

Occupational Safety and Health Advisory Council
Meeting minutes
Aug. 2, 2013

Members present

Erick Ajax
Carol Bufton
Michael Hawthorne
Scott Huberty
Michael Mueller
Elizabeth Rheingans
Greg Rindal
Christopher Schmidt
Dean Tharp

Staff members present

Dave Ferkul
James Honerman
Jeff Isakson
James Krueger
Commissioner Ken Peterson
Roslyn Robertson
Cindy Valentine
Nancy Zentgraf

Speakers and guests present

Robert Feyen
John Hollingsworth
Matt Marquis

Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 10:06 a.m. by Chairwoman Carol Bufton and announcements were read. Members, staff members and guests introduced themselves.

Approval of the agenda

The Aug. 2, 2013, meeting agenda was approved.

Approval of the minutes

It was noted a proper name needed correction. Erick Ajax moved to approve the May 3, 2013 meeting minutes, Mike Mueller seconded. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

Department update - Commissioner Ken Peterson

- Six construction partnerships have been negotiated with Associated Builders and Contractor (ABC) and Associated General Contractors of America (AGC).
- The *Minnesota Workplace Safety Report* draft was received yesterday. Fewer accidents occurred - 142,000 in 2010 and 76,000 in 2011 - due to safer workplaces and a higher consciousness of workers and employers.
- In workers' compensation, fewer accidents have been reported, but medical costs have increased. Costs for an average workers' compensation case run \$9,000; for someone receiving benefits, an average case cost is \$13,000.
 - An increase has been seen in case disputes.

- The Legislature is conducting a study about workers' compensation costs.

New business

- ***Wind turbine safety issues, John Hollingsworth, Minnesota Power, safety specialist*** – A PowerPoint presentation is attached to these minutes about Minnesota Power's Bison 1, 2, 3 Project statistics.
 - There are 101 wind turbine units in North Dakota, powering 150,000 homes. Minnesota has 10 towers, near Virginia, on U.S. Steel property, powering 10,000 homes.
 - The land around the turbine is able to be farmed.
 - Wind turbines are coded the same as skyscraper buildings.
 - Minnesota Power has no lost-time work injuries.
 - Fall protection is a top priority. All technicians receive climb rescue training and they ensure an emergency action plan is in place. A wind technician is not an electrician, but works with power and receives specialized training. Minnesota Power has created and designed the use of switching with very little electrical exposure.
 - Hoists and service lifts are used on all Minnesota turbines, but none are used in North Dakota.
 - Each blade is 49 meters long; they are made in Fort Dodge, Iowa. The collection cells are made in Denmark.
 - Wind turbines have a 30- to 35-year life span and the return on investment is 20 years.
 - Greg Rindal stated that North Dakota wind farms use a greater distance between turbines for optimum use, much different than those in Iowa.
 - Sustained, rather than intense, wind is the most advantageous.
- ***Safety education, Robert Feyen, director of master of environmental health and safety, University of Minnesota - Duluth*** – A PowerPoint presentation is attached to these minutes.
 - Trainers are needed to keep the workforce safe. Students and managers are needed to promote a workplace culture of safety. Environmental safety and health provides a niche service to educate students to step into safety and health positions to address safety issues.
 - The University of Minnesota - Duluth's program is a practitioner-based program. The American Society of Safety Engineers is very supportive of the students. Facility tours are offered to see what the real issues are and how they are resolved in the real world.
 - There are more than 800 alumni of the program. More than 90 percent of the graduates find job placement within six months.
 - The demand is greater than the supply, which indicates a shortage of safety and health professionals. Feedback is needed for effective training and successful programs.

Federal update – James Krueger for Mark Hysell

- On July 23, 2013, Thomas Perez was sworn in as Secretary of Labor.
- On July 1, 2013, OSHA and the U.S. Postal Service agreed to terms to improve worker safety at postal facilities.
- On May 28, 2013, OSHA issued the final rule to broaden exemption for digger derricks in its Cranes and Derricks standard.
- On May 22, 2013, OSHA announced its intent to extend the compliance date for crane operator certification requirements.
- Minnesota OSHA’s federal-fiscal-year 2014 federal grant applications have been submitted to Region V.

Old business

- Postponed, due to time constraints.

Staff member reports

- **Compliance – James Krueger**
 - 2014 grant: There has been a 5-percent reduction in funding. Minnesota OSHA will not fill a vacant position at this time in Compliance and Minnesota OSHA Workplace Safety Consultation.
 - Federal OSHA audit: On Aug. 14, the federal-fiscal-year 2012 annual audit will be published on the federal OSHA website.
 - GHS implementation: The codes are catching up to the GHS changes. Roughly 30 standards have been impacted by GHS.
 - Publications: The *GRASSROOTS Worker Protection 2012 OSHSPA Report* publication copies were made available and can also be found on DLI’s website at www.dli.mn.gov/OSHA/PDF/grassroots_2012.pdf.
- **Workplace Safety Consultation – Roslyn Robertson**
 - Second quarter 2013 statistics: The Workplace Safety Consultation unit conducted 275 consultation visits, 900 serious hazards and 184 other-than-serious.
 - Construction efforts are being expanded to include youth and minority organizations.
 - Marketing has been focused on high DART employers. Mailings are sent every other month to allow the public to respond.
 - Safety Grant Program: Forty-five grant applications were awarded.
 - MNSHARP, MNSTAR Program: Thirty-eight MNSHARP worksites in general industry; seven MNSHARP Construction worksites; and 33 MNSTAR Program worksites, with two MNSTAR Merit sites.
- **Training and outreach – Nancy Zentgraf**
 - In June, the first Spanish-language Construction Seminar was presented to Hispanic/Latino partners. A MNOSHA overview and roofing standards were provided. Attendance was low, but efforts will continue to reach out to Spanish-speaking employers and employees.
 - OTI training has been reduced to “core” classes.

- The 2014 Construction Safety Seminars will be at the Minnesota Department of Transportation's Training and Conference Center at 1900 W. Cty. Road I, in Shoreview, MN. The next seminar topic is vehicle safety; it is from 7 to 9 a.m. on Sept. 17, 2013.
- Six partnerships have been signed:
 - AGC - Oscar J. Boldt Construction, Graham Construction Services, Kraus-Anderson Construction, M.A. Mortenson Company and Q3 Contracting, Inc.; and
 - ABC - Shingobee Builders, Inc.

2013 meeting schedule

- Nov. 1

Adjournment

Mike Hawthorne moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Dean Tharp. All voted in favor and the motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 12:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Pamela McLaughlin
Executive Secretary