

MNOSHA Web resources

Since the new Department of Labor and Industry Web site was launched a year ago, the MNOSHA section of the site -- www.dli.mn.gov/MnOsha.asp -- has continued to evolve, providing more resources that are easier to find.

A few highlights include:

'Best of the worst': worksite hazard photos
www.dli.mn.gov/OSHA/BestofWorst.asp

Construction breakfast information
www.dli.mn.gov/OSHA/ConstructionBreakfast.asp

Contact MNOSHA
www.dli.mn.gov/OSHA/Contact.asp

Informational resources for all industries
www.dli.mn.gov/OSHA/Information.asp

MNOSHA fact sheets
www.dli.mn.gov/OSHA/FactSheets.asp

MNOSHA Workplace Safety Consultation
www.dli.mn.gov/Wsc.asp

Federal OSHA recently gave its Web site a new look and structure as well, visit www.osha.gov.

Software tools help employers show need for safety and benefits and costs of health and safety programs

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Employers, safety directors and safety professionals now have software tools to help quantify the need for safety programs and understand the costs and benefits of safety and health interventions.

The OSHA \$afety Pays program is a software tool that helps show why a company may need to implement new safety and health interventions. This tool estimates the impact of workplace injuries and illnesses on company profitability. The \$afety Pays program is an interactive expert system that uses a company's profit margin and its average direct costs of occupational injuries and illnesses to estimate the total direct and indirect costs and to estimate the sales needed to compensate for these losses. This free program is available at www.osha.gov/dcsp/smallbusiness/safetypays/index.html.

After understanding the need for implementing new safety and health initiatives, employers can use a second tool to evaluate their efforts or invest in new initiatives. The Institute for Work and Health (IWH) in Ontario, Canada, has developed a free software program to help companies perform economic evaluations to see the benefits and costs of health and safety programs. The program, Health & Safety Smart Planner, will be available on the IWH Web site later this spring – www.iwh.on.ca.

This tool prompts users for information about all safety initiative benefits and costs, and includes a database component for keeping records of injury and illness claim costs. Versions are being created for various industry sectors: the version for manufacturing and service sectors will be available soon; a version for the health care industry is also being developed.