

Oregon OSHA's mission:
"To advance and improve
workplace safety and health
for all workers in Oregon."

Introduction

Oregon OSHA recently completed the first year of its five-year strategic plan. The strategic plan covers the period from October 1, 1998, through September 30, 2003, and is broken down into five one-year periods.

Your first question may be "What is Oregon OSHA's five-year strategic plan?"

This report is our attempt to answer this question.

In addition to an outline of our strategic plan, we've included some history for those of you who don't know OR-OSHA well, statistics and highlights of activities of the past year, information on grant monies administered by OR-OSHA, and a list of accomplishments, projects, events, partnerships, and activities that are moving us toward our goals.



Peter De Luca
OR-OSHA Administrator

1999 Report to

Stakeholders

June 2000

Legislature creates Oregon OSHA

The federal Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (OSHA) became an official part of national labor law effective April 28, 1971. Its purpose is to assure so far as possible every working man and woman in the nation safe and healthful working conditions and to preserve our human resources.

Oregon passed its own occupational safety and health legislation in 1973, the Oregon Safe Employment Act (OSEA) and now operates under a state plan agreement with federal OSHA.

What is a state plan?

States and territories may elect to develop their own unique occupational safety and health programs. State plans are approved and monitored by the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), which provides up to 50 percent of an approved plan's operating costs. A state plan, which must include the job safety and health standards that employers are required to meet, must be at least as effective as federal OSHA's program. Oregon elected to adopt a state plan because of the benefits and flexibility afforded states with approved plans. Those benefits include coverage for public sector employees, and the

opportunity to promulgate unique standards and to develop innovative programs that address the types of hazards specific to each state's workplaces. Twenty-three states currently operate under a state plan.

Oregon OSHA is a division within the Department of Consumer and Business Services. The division has a total of 254 employees in its central office in Salem and five field offices. Its 1999-2001 biennial budget is approximately \$35 million, \$9 million of which is provided by federal OSHA in the form of a grant.

Federal oversight

Federal OSHA monitors OR-OSHA's fiscal and program performance to ensure that OR-OSHA's state plan is at least as effective as federal OSHA.

While the method and means of federal OSHA's monitoring has taken many forms over the past 27 years, OR-OSHA is currently monitored through its strategic plan. All states with state plans are required to develop five-year strategic plans. The Oregon OSHA strategic plan and its mission, vision, and values were developed over 18 months with input from all OR-OSHA staff, Oregon employers, businesses, and labor groups.

Oregon OSHA was the first state to have its five-year strategic plan approved by federal OSHA.

Oregon OSHA's mission, vision, and values

Mission Oregon OSHA's mission is "to advance and improve workplace safety and health for all workers in Oregon." Oregon OSHA strives to accomplish its mission by administering the Oregon Safe Employment Act (OSEAct) and enforcing Oregon's occupational safety and health rules. These rules establish minimum safety and health standards for all industries and outline specific standards for individual industries such as logging and agriculture.

Enforcement — Oregon OSHA's comprehensive enforcement program ensures that Oregon's occupational safety and health rules are carried out in the workplace. The Enforcement Section conducts unannounced safety and health inspections of worksites as part of Oregon OSHA's scheduled inspection program and investigates workplace safety and health complaints and accidents.

This section also offers pre-job conferences for mobile employers in industries such as logging and construction, abatement assistance to employers who have received citations, and compli-

ance and technical assistance by phone.

Consultation — Trained safety and health professionals offer no-cost on-site safety and health assistance to Oregon employers to help them recognize and correct safety and health problems in their workplaces. Consultative services are provided in the areas of safety, industrial hygiene, ergonomics, occupational safety and health plans, new business assistance, and the Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program (SHARP).

Standards and Technical — This section adopts and amends Oregon's occupational health and safety standards, and provides technical assistance to employers and workers. The Standards and Technical Section answers questions about rules, operates the Resource Center and Audiovisual Library, and administers the Worksite Redesign Program. (See Special Programs.)

Public Education and Conferences — By conducting conferences, seminars, workshops, and rule forums, this section reaches employers, employees, and health and safety professionals. It coordinates and provides technical training on topics like confined space, ergonomics, and excavations.

Vision

OR-OSHA's vision is to continue as a national leader in occupational safety and health through:

- ▼ focusing on worker protection, helping employers to become self-sufficient with workplace safety and health, maintaining enforcement as the cornerstone of its program
- ▼ providing training and education that supports employers and employees in their progress toward self-sufficiency
- ▼ conducting its work in a timely, courteous, and professional manner
- ▼ developing and delivering outstanding and innovative programs and services
- ▼ improving workplace safety and health through new technology

Values

To support Oregon OSHA's mission and vision, staff have adopted the following guiding values:

Commitment — We take pride in producing the highest-quality work and in making the best decisions possible through partnerships with business, labor, and other government agencies.

Leadership — Effective leaders at all levels of our organization listen, then seek win/win solutions to challenges, communicating clear goals and providing OR-OSHA staff with the tools to accomplish work successfully. Leaders delegate responsibility and authority and ensure accountability at every level.

Involvement — OR-OSHA involves all employees in decisions that affect work. We follow through on decisions,



assuming responsibility and accountability for outcomes — a process facilitated by understanding our roles and responsibilities.

Respect — We respect and value others' ideas and backgrounds, creating a work environment that strengthens the capabilities of all. We conduct recruitment, hiring, retention, and promotion practices to enhance the diversity of our workforce.

Teamwork — We commit to working together to achieve our mission and goals throughout OR-OSHA, sharing information and resources freely.

Communication — We recognize effective communication in its many forms as the foundation for our work processes and commit to communicating with honesty, civility, and respect.

Customer service — We recognize that we assist both labor and business, and we commit to providing timely, courteous, and professional services and information to Oregon employers, workers, and others regarding workplace injury and illness prevention.

Partnerships — All OR-OSHA staff commit to building and maintaining partnerships with Oregon organizations and individuals with an interest in workplace safety and health, recognizing that the division's continued effectiveness in reducing workplace injuries and illnesses depends on the support provided by management, labor, and government.

Balance — In fulfilling our mission of advancing and improving workplace safety and health for all workers in Oregon, we continually seek balance, fairness, and reasoning in our approach, endeavoring to make every contact with the public a learning experience.

Oregon OSHA's Strategic Plan

Oregon OSHA is dedicated to safety and health in the workplace and to helping employers and employees develop and implement comprehensive safety and health programs.

To better serve the employers and employees of the state of Oregon, OR-OSHA has developed a plan. The plan contains three goals OR-OSHA hopes to achieve over a five-year period. The following is a brief description of the goals and highlights of accomplishments made toward the achievement of those goals during federal fiscal year 1999 (FFY 1999).

GOAL 1

Change the workplace culture in Oregon to increase employer and worker awareness of, commitment to, and involvement with safety and health. With this goal, Oregon OSHA is focused on helping Oregon businesses become self-sufficient in managing their safety and health programs.

Accomplishments

A **Web-based self-assessment tool** for employers was developed in FFY 1999. The tool is designed to provide a confidential way for employers and employees to evaluate their safety and health programs. The self-assessment takes the employer through a series of questions about the company's safety and health program and provides employers with numerical ratings of their programs. Upon completion of the assessment, employers can contact Oregon OSHA directly to ask questions or arrange a consultation. The tool went into use in early 2000 and is now available to

employers and employees through the Oregon OSHA Web site, www.orosha.org.



The **Safety & Health Achievement Recognition Program (SHARP)** provides an incentive and road map

for Oregon employers to work with their employees to find and correct hazards, develop and implement effective safety and health programs, continuously improve, and to become self-sufficient in safety and health. The Oregon SHARP program continues to exceed expectations. As of September 30, 1999, 42 companies had attained certification in Oregon. More information is available on the OR-OSHA Web site.

The **Voluntary Protection Program (VPP)** recognized a select group of facilities that designed and implemented outstanding health and safety programs.



VPP promotes effective safety and health management. The VPP concept recognizes that good safety and health management that goes beyond OR-OSHA standards can protect workers more effectively than simple compliance. Oregon added two VPP sites in the past year. More information is available on the OR-OSHA Web site.

In an effort to teach prospective employees about safety and health awareness before they enter the workforce, promoting occupational safety and health in educational settings was identified as another goal of Oregon OSHA. Relationships with several apprenticeship programs throughout the state have been initiated. These collaborative

efforts resulted in the development of curricula addressing specific industries.

To change workplace culture, employers and employees must understand what is needed. In FFY 1998 Oregon OSHA trained its staff in the writing of "plain language" rules. In FFY 1999 that training was put to the test as the Agricultural Standards were rewritten and adopted. When surveyed, 99% of users rated the rewritten rules as readable and easy to understand. As more rules come up for review, they will be rewritten in a style that is straightforward and understandable to those who must use the rules.

GOAL 2

Improve workplace safety and health for all workers, as evidenced by fewer hazards, reduced exposures and fewer injuries, illnesses, and fatalities. To reduce the number of worker injuries, illnesses, and fatalities in Oregon, OR-OSHA is focusing resources on high-hazard industries. The high-hazard industries were identified through claims data analysis as agriculture, construction, lumber and wood products, food and kindred products, and health care.

Accomplishments

Increasing public outreach is a constant theme in OR-OSHA's strategic plan. This year's outreach included seven safety and health conferences throughout the state, 707 on-site training workshops provided for employers, and the creation of five new publications for employers to use to educate employees.

The Oregon construction industry and OR-OSHA worked together to reduce construction

injuries and fatalities.

The Joint Emphasis Training Program (JEP)



is a cooperative effort among management, labor, and government to design and implement focused joint training sessions. The goals of JEP are to focus on hazards; design a curriculum; provide training to safety personnel, foremen, supervisors, and OR-OSHA staff; and to communicate the problems and solutions to the industry and public through outreach efforts.

The first subject chosen for joint training was ladder safety. The subject selected for 1999 was the new respiratory protection regulations and silica and lead hazards in construction. JEP training was presented at the Central Oregon Safety and Health Conference in September and is scheduled for six additional sessions throughout the state in FFY 2000. The JEP committee will continue to meet in FFY 2000, choosing a new topic for training development.

Construction continues to be one of the highest-hazard occupations nationwide. OR-OSHA has committed resources to reducing the number of work-related fatalities in the construction industry in



Oregon. The small construction employer safety committee program is one strategy being utilized. Participation in FFY 1999 increased from 336 to 509 companies. The program provides construction employers with 10 or fewer employees an alternative

means to meet the requirement for safety committees.

Ergonomics has been a hot topic for several years. Consultation resources are now being used to address ergonomic issues for employers. An ergonomics task force was created to plan how Oregon OSHA will address ergonomics in the future. The group is working with OR-OSHA to plan a second "best practices" conference as well as developing new publications and a Web site devoted to ergonomic issues.

Oregon initiated a program whereby particular employers may be invited to participate in a cooperative settlement agreement (CSA). Candidates are carefully evaluated based on criteria that include management's acknowledgment of a problem and a desire to implement a successful safety and health program. These cooperative settlement agreements show a significant increase in the employer's management of safety and health processes.

GOAL 3

To continuously strengthen public confidence through excellence in the development and delivery of OR-OSHA programs and services involves changing the public perception of Oregon OSHA from that of an enforcer to be avoided to that of a potential business partner able to provide valuable resources and direction. It also involves changing OR-OSHA staff's perception and attitudes about how OR-OSHA conducts business.

Accomplishments

In FFY 1999, OR-OSHA utilized stakeholder involvement in the process of writing rules. Stakeholder groups convened in agriculture, forest activities, lift-truck training,

confined spaces, temporary labor housing, inspection scheduling, utility safety, manufactured-home-industry safety and window washing. These groups are now participants in a wide variety of activities including review of rules, standards development, publications development, conference organization and planning, and identifying how Oregon OSHA can best meet stakeholder needs.

Oregon OSHA partnered with the Oregon Alliance of Senior and Health Services to sponsor the Senior Care and Housing Facilities Safety and Health Conference in Portland. This is a “first” and should lead to other partnerships.

Oregon OSHA management performance evaluations were linked to division goals, guiding values, and core competencies this year. A competency model that is in alignment with the overall division performance management system was put in place. In FFY 2000, efforts will focus on linking staff performance evaluations to the same criteria as management.

The effectiveness of Oregon OSHA’s various programs depends to a large degree on the performance of its staff. To assess the quality of work done by its compliance officers, consultants, and trainers, ongoing surveys are conducted to measure customer satisfaction. Surveys collected and analyzed show an overall customer satisfaction rate of 90.6 percent.



Highlights & statistics: FFY 1999

In addition to its strategic plan activities, OR-OSHA offers a wide variety of safety and health services to employers and employees to help ensure safe workplaces for workers in Oregon.

The Enforcement Section, made up of 58 safety compliance officers and 28 health compliance officers, conducted 5,715 inspections.

The Consultative Services Section conducted 2,095 consultations in the areas of safety, industrial hygiene, ergonomics, safety and health program management, and new business assistance. Fifty-seven percent of the consultations conducted were comprehensive, which means a safety and health program evaluation was included. This section has 24 safety consultants, 13 health consultants, and five ergonomic consultants.

The nine trainers of the **Public Education and Conferences Section** participated in 1,187 events including:

- workshops around the state
- on-site, customized training for individual employers
- interactive Internet courses
- other special projects

The conference staff conducted

six statewide and regional conferences, coordinating with co-sponsors and organizing a multitude of volunteers.

The **Oregon OSHA Resource Center and Audiovisual Library** lent (at no cost) 7,730 video training programs to Oregon employers and employees. The library stocks up-to-date books, topical files, technical periodicals, and more than 200 databases.

Interpretations of Oregon OSHA’s rules were provided by telephone and through speaking engagements by the **Standards and Technical Resource Section**. This section worked with numerous stakeholder groups to review, revise, and create safety and health rules; published materials to help in the implementation of safety and health standards and programs; and administered the Worksite Redesign Grant Program. Project grants totaling \$814,079 and product grants totaling \$186,444 were awarded in FFY 1999.

Lost-workday-cases incidence rates (LWDIR) for 1998 have followed a trend of reductions since 1988. The LWDIR includes injury and illness cases which resulted in one or more days away from work. The 1998 private sector LWDIR of 3.4 is a record low in Oregon and represents an overall reduction from 1988 of 39.3 percent. The public sector rate is 2.8, a 24.3 percent reduction from 1998.

Workers’ compensation premium rates declined by 2.2 percent for calendar year 2000. This marks 10 consecutive years of rate reductions in Oregon, totaling a 55.7 percent cut in workers’ compensation insurance costs since 1990. Oregon’s national ranking in workers’ compensation costs moved from sixth most expensive in the nation in 1986 to 38th by 1998.

Special Programs

Oregon OSHA administers the Worksite Redesign Program, the Training and Education Grant Program, and the Workers' Memorial Scholarship Account. A brief description of each follows.

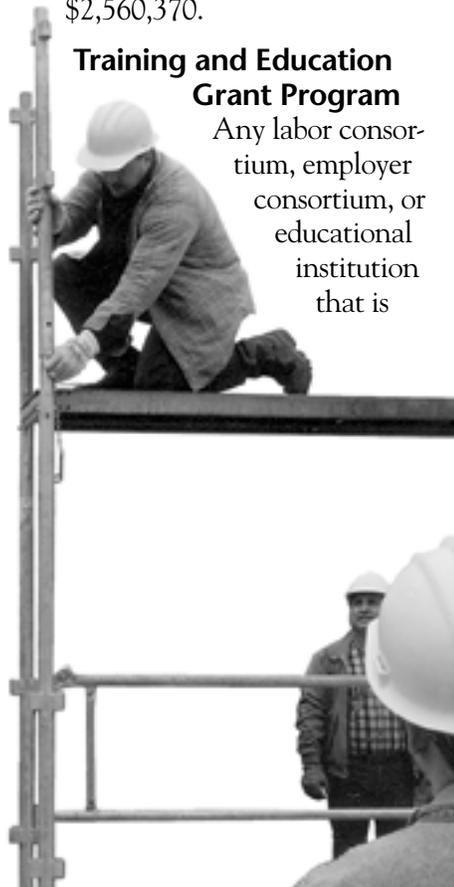
Worksite Redesign Program

This unique program was established in 1995. It provides grants from workers' compensation funding sources to conduct research and development in public and private sector workplaces. It promotes safety and health to help employers solve workplace injury and illness problems.

Research grants up to \$50,000 and development grants up to \$100,000 are available. Product grants offering partial funding for the purchase of successfully completed projects are also available. During the fiscal year ending June 30, 1998, 18 projects representing 1,500 employers received project grants totaling \$2,560,370.

Training and Education Grant Program

Any labor consortium, employer consortium, or educational institution that is



affiliated with a labor organization, employer group, or other nonprofit entity in Oregon may apply for a grant to produce innovative safety training programs. Since the 1989 Legislative Session created this grant program, more than \$1.3 million has been granted to develop programs with industry-wide applications for reducing workplace injuries and illnesses or to target specific work processes with the goal of improving safety and health.

Funding for this program comes directly from penalties paid by employers who violated the Oregon Safe Employment Act. Grants up to \$40,000 can be awarded. Grant proposals are reviewed by the Safe Employment Education and Training Advisory Committee, comprising three labor and three management representatives from the public sector and one OR-OSHA representative.

Worker Memorial Scholarship Account

The Worker Memorial Scholarship Account was established by the 1991 Legislature at the request of the Oregon AFL-CIO. The account is used for educational needs of spouses and children of permanently disabled or fatally injured workers. A recipient must be an Oregon resident and a high school graduate, GED certificate holder, or a student at an Oregon college.

The Safe Employment Education and Training Advisory Committee, an appointed advisory group for OR-OSHA grants, has been given the authority to determine the scholarship standard and make recommendations to the director. Scholarship funds are distributed through the Oregon Student Assistance Commission.

Important legislation and changing administrative rules

It was a busy and ultimately successful legislative session for Oregon OSHA. Thanks to the hard work of our partners and others, we saw good legislation pass, bad legislation not pass, and we made some new friends along the way.

Important laws passed in 1999

SB 211 allows service of citations for violation of occupational safety and health laws on an employer's registered agent. The bill corrects wording from the 1981 Legislative Session, when the word "director" was substituted for the word "employer" in error.

SB 212 repealed the requirement for Oregon OSHA to review and report to the legislature those employers not covered by hazard communication rules.

The statute was enacted in 1985 when the federal Hazard Communication Standard regarding employee exposure to hazardous substances applied only to the manufacturing industry. The standard adopted by Oregon OSHA in 1987 applies to all employees, making the requirements of this statute unnecessary.

HB 2320 establishes the privilege to refuse disclosure of employer's safety and health consultation reports in administrative proceedings.

HB 2402 exempts corporate farms from occupational safety and health requirements when the farm's only employees are family members.

HB 2477 increases the maximum amount that can be credited to the Workers' Memorial Scholarship Account (from civil penalties) from \$100,000 to \$250,000. The interest earned on the account pays for the establishment and administration of the scholarship program, which Oregon OSHA administers. Annual interest accrued prior to the passage of this bill was approximately \$5,000.

Since the scholarship was established in 1991, the advisory committee has reviewed applications from 67 qualified applicants and awarded 18 scholarships.

HB 2830 provides that OR-OSHA will schedule inspections by focusing resources on the most unsafe places of employment. By its use of the term "predominantly," and by specific reference approving random inspections, it is clear that Oregon OSHA will not exclude

any category of workplaces from inspections. The intent of this bill is to create a balance between focusing resources on the worst workplaces and ensuring safety and health in all workplaces.

The bill specifies that Oregon OSHA will notify employers in the most unsafe workplaces that they have an increased likelihood of inspection. The purpose of this notice is to urge employers to increase safety efforts. This notification is not a prerequisite to inspections. Oregon OSHA will promulgate administrative rules to revise its method for scheduling workplace inspections and provide notice to certain employers of an increased likelihood of inspection; stakeholders are taking part in the review process. New rules are expected to be in effect by June 2000.

All of the above bills became effective October 23, 1999.

Summary

We believe Oregon OSHA's efforts, in conjunction with the efforts of all our labor, management, and government partners, have resulted in safer workplaces as exemplified by lower injury and illness rates, fewer workplace fatalities, and decreasing workers' compensation insurance premiums.

Oregon OSHA's continued efforts to review, revise, write, and administer safety and health rules that protect Oregon's workers, and support Oregon's economy, demonstrate the necessity and desirability of having a wide array of people involved in the process. Involving stakeholders — all those people affected by the way we do business — is good government.





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Questions?

OR-OSHA has field offices across Oregon. If you have questions or need information, call toll-free (800) 922-2689, or phone one of the offices listed below. (All phone numbers are V/TTY.)

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