, please call (207) 624-6400 or toll-free at 1-877-SAFE-345. Information is also available on our website.

Do Any of Your Employees Wear a Respirator? Even Occasionally?

Michael A. LaPlante, Public Sector Enforcement Officer

Fire/Rescue, Water, Sewer, Public Works, Parks and Recreation departments, Maintenance, and even some Law Enforcement agencies all may use respirators in their duties. If the respiratory hazard cannot be engineered controlled and you have determined that employees will need to wear a respirator, you will need:

- A written Respiratory Protection Program specific to your agency and type of respirator(s) used and reviewed annually for updates or changes.
- Medical Clearances: Wearing a respirator is hard on the cardiovascular system. A physician or other Licensed Health Care Professional (LHCP) must clear employees wearing a respirator, even occasionally. If the employee is wearing a dust mask voluntarily, medical clearances are not required, but must be provided with Appendix D-Voluntary Use Respirators. The medical clearances for Public Sector are based on the age of the employee:
  - Up through 35 years of age = at least every 5 years
  - 36 - 40 years of age = at least every 2 years
  - Over 40 years of age = at least annually
- Fit Testing: Once employees have been medically cleared to wear a respirator, the employees wearing the respirator must be “fit tested” for the masks annually (within 1 year of the last test.)
- Training: All employees must have initial and annual training on the specific respirators they will be wearing.
- Inspection of Respirators: Employers must ensure that employees are inspecting the respirators before use and at least annually thereafter. Always document the inspections. Fire departments must inspect the SCBA’s weekly for full time and monthly for volunteer.
- Recordkeeping: Records you will need to maintain: the written Respiratory Protection Program, written medical clearances from the LHCP, the annual fit test records, inspection records of the respirator, flow test data (SCBA’s) and the initial and annual employee training records.

For more in-depth guidance in the use of respirators, follow the OSHA Standards on Respiratory Protection 29CFR1910.134 and its appendices or call SafetyWorks! at (207) 624-6400 or toll-free at 1-877-SAFE-345.

Visit our web site at www.safetyworksmaine.com
Reducing the Risk of Rollover Crashes in 15-Passenger Vans

Fifteen-passenger vans typically have seating positions for a driver and 14 passengers. They are widely used by community organizations to take members on short trips and outings. Colleges use them to drive sports teams to intercollegiate games and vanpools use them for commuters.

Recent research conducted by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has found that the risk of a rollover crash is greatly increased when ten or more people ride in a 15-passenger van. This increased risk occurs because the passenger weight raises the vehicle's center of gravity and causes it to shift to the rear. As a result, the van has less resistance to rollover and handles differently from other commonly driven passenger vehicles, making it more difficult to control in an emergency situation. Placing any load on the roof also raises the center of gravity and increases the likelihood of a rollover.

Over the past decade, 80 percent of people killed in rollover crashes in 15-passenger vans were unbelted. Organizations owning 15-passenger vans should have a written seat belt use policy. Drivers should be responsible for enforcing the policy. Significant differences in the design and handling characteristics of a 15-passenger van make it drive differently from other passenger vehicles. Therefore, an organization that owns a 15-passenger van should select one or two experienced drivers to drive the van on a regular basis.

For additional information or training, contact Bureau of Highway Safety, NHTSA website at www.nhtsa.dot.gov/cars/problems/studies/15PassVans/index.htm or SafetyWorks!

Source: National Highway Traffic Administration

From the Director

This edition's cover story about the new Safety Training Institute is a truly a big story on several levels. One of the most important aspects is the high level of cooperation between the Department of Labor and the Department of Transportation. The result gives both departments exciting new possibilities for training that benefits all employers and workers in Maine. My heartiest congratulations to all those involved in making the STI a reality!

Here at the Bureau of Labor Standards, as Anne Harriman points out in her article, Spring means a flood of work permits for the youngest workers entering the workforce, many for the first time. A recent study shows that one of the most important determinants of an individual's work-life success is early, safe and satisfying employment. We consider protection of working minors one of our most important functions. Whether you're an employer of minors, a working youth, the parent or a concerned citizen with any questions, such as the jobs a minor can be assigned, training of young workers, or something just doesn't seem right, I encourage you to call us at (207) 624-6400.

William Peabody, Director
Bureau of Labor Standards

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