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PSC Safety Fax



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Weekly Safety Meeting

“Eyesight - Is it Important?”

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POTENTIALLY FATAL WESTWOOD, MASS., CONSTRUCTION ACCIDENT RESULTS IN OSHA CITATIONS AND \$224,000 IN PROPOSED PENALTIES FOR EMPLOYERS

BOSTON -- Exposing employees to potentially fatal safety hazards at a Westwood, Mass., construction site has resulted in two Massachusetts employers and one Vermont employer being cited and fined a total of \$224,000 by the U.S. Labor Department's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

OSHA has cited Jan Five, doing business as Alexandra Construction, and Epernay Design and Construction, Inc., both of Newton, Mass., as well as Northern Construction Dynamics of Hyde Park, Vt., for alleged willful violations of the Occupational Safety and Health Act after the agency investigated an Oct. 1, 2002, accident at the Westwood High School construction project. In the accident, a 55-foot steel column toppled over after it had been placed on its foundation as soon as the crane line holding it was released.

"Fortunately, no one was injured in this incident, which could have had tragic consequences," said U.S. Secretary of Labor Elaine L. Chao. "These companies knew the safety standards they should have been following, and they all are being cited for willful violations of the law."

According to Brenda Gordon, OSHA's area director for southeastern Massachusetts, Alexandra Construction, as the general contractor on the site, is being cited for three willful violations, including: allowing steel erection to begin before foundation material was sufficiently strong, and before giving written notification to the steel erector; allowing steel erection to begin before giving written notification to the steel erector that anchor bolts had been repaired; and modifying anchor bolts in an unsafe manner without the approval of the engineer of record. This company is also being cited for one other-than-serious violation for failing to secure a compressed gas cylinder. The total proposed penalty for this contractor is \$126,000.

Epernay Design and Construction is being cited for a willful violation, with a proposed penalty of \$56,000, for modifying anchor bolts in an unsafe manner without the approval of the engineer of record. Epernay Design and Construction was in charge of preparing the foundation of the building prior to steel erection.

Northern Construction Dynamics, the steel erection contractor, is being cited for one willful violation for beginning to erect steel before receiving written notification from the controlling contractor that foundation material had sufficient strength to support the steel. It is also cited for an other-than-serious violation for providing a discharged fire extinguisher for emergency use. The company's total proposed penalty is \$42,000. **OSHA News Release**

NATIONAL WORK ZONE SAFETY WEEK

April 6 - 12, 2003 marks National Work Zone Safety Week, a time to increase awareness about the dangers to both motorists and workers in roadway work zones. The observation is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor, Federal Highway Administration. The agency's National Highway Work Zone Safety Program is designed to reduce fatalities and injurious crashes in work zones, and to enhance traffic operation and safety within work zones. More information can be found at the below link.

<http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/programs/wsz.htm>

EYESIGHT - IS IT IMPORTANT?

Take a look around and think, for a moment, what your life would be like without your eyesight. You wouldn't be able to see a pretty girl, watch a football game or drive your car. The mountains, forests and the beaches would only be hazy memories that can be enjoyed through smell, touch and hearing, but not to see.

Yes, we take our eyesight for granted. Everyday, we wake up and open our eyes to the things around us, then we start playing Russian Roulette with our eyesight.

Every time you do a job that generates chips, dust or other flying particles without protecting your eyes, you are playing a game of Russian Roulette. Just one chip in the right place and your eyesight is gone. It is also unforgiving because once it is lost you will not get it back.

There are more than 1,000 reported eye injuries everyday among workers in this country. Many of these workers lose this game of Russian Roulette and are left partially or totally blind.

What can you do? Plenty! **PROTECT YOUR EYES.** Forget the old and lame excuse that "you can't get used to safety glasses." You will find them much easier to adjust to rather than blindness.

Some things to consider on eye protection:

- ! Contact lenses do not provide any protection against chemicals, dust, chips and other foreign bodies. In many cases, they compound the hazard.
- ! Eye protection is often not worn because of improper fit or because the lenses are dirty. Make sure your safety glasses are kept clean and fit properly.
- ! If you get a foreign particle in your eyes, don't rub them. Use water to wash out the particle. If it can't be washed out, go to a doctor to have it removed.
- ! If you weld, make sure that you have the right shade lens to protect against flash burn. Long exposure can harm an unprotected eye.

ARE YOUR EYES IMPORTANT? YOU DECIDE...

IF YOU THINK THEY ARE, PROTECT THEM!!!