

## Occupational Safety and Health Administration — MNOSHA

### SIGNATURE PROJECTS

#### 2015 Safety Stand-Down

Participation in the 2015 Safety Stand-Down in Minnesota doubled from 2014, reaching 36,621 participants in 2015, compared to 18,000 participants the prior year. Minnesota's participation ranked fourth in the nation and exceeded participation totals in the four bordering states combined.

#### Reporting serious injuries

Minnesota OSHA (MNOSHA) Compliance successfully implemented new procedures to screen and respond to mandatory reports of serious injuries. MNOSHA Compliance has had a serious-injury local emphasis program for many years. Prior to the implementation of the requirement to report serious injuries, many employers and employees often reported them voluntarily, and MNOSHA Compliance conducted an average of 38 inspections of serious injuries yearly. With the changes in reporting requirements under 29 CFR 1904.39, MNOSHA Compliance's serious-injury inspections more than doubled in federal-fiscal-year 2015 and are projected to triple in federal-fiscal-year 2016.



### EMPHASIS PROGRAMS

In 2015, Minnesota OSHA Compliance conducted inspections under 18 local and national emphasis programs. MNOSHA's key areas of inspection emphasis continued to be workplaces with high injury and illness rates as determined by workers' compensation information and data obtained from the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Ninety-three percent of the 1,778 programmed inspections MNOSHA Compliance conducted were in the above-stated emphasis programs. Seventy-two percent of inspections conducted in these emphasis programs resulted in citations issued.

Based on citation history in the grain-handling industry, MNOSHA Compliance started a local emphasis program for grain elevators in federal-fiscal-year 2014. Fourteen inspections of grain elevators were conducted in federal-fiscal-year 2015, resulting in 53 citations and \$52,575 in penalties.

In 2014, MNOSHA Compliance added a national emphasis program to focus on operations where employees may be exposed to isocyanates. The emphasis program targets industries with increased risk of employee exposures resulting in adverse health effects, such as asthma or respiratory and skin sensitization. In federal-fiscal-year 2015, MNOSHA Compliance conducted 18 inspections under this emphasis, with 52 citations issued to 15 employers.

Minnesota OSHA Compliance added a local emphasis program for window-washing activities in federal-fiscal-year 2011. The emphasis program directs investigators to initiate an inspection when they observe employees engaged in window-washing activities. Since the inception of the emphasis program, MNOSHA Compliance has conducted 130 inspections and issued 94 citations, totaling \$266,525 in penalties. In comparison to previous fiscal-years, data indicates an increased number of in-compliance employers. Additionally, the percent of inspections with citations has decreased from 48 percent in federal-fiscal-year 2011 to 11 percent in federal-fiscal-year 2015.



*Univision TV 2016*



## ENFORCEMENT

At an ethanol production plant, two employees received burn injuries following an explosion in the dryer area. Process changes made two months before the accident, as well as loss of vacuum pressures due to other failures, contributed to the explosion. Minnesota OSHA Compliance issued five citations for violations of the Process Safety Management standard, assessing a total of \$32,000 in penalties. The violations included process hazard analyses, operating procedures, employee training, management of change, and informing operators when a change in the process was made.

A roofing contractor was cited for not ensuring an employee used fall protection while working from a low-slope roof. The contractor's foreman was working adjacent to the exposed employee at the time. A willful citation was issued, which resulted in a \$25,000 penalty for the violation. This employer had a history of violating the standard; it had been cited seven times in the previous four years, including two repeat violations.

## OUTREACH

In federal-fiscal-year 2015, Minnesota OSHA Compliance conducted 104 presentations to 4,312 participants. Ninety-nine percent of outreach presentations were in emphasis industries, including construction with a focus on excavation and residential construction. Nine

outreach training sessions specific to trenching operations were presented to more than 549 employer representatives.

MNOSHA Compliance conducted five Construction Seminars to 216 participants. A Construction Seminar focus group of representatives from the construction industry, including insurance agents, safety directors and safety consultants, selects safety topics and presenters for each event. Topics included: silica; A Workplace Accident, and Injury Reduction (AWAIR) programs and GHS; residential fall-protection; road construction and traffic controls; and defective or damaged tools.

MNOSHA conducted two presentations outside of the targeted industries and continued its strong working relationship with the Minnesota Safety Council. MNOSHA continues to participate in major safety conferences throughout the state, including staffing information booths at four separate exhibitions in federal-fiscal-year 2015. All were well attended, with significant attendance and interest at the MNOSHA booth.

MNOSHA provided presentations at the local American Society of Safety Engineers (ASSE) with 96 participants in attendance. The MNOSHA director traveled to four Regional Safety Day events around the state, with a total of 145 participants.

MNOSHA continues to publish its quarterly newsletter Safety Lines. Topics during the past year included: the most frequently cited standards; MNOSHA Workplace Safety Consultation services for small businesses; the Minnesota Safety and Health Achievement

Recognition Program (MNSHARP); results of the annual workplace safety report from the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry's Research and Statistics unit; partnerships with construction contractors; recordkeeping requirements and training events; safe patient-handling; the National Fall Prevention Safety Stand-Down; keeping temporary and young workers safe; personal protective equipment safety alerts; safety grant availability; special emphasis programs; preparation for an inspection; fall protection; logging; heat stress; MNOSHA's year in review; the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labeling; and answers to frequently asked questions.

## PARTNERSHIPS

### Minnesota STAR (MNSTAR) Program/VPP

In federal-fiscal-year 2015, three new organizations in Minnesota achieved full Minnesota STAR (MNSTAR) Program status, and one employer achieved MNSTAR Program Merit status. In addition to these new participants: seven employers received full recertification and the associated five-year exemption; one employer achieved the established one-year conditional goals and received the remaining four years of their certification; and one participant voluntarily withdrew from the program.

Federal-fiscal-year 2015 ended with the MNSTAR Program having 41 active employers – two are construction participants, and the remainder are general-industry workplaces. Of these employers, 40 are full MNSTAR Program participants, and one is working in Merit status.

General-industry participants in the MNSTAR Program have a three-year average (2012 through 2014) that is 61 percent below the current U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) rate data for total recordable cases and 71 percent below the current BLS data for days away restricted transfer (DART) rates. The MNSTAR Program construction participants – both are resident contractors at a MNSTAR Program worksite – are 38 percent below the current BLS rate data for total recordable cases and 87 percent below the current BLS data for (DART) rates.

Participants benefited from the MNSTAR Program with an approximate \$1.5 million total cost savings.



*Bosch, May 2015*

## **Construction contractor partnerships**

Minnesota OSHA's construction safety and health partnerships with the Minnesota Chapter of Associated Builders and Contractors (MN ABC) and with Associated General Contractors (AGC) of Minnesota are designed to help reduce the number of injuries, illnesses and fatalities at participating construction-industry employers.

The partnerships are managed by both associations and have three levels. Level 1 requires the employer to maintain the minimum requirements of a safety and health program. Level 2 requires a more comprehensive safety and health program. Level 3 is MNOSHA's Cooperative Compliance Partnership (CCP) program, whereby MNOSHA Compliance will provide compliance assistance for a specific project. To qualify, contractors must be at Level 2 for a minimum of one year and can then apply for participation in the CCP program for construction projects expected to last at least six months, but fewer than 18 months.

In federal-fiscal-year 2015, MNOSHA Compliance signed CCP program agreements with seven Level 3 individual contractors at nine specific construction sites.

## **St. Croix Crossing Bridge partnership**

MNOSHA also entered into a new partnership agreement with the Minnesota Department of Transportation and two contractors for a joint venture during the construction of the St. Croix Crossing Bridge superstructure. This partnership is designed to establish a cooperative effort in ensuring safety and maintaining an open line of communication between MNOSHA and the contractors on the worksite. This is a major construction project replacing the 80-year-old Stillwater Lift Bridge with a four-lane bridge connecting expressways on both sides (Minnesota and Wisconsin) of the St. Croix River. The superstructure project consists of the construction of piers, the precast segment components, with ramp bridges connecting to Minnesota Highway 36, the Minnesota Highway 36 box-girder approach bridge, and a structure connecting that bridge to the one crossing the river. This project is ongoing.