



Safety Meeting Packet

May 2021

**2021 LABOR HOURS RECAP
ALL SIGNATORY CONTRACTORS**

Local#	Contract Type	Annual Total	Average Hrs/Mo	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
280	Inside	276,634	3	92,211	82,595	93,391	100,648								
280	Inside Appr.	89,824	3	29,941	27,402	29,644	32,778								
280	MAI	0	3	0	0	0	0								
280	Material	29,723	3	9,908	10,283	9,565	9,875								
280	Residential	16,790	3	5,597	4,681	5,546	6,563								
280	Resi. Appr.	10,583	3	3,528	2,774	3,627	4,182								
280	S & C	74,799	3	24,933	21,783	26,179	26,837								
280	S & C Appr.	20,222	3	6,741	5,989	6,463	7,770								
280	Support Tech														
	Total 280	518,575		172,858	155,507	174,415	188,653	0							
	Total NECA			129,255	148,536	156,501	0								
	% NECA			83.12%	85.16%	82.96%	#DIV/0!								
659	Inside	51,717	3	17,239	14,402	17,416	19,899								
659	Inside Appr.	22,832	3	7,611	6,631	7,413	8,788								
659	Material	1,147	3	382	326	315	506								
659	Residential	1,704	3	568	529	604	571								
659	Resi. Appr.	872	3	291	192	292	388								
659	S & C	1,339	3	446	377	388	574								
659	S & C Appr.	176	3	59	31	141	4								
	Total 659	79,787		26,596	22,488	26,569	30,730	0							
	Total NECA			16,260	18,904	21,099	0								
	% NECA			72%	71%	69%	#DIV/0!								
932	Inside	26,722	3	8,907	7,377	8,779	10,566								
932	Inside Appr.	11,639	3	3,880	3,196	4,050	4,393								
932	Residential	981	3	327	204	321	456								
932	Resi. Appr.	268	3	89	123	145	0								
932	S & C	1,080	3	360	248	276	556								
932	S & C Appr.	136	3	45	49	37	50								
	Total 932	40,826		13,609	11,197	13,608	16,021	0							
	Total NECA			10,106	12,371	14,448	0								
	% NECA			90%	91%	90%	#DIV/0!								
	Grand Total	639,188		213,063	189,192	214,592	235,404	0							
	Total NECA	527,480	3	175,827	155,621	179,811	192,048	0							
	% NECA	83%		83%	82%	84%	82%	#DIV/0!							

**2021 LABOR HOURS RECAP
NECA MEMBERS**

Local#	Contract Type	Annual Total	Average Hrs/Mo	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
280	Inside	231,249	77,083	68,719	79,269	83,261									
280	Inside Appr.	67,047	22,349	19,971	22,732	24,344									
280	MAI	0	0	0	0	0									
280	Material	26,015	8,672	9,029	8,340	8,646									
280	Residential	10,172	3,391	2,769	3,611	3,792									
280	Resi. Appr.	8,095	2,698	2,079	2,906	3,110									
280	S & C	72,014	24,005	20,866	25,375	25,773									
280	S & C Appr.	19,700	6,567	5,822	6,303	7,575									
280	Support Tech														
	Total 280	434,292	144,764	129,255	148,536	156,501	0								

Local#	Contract Type	Annual Total	Average Hrs/Mo	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
659	Inside	37,462	12,487	10,690	12,739	14,033									
659	Inside Appr.	16,262	5,421	4,847	5,320	6,095									
659	Material	207	69	75	10	122									
659	Residential	701	234	284	226	191									
659	Resi. Appr.	160	53	0	80	80									
659	S & C	1,295	432	333	388	574									
659	S & C Appr.	176	59	31	141	4									
	Total 659	56,263	18,754	16,260	18,904	21,099	0								

Local#	Contract Type	Annual Total	Average Hrs/Mo	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
932	Inside	24,911	8,304	6,812	8,226	9,873									
932	Inside Appr.	10,963	3,654	2,997	3,832	4,134									
932	MAI	0	0	0	0	0									
932	Residential	0	0	0	0	0									
932	Resi. Appr.	0	0	0	0	0									
932	S & C	915	305	248	276	391									
932	S & C Appr.	136	45	49	37	50									
	Total 932	36,925	12,308	10,106	12,371	14,448	0								

	Grand Total	527,480	175,827	155,621	179,811	192,048	0								
--	--------------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------	----------	----------	----------	----------	----------	----------	----------	----------

**IBEW LABOR HOUR RECAP, LAST 5 YEARS
ALL SIGNATORIES**

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
2017	124,362	150,693	171,896	141,612	152,580	176,209	132,408	180,192	171,516	172,152	180,357	179,521	1,933,498
2018	129,958	152,277	187,788	175,909	199,302	194,584	197,419	246,866	230,127	238,937	241,813	261,195	2,456,175
2019	235,064	267,789	302,365	274,692	291,848	269,365	243,405	312,956	299,388	305,249	332,724	289,681	3,424,525
2020	269,064	305,744	303,666	204,430	211,800	216,251	245,543	256,035	196,445	272,974	231,380	249,688	2,963,020
2021	189,192	214,592	235,404	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	639,188
Grand Total	947,640	1,091,095	1,201,119	796,643	855,530	856,409	818,775	996,049	897,476	989,312	986,274	980,085	11,416,406

**IBEW LABOR HOUR RECAP, LAST 5 YEARS
ALL SIGNATORY CONTRACTORS - LOCAL 659**

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
2017	14,658	21,350	26,115	21,955	23,267	28,077	17,996	26,285	31,534	32,069	36,108	37,772	267,940
2018	21,344	24,542	30,838	24,723	25,527	31,562	27,500	37,546	28,153	26,958	31,873	27,854	317,186
2019	21,197	25,620	29,205	25,630	33,395	27,182	25,193	35,508	41,951	54,575	72,625	52,457	338,420
2020	43,270	54,711	48,644	28,261	31,390	25,282	29,461	26,442	25,695	33,549	28,151	31,985	444,538
2021	22,488	26,569	30,730	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	79,787
Grand Total	122,957	152,792	165,532	100,569	113,579	112,103	100,150	125,781	127,333	147,151	168,757	150,068	1,447,871

**IBEW LABOR HOUR RECAP, LAST 5 YEARS
NECA MEMBERS**

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
2017	100,470	125,233	141,871	118,878	127,241	148,638	108,231	148,241	132,386	126,237	127,950	132,070	1,823,025
2018	100,801	121,674	149,612	140,924	160,511	152,229	156,427	200,133	190,473	197,958	202,072	222,483	1,537,446
2019	199,200	231,668	259,726	232,744	244,112	226,383	200,634	261,084	237,306	253,322	247,628	235,455	1,995,297
2020	224,793	255,228	246,899	167,739	169,124	172,186	203,008	209,747	162,195	231,451	191,467	211,496	2,829,262
2021	155,621	179,811	192,048	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	527,480
Grand Total	780,885	913,614	990,156	660,285	700,988	699,436	668,300	819,205	722,360	808,968	769,117	801,504	8,712,510

**IBEW LABOR HOUR RECAP, LAST 5 YEARS
NECA CONTRACTORS - LOCAL 659**

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
2017	10,754	16,802	21,157	17,244	17,899	22,023	13,135	19,344	22,082	20,875	23,069	25,458	210,001
2018	15,797	19,177	23,859	19,105	19,663	21,676	19,398	26,348	20,439	20,201	24,060	20,689	229,842
2019	14,628	17,749	20,192	16,638	23,467	18,332	17,202	23,763	19,442	22,313	26,129	26,555	250,412
2020	31,948	36,439	28,175	18,266	22,281	17,473	21,071	18,823	17,933	24,790	19,767	23,209	246,410
2021	16,260	18,904	21,099	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	56,263
Grand Total	89,387	109,071	114,482	71,253	83,310	79,504	70,806	88,278	79,896	88,179	93,025	95,911	992,928



Safety Training Topics

June 2021

Home Improvement Ladder Safety

Boating Safety

Bonfire, Grill and Fire Pit Safety

Sun Exposure

Working Hot

SAFETY TRAINING TOPIC

Home Improvement Ladder Safety

During the summer months you are likely to undertake more home improvement projects than any other time of the year. When you are on the job there are numerous regulations and safety precautions used to help protect you from injuring yourself. Unfortunately, far too often when doing the same type of activity away from work, protections are ignored. This especially holds true when it comes to using ladders.

As a refresher, on or off the job, it is imperative that you choose the right ladder. Always read and follow any instructions, labels, markings or manufacturer recommendations and never exceed the maximum load rating of a ladder. Factor in the weight of any tools or equipment that might be used, as well.

You should always inspect your ladder before using it. If you discover slippery material on the rungs, steps or feet do not use the ladder until you clean it. Damaged ladders must be repaired or thrown away.

When positioning a ladder, it is imperative that it is placed in a location where it cannot be displaced by any other activities. Do not position the ladder on uneven or unstable surfaces or bases such as crates or boxes to obtain additional height.

If your ladder has any locking mechanisms make sure that they are engaged before climbing on it. You should also always maintain 3-point (two hands and a foot, or two feet and a hand) contact. Always keep your body near the middle of the step and always face the ladder. Avoid use the top step or rung, at all costs, unless it was specifically designed for that purpose.

Never attempt to move or shift a ladder while you are on it. Do not reach for items laterally at any point while on the ladder. These actions greatly increase the risk of a fall as a result of the ladder tipping over.

Finally, be aware of any electrical hazards that you could potential come in contact with when working on a ladder. Never use a metal ladder near power lines or exposed energized electrical equipment! If electrical work is necessary, you should use an approved non-conductive ladder.

REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

- Why should you never attempt to move or shift a ladder while you're on it?
- What should you do if you discover slippery material on the rungs, steps or feet of a ladder?
- When is it safe to step on the top rung or step of a ladder?
- If electrical work is necessary, what type of ladder should be used?

SAFETY TRAINING TOPIC

Boating Safety

Hundreds of people are killed each year in recreational boating accidents. During the summer months it is likely that you and or your colleagues will be on a recreational water-vehicle. Here are some safety tips to follow if you plan on being out on the water.

First, always check local weather conditions and forecasts before taking a boat out. If you observe darkening clouds, volatile or rough waters, changing winds or sudden drops in temperature, return to shore immediately.

Before taking a boat you must inspect the vehicle to ensure that it is safe for use. You should ensure that there is a fire extinguisher on board and enough life vests for each passenger on the boat. It is also important that more than one person on board is familiar with all aspects of the boat's handling, operations and features. In the event that the operator is injured or incapacitated in any way, it's crucial that someone else can get everyone back to shore safely.

Once on the water it is imperative to use common sense. This means always operating at a safe speed (especially in crowded areas), being alert at all times and steering clear of large vessels and watercraft that may have difficulty stopping or turning. You should also always adhere to buoys and other navigational aids.

The likelihood of being involved in a boating accident drastically increases when alcohol is involved. Avoid drinking alcohol while boating at all costs. It can be deadly, not to mention it's illegal.

You should also be able to swim. A large part of safe boating means you can swim in the event your boat capsizes or you fall into the water. Familiarize yourself with any state laws and regulations, prior to operating a boat. Regardless of your state's requirements, it's always important to be educated. Consider taking a boating safety course, even if you are not required to do so.

Finally, you should also consider getting a free vessel safety check. The United States Coast Guard offers complimentary boat examinations to verify the presence and condition of certain safety equipment required by state and federal regulations. They'll provide a specialist to check out your boat and make helpful boating safety tips and recommendations.

REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

- Why should you have more than one person on board is familiar with all aspects of the boat's handling, operations and features?

SAFETY TRAINING TOPIC

Bonfire, Grill and Fire Pit Safety

During the summer months you are likely to use or be around bon-fires, propane and charcoal grills and fire pits. These can all be extremely dangerous if not used properly. Here are a few safety tips to follow to prevent fires and injuries from occurring.

When using any type of grill only do so outdoors. Always have them positioned away from siding, deck railings and out from under eaves or overhanging branches. Grills must be kept a safe distance from lawn games, play areas and foot traffic. As a general rule of thumb a three-foot "safe zone" around the grill should be established. When cooking, use long-handled grilling tools to provide adequate clearance from heat and flames when using the grill. You should also periodically remove grease or fat buildup in trays below the grill to prevent fires from occurring.

In the event, you are using a charcoal grill, always purchase the proper starter fluid and store out of reach of children and away from heat sources. Never add charcoal starter fluid when coals or kindling have already been ignited. Do not use any flammable or combustible liquid other than charcoal starter fluid to light the fire.

Prior to using a propane grill, check the propane cylinder hose for leaks. You can do so by using a light soap and water solution applied to the hose. This will reveal escaping propane quickly by releasing bubbles. You must replace any damaged cylinder or hose before use,

When using a fire-pit, make sure to never use flammable fluids such as gasoline, alcohol, diesel fuel, kerosene, and charcoal lighter fluid to light or relight fires. Do not burn trash, leaves, paper, cardboard, or plywood. Avoid using soft wood such as pine or cedar that likely pop and throw sparks.

If you are building a bonfire never do so in dry conditions or if the campground and area rules prohibit fires. If there is not an existing fire pit, and pits are allowed, look for a site that is at least fifteen feet away from tent walls, shrubs, trees or other flammable objects. Also beware of low-hanging branches overhead.

When you're ready to put out your, follow these guidelines:

- Allow the wood to burn completely to ash, if possible.
- Pour lots of water on the fire; drown all embers, not just the red ones.
- Stir the campfire ashes and embers with a shovel.
- Scrape the sticks and logs to remove any embers.
- Stir and make sure everything is wet and they are cold to the touch.
- If it is too hot to touch, it's too hot to leave

Finally when being around any type of fire it is a good idea to have an appropriate rated fire extinguisher in reach!

REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

- What should you do prior to using a propane grill?

SAFETY TRAINING TOPIC

Sun Exposure

Sun exposure is an extremely dangerous hazard that is encountered both on and off the job. It can result in sunburn and other heat related illnesses. You should be aware of what these potentially hazardous health conditions are, along with the associated symptoms and how to prevent them from occurring.

Sunburn can be painful and result in both short term and long term health complications. Though sunburn can occur year round, you are most at risk during the summer months between 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. When spending time outdoors, always protect yourself with sunscreen. You should also wear sunglasses to protect your eyes from becoming sunburned.

Skin damage caused by sunburn can occur after short periods of exposure. However symptoms typically begin to occur about 4 hours after exposure, and worsen within 24-36 hours. They may include red, warm and tender skin, swollen skin, blistering, headache, fever, peeling skin, nausea and fatigue. Your symptoms usually will last 3-5 days.

Heat exhaustion is another heat related illness that is caused by dehydration as a result of working in high temperatures or humid conditions. Symptoms of heat exhaustion include clammy, moist skin and pale complexion. These signs and indicators may also be accompanied by extreme fatigue, headache, nausea, vomiting, giddiness and even fainting.

Heat cramps can also occur as a result of dehydration. They usually occur in the calf muscles. If heat cramps become a common occurrence, seek medical attention to determine the best way to treat them. You may also experience heat rash when working in hot and humid conditions. This happens when sweat causes wet or moist clothing to rub against your skin. Heat rash can be prevented by resting in a cool place and allowing sweat to dry and wearing clothing that wicks moisture from the body.

Heat stroke is the most dangerous of all heat related injuries. When heat stroke occurs your body loses the ability to regulate its own temperature. Symptoms of heat stroke include loss of the ability to sweat, dry-hot skin, mental confusion, convulsions, delirium, and loss of consciousness or even coma. If you or a colleague exhibits these symptoms, seek immediate medical attention. If you do not seek immediate medical attention, heat stroke can cause death.

Here are a few ways to prevent sunburn and heat related illnesses:

- Wear a hat that allows air circulation around your head
- Wear sunscreen on exposed skin and parts of the body subject to the sun
- Drink plenty of fluids throughout the day
- Avoid caffeine, alcohol and very cold drinks

REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

- When are you at the highest risk of sun exposure?

SAFETY TRAINING TOPIC

Working Hot

Why This Is Important

Every time you work on energized circuits you risk an arc blast or electric shock. If you take the necessary precautions, you can eliminate the risks.

The Potential Harm

Temperatures generated by short-term contact with a circuit even as low as 120V can be 10 times higher than what it takes to cook your tissues. It takes very little electricity to electrocute you. The amount of current it takes to light a 75W lamp is past the threshold of what it takes to cause fibrillation. When you think of fibrillation, think of your heart being rendered useless.

Electrocution burns take place from the inside out.

Contact time is an important determinant in the severity of damage. The less time, the better. Other factors that determine the severity of damage include voltage, resistance, frequency, and victim characteristics such as age, physical condition, and size, plus some environmental factors.

Shock Characteristics

At 60 Hz, AC shock produces a tingling sensation that ranges from slight to violent. DC shock produces a warmth sensation that ranges from warm to burning hot. When current through your body reaches a certain point, it paralyzes your arm muscles so you can't let go. This is what people are talking about when they refer to "let-go current."

The let-go current threshold decreases as frequency increases. It takes less current to pass the let-go threshold when you are working on a 400 Hz UPS than when you are working on a 60Hz system.

Shock Current Path

The path the current takes through your body can determine whether you survive or not. That's why we take measurements with one hand on the probe and one hand in a pocket, rather than with both hands on probes and a path established across the heart.

That's why we also try to eliminate pathways between feet and hands. Your heart is on your left side. Thus, if you must choose a path that includes a hand and a foot, choose the right hand and foot rather than the left hand and foot.

Preventing Electric Shock

Working on de-energized circuits is an obvious way to prevent shock, but it depends on proper lockout/tagout, proper testing for voltage, and using safety grounds. Non-compliance with the requirements for ensuring circuits are de-energized is rampant, and the body count from non-compliance is high.

Using the appropriate PPE and following hot work procedures is your first line of defense, not your last.

Electric Arc Blast Characteristics

The heat from an electric arc can reach temperatures four times as hot as the surface of the sun. The pressure wave generated by an arc fault can hurl you away from the heat source, but usually causes other injuries also. In worst case scenarios, the pressure wave acts like a giant hammer. The pressure waves are sometimes strong enough to level concrete walls.

Protection From Flash

Wear the required PPE, such as a flash suit, hood, and face shield.

Wear clothing resistant to flash flame wherever exposure to an electric arc flash is possible. In the several seconds it takes to remove clothing or extinguish flames, you can be subject to deep and possibly fatal burns.

Reduce the likelihood of arc faults to begin with. For example, make test connections one lead at a time to prevent creating an ionized path that completes a circuit between an energized terminal and ground. Another way is to remove as many loads from the equipment as possible before working on it.

REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

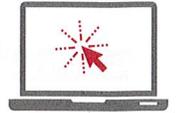
- Why is it important to know the principles of working hot?
- What are the characteristics of AC shock?
- What are the characteristics of DC shock?
- What is let-go current? Regarding hands and feet, what is the proper way to take measurements, and why?
- What is your first line of defense for preventing electric shock?
- How hot can an arc blast get?
- Is the pressure wave from an arc blast powerful? How so?
- What are some clothing and PPE issues, in regard to arc flash and arc blast?
- How can you prevent an arc fault in the first place?

Safety

COMPLIANCE ALERT™

Get more online:

- Training Shops
- Safety Checklists
- Scenario Responses



www.SafetyComplianceAlert.com

May 3, 2021

WHAT'S ONLINE

If you haven't been to our website recently, here's exclusive online content you've been missing:

www.SafetyComplianceAlert.com



Training Shop

Near-misses



Checklist

Materials handling



Be sure to add our address sca@safetycompliancealert.com to your safe senders list to receive our safety updates – and keep your company in the know.

WHAT'S INSIDE

2 Sharpen Your Judgment

Was chemical release really an emergency?

3 What's Coming

Board's Top 10 focuses on highway safety

4 Who Got Fined – And Why

Auto shop fined \$7K after jack failure kills worker

5 What's Worked for Other Companies

Building employee engagement – today!

6 Safety Regs Update

OSHA to cease enforcing 'double reporting' requirement

8 What Would You Do?

Employee concerned about driver with COVID "brain fog"

How important is supervisor buy-in? It can mean life or death

■ OSHRC chair: Incident could've been prevented

Having supervisor buy-in with a safety program is a key element in ensuring employees remain safe on the job, as supervisors typically interact with workers more than other levels of management. But how important is it?

A supervisor's commitment to safety could mean the difference between an employee going home at the end of the day or a worker suffering a fatal injury, as a recent Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission (OSHRC) decision demonstrates.

A supervisor and two linemen from MasTec Advanced Technologies were

given a project involving moving three overhead electrical distribution lines from existing 45-foot-high wooden poles to new 50-foot-high weather-resistant concrete poles in Merritt Island, FL.

Technical mistakes

The linemen – T.M., who was designated as lead despite only 18 months of experience, and Jonathan Jinks, a lineman with 20 years of experience – worked from aerial buckets while the supervisor, Ed Bilodeau, watched from below.

However, according to the OSHRC

(Please see Supervisor buy-in ... on Page 2)

FEDERAL SAFETY LEADERSHIP

Walsh confirmed as new head of Department of Labor

The Senate confirmed Marty Walsh as secretary of the Department of Labor (DOL) with a 68 to 29 vote in favor of the Boston Mayor and former leader at the Laborers' Union Local 223.

As head of the DOL, Walsh will oversee both OSHA and MSHA.

"I have been a fighter for the rights of working people throughout my career, and I remain committed to ensuring that everyone – especially those in our most marginalized communities – receives and benefits from full access to economic opportunity and fair treatment in the workplace," Walsh said in a DOL news release.

Walsh spoke about his own life experiences during his confirmation hearing, offering some insight into his view of the work he'll be doing at

the DOL.

"Workers' protection, equal access to good jobs, the right to join a union, continuing education and job training, access to mental health and substance use treatment. These are not just policies to me, I lived them," Walsh said, according to CNN.

Focus for near future?

As Secretary of Labor, he's likely to aggressively advocate for tighter silica dust rules because his father's health was impacted by dust exposure on the job at construction sites.

Walsh and the "new face of OSHA, Jim Frederick," are both former union officials and are known to be pro-union, so the AFL-CIO Top 5 wish list, released in February, could carry some weight in the new DOL.

GUILTY PLEA

Supervisor illegally removed asbestos

A supervisor specializing in asbestos abatement pleaded guilty March 26 to illegally removing and disposing of asbestos at a New York work site.

Gunay Yakup is scheduled to be sentenced July 27 and faces a maximum penalty of five years in prison.

In the summer of 2016, Yakup joined an existing conspiracy to illegally remove asbestos from a former IBM site in Kingston, NY, according to the Department of Justice.

Pressure to speed it up

The facility contained more than 400,000 square feet of regulated asbestos materials along with another 6,000 linear feet of pipe wrapped in the same material.

Yakup, who had special asbestos abatement training, was pressured by other conspirators to “expedite the removal of asbestos at the site.”

In speeding up the removal, he and his crew violated the Clean Air Act’s work practice standards addressing

how asbestos can be stripped, bagged, removed and disposed of safely.

Yakup later admitted he and the other conspirators removed a substantial amount of asbestos material from the worksite in violation of the standards, including dry removal with visible emissions and storing asbestos-containing materials in open containers on site.

Supervisor buy-in ...

(continued from Page 1)

decision, Bilodeau spent most of his time watching from inside a truck parked a short distance away.

At one point, without anyone noticing, T.M. made several technical errors, including improperly insulating one of the live lines, and was electrocuted.

Unpreventable misconduct?

OSHA cited MasTec for failing to properly insulate the energized line and for encroachment of the minimum approach distance, and the company fought the citation claiming unpreventable employee misconduct.

An administrative law judge upheld the citation, but a split Commission vacated it with Chairperson Cynthia Attwood dissenting.

The commissioners who vacated the citation felt OSHA didn’t establish MasTec had knowledge of the violation since Bilodeau, the supervisor, wouldn’t have been able to see T.M.’s unsafe work from the ground, whether he was sitting in his truck or standing nearby under the bucket.

Attwood, however, felt MasTec’s supervisor “failed to exercise reasonable diligence in supervising the linemen’s work, specifically the multiple missteps that culminated in the violative condition and were readily observable at several points.”

Because of the lack of supervision, the company failed to prove unpreventable employee misconduct and the citation should be upheld, Attwood wrote in her dissent.

SHARPEN YOUR JUDGMENT

This feature provides a framework for decision making that helps keep you and your company out of trouble. It describes a recent legal conflict and lets you judge the outcome.

■ WAS CHEMICAL RELEASE REALLY AN EMERGENCY?

“Our response to that ammonia release was perfect!” Safety Manager Pete Travers said.

“I know, but OSHA is still citing us,” Attorney John Jenkins said. “So let’s go over this again.”

Didn’t wear SCBA

“A valve for the anhydrous ammonia system was overpressurized, causing ammonia to be diverted into an underground sump,” Pete explained. “But the sump can only hold so much, and some of the gas was vented. It’s not ideal, but it was designed to do that, and it’s better than a burst pipe.

“Unfortunately, the wind pushed the gas directly toward the front gate where it made two security guards pretty sick,” Pete continued. “Someone called 9-1-1 for them while our rovers – employees trained to take care of these situations – responded to the valve.

“The rovers didn’t know how much ammonia released, but they could see there was no big cloud, and they paid attention to the windsock in the area to be sure they were on the safe side of the release,” Pete said. “So they approached the area, assessed the situation and called for the valve to be closed remotely, which effectively sealed the release.”

“They didn’t wear self-contained breathing apparatus?” John asked.

“Right, but there was no need to under the circumstances,” Pete said.

“If there was no need for them, then we can fight this,” said John.

The company fought the citation. Did it win?

■ *Make your decision, then please turn to Page 6 for the ruling.*

Safety COMPLIANCE ALERT

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF: MERRIELL MOYER
MMOYER@PBP.COM

EDITOR: BRIAN BINGAMAN
MANAGING EDITOR: FRED HOSIER
PRODUCTION EDITOR: P.J. FRONZEO
EDITORIAL DIRECTOR: CURT BROWN

Safety Compliance Alert (ISSN 1077-9787), May 3, 2021, Vol. 27 No. 617, is published semi-monthly except once in December (23 times a year) by Progressive Business Publications, 384 Technology Drive, Malvern, PA 19355; PHONE: 800-220-5000. FAX: 610-647-8089. Periodicals postage paid at West Chester, PA 19380. Postmaster: Send address changes to *Safety Compliance Alert*, 384 Technology Drive, Malvern, PA 19355.

Subscriptions: 800-220-5000

This publication is designed to provide accurate and authoritative information in regard to the subject matter covered. It is sold with the understanding that the publisher is not engaged in rendering legal, accounting, or other professional services. If legal or other expert assistance is required, the services of a competent professional should be sought. — From a declaration of principles jointly adopted by a committee of the American Bar Association and a committee of publishers.

♻️ Printed on recycled paper.

Copyright © 2021 Progressive Business Publications. Please respect our copyright: Reproduction of this material is prohibited without prior permission. All rights reserved in all countries.

TRANSPORTATION

Board's Top 10 focuses on highway safety

■ MOST WANTED ZEROES IN ON SPEEDING, OTHER DRIVING ISSUES

Five out of the 10 items listed on the National Transportation Safety Board's 2021-22 Most Wanted List are again tied to highway safety, with speeding, impaired driving and distracted driving among the most notable issues addressed.

Speeding

There were 9,378 fatalities from speeding-related crashes in 2018, according to the NTSB.

More often than not, speeding is defined as exceeding a speed limit, but it can also mean driving too fast for road conditions while maintaining the speed limit.

The NTSB feels speed-limiters on large trucks, automated enforcement, speed analysis tools and education campaigns are underused tools that should see more use in addressing this safety issue.

Impaired driving

In 2019 there were 10,142 deaths from crashes involving drivers with

blood alcohol levels of 0.08% or higher, or 28% of all traffic fatalities that year.

Alcohol-impaired drivers were behind one in four fatalities in 2019, but drugs also factor into the problem, with state laws allowing the use of recreational and medicinal marijuana further complicating matters, according to the NTSB.

Unlike alcohol impairment, there's no way of knowing how extensive the drug-impaired driving problem is since there are no standardized drug-testing protocols, something the NTSB says needs to be developed.

Distracted driving

There were 3,142 people killed in crashes involving distracted drivers in 2019.

Crash data and research indicate devices such as cell phones and tablets are among the greatest contributors to driver distraction.

Some states made progress in addressing the problem, but none have implemented NTSB's recommendation for a ban on use of all personal electronic devices while driving.

ENVIRONMENTAL

EPA wants to keep workers safe from new chemicals

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced it is currently evaluating its policies and regulations under the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) to ensure workers are safe when using new chemicals.

EPA identified several instances where the agency could align its approach more with statutory requirements and Biden administration executive orders for making determinations and managing risks associated with new chemicals.

Going forward, the agency "intends to ensure necessary protections for workers identified in its review of new chemicals through regulatory means."

This means in situations where

the agency identifies a potential unreasonable risk to workers that could be addressed with PPE and hazard communication, it will no longer assume workers are adequately protected by OSHA standards and updated Safety Data Sheets.

Absence of safeguards 'foreseen'

Instead, the absence of worker safeguards will be viewed as "reasonably foreseen" and the agency will mandate necessary protections as appropriate.

Further, the agency will stop issuing determinations of "not likely to present an unreasonable risk" based on proposed significant new use rules (SNURs).

TRENDS TO WATCH

Watch what's happening in various states. Some actions indicate trends.

■ STATE COVID RULES LIFTED, BUT ARE THEY REALLY?

Beginning March 19, 2021, employers in **Connecticut** will no longer be required to follow the state's Safe Workplace Rules for Essential Businesses issued for the COVID-19 pandemic.

The state's Department of Economic and Community Development issued new recommendations in its reopening guidance, encouraging businesses to continue following the rules as best practices.

However, the new guidance continues to require employers to follow CDC cleaning and disinfecting protocols and encourages reporting of potential violations of the guidance to the state hotline, according to law firm Jackson Lewis.

There is no mention of any enforcement mechanisms that may be in place, the law firm states.

■ NEW LAW CLARIFIES EMPLOYEE CLASSIFICATION

West Virginia Governor Jim Justice signed a bill March 23 that provides considerations regarding employee classification.

SB 272 requires someone classified as a contractor to acknowledge they:

- have a written contract confirming they know they are providing services as a contractor
- will not be treated as an employee
- will not be entitled to workers' compensation or unemployment benefits, and
- are responsible for the majority of supplies and other variable expenses incurred while performing contracted services.

Some other criteria involving control over where work is done and the ability to hire employees are also required.

The law is effective June 9.

Roundup of most recent OSHA citations

Go to www.SafetyComplianceAlert.com/fine for more OSHA fines and injury settlements.

Auto shop fined \$7K after jack failure kills worker

OSHA cited a North Carolina automotive repair shop after an employee was crushed to death while working under a motor home.

The jack propping up the motor home failed while the employee was working underneath it and pinned him between the motor home and the mechanic's creeper, crushing him to death.

Fine: \$7,000

Company: Fleet Truck Service, Charlotte, NC

Business: General automotive repair

Reasons for fine:

Three serious violations for failure to:

- legibly mark jack load rating in prominent location on jack by casting, stamping or other suitable means
- crib, block or secure jack's load after load was raised
- inspect jack for constant or intermittent use at one locality once every six months

Employees working in trench with standing water

OSHA cited an Oklahoma contractor after inspectors found employees working in a trench with standing water.

The workers, who were installing water lines in two different trenches as part of a street widening project, weren't wearing hard hats and had no appropriate means of escape in the event of a cave in or other emergency.

This contractor was cited three times in 2017 for similar violations, leading to multiple citations for repeat violations in the recent case, according to a Department of Labor news release.

Fine: \$146,128

Company: Cherokee Pride Construction, Sapulpa, OK
Business: Water and sewer

line construction

Reasons for fine:

One willful violation for failure to:

- ensure employees wore protective helmets while working in trench
- Four repeat violations for failure to:*
- provide safe means of egress from trench

- protect employees from hazards posed by trench with accumulated water
- protect employees from excavated materials that could fall back into trench

- ensure ladder side rails extended 3 feet above upper landing area

Three serious violations for failure to:

- train employees in recognition and avoidance of unsafe conditions
- ensure ladders were used only on stable and level surfaces
- withdraw defective ladders from service

One other-than serious violation for failure to:

- provide injury and illness logs within four hours of request

Restaurant fails to comply with state COVID orders

Oregon OSHA fined a restaurant for violating the state's public health order against indoor dining during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The business remained open despite knowing it was violating the order, which limited the capacity for indoor dining to zero in an extreme risk county.

In carrying out the investigation, two inspectors had to face a group of people who blocked the restaurant's entrance and ordered them to leave, according to KEZI 9 News.

Fine: \$17,800

Company: Little Brown Hen Café, Florence, OR

Business: Restaurant

One willful violation for failing to:

- comply with public health orders limiting capacity for indoor dining exposing employees to COVID-19

Note: The inspection was carried out despite several people, one with a firearm, blocking the entrance.

WORKERS' COMP DECISIONS

Can worker with benefits collect more for disability?

A sanitation worker received benefits for his injuries, but later claimed a permanent partial disability. Can he collect?

What happened: The worker was collecting trash when the sanitation truck struck a tree causing a branch to come down on top of him. He received benefits for various injuries, but later claimed permanent partial disability of his right arm.

Company's reaction: You returned to work with no loss of earnings, so you're not getting more benefits.

Decision: He could collect. The court found he hadn't received benefits for the permanent injury that was incurred at the same time as the other injuries, so he was entitled to more benefits.

Cite: *Matter of Cosides v. Town of Oyster Bay Sanitation*, NY Court of Appeals, No. 529772, 7/2/20.

Slipped and fell while running errand: Benefits?

A home health attendant slipped and fell while running an errand with her client. Can she collect?

What happened: During a daily walk with her client, the attendant stopped at her doctor's office to get paperwork required by her employer and to schedule an appointment for her client. On her way out, she slipped and fell on the wheelchair ramp, severely injuring herself and her client.

Company's reaction: The incident isn't work-related.

Decision: She could collect. All of the activities she was engaged in at the time of the incident were work-related, according to the court.

Cite: *Matter of Sharipova v. BNV Home Care Agency*, NY Court of Appeals, No. 530614, 2/4/21.

REAL PROBLEMS, REAL SOLUTIONS

Building employee engagement – today!

If you're like most safety managers, you've probably been in a situation where you've been tasked with implementing either new training, a new management system or something else new with safety.

One of the most important parts of a safety management program is employee engagement – it's one of the linchpins of making a safety program work.

How do you get employees involved with safety?

You can do this today

One method I've used is asking employees to take part in Job Safety Analyses (JSAs). It's something that you can do today.

JSAs can be hard to do. There's a lot of work involved.

You have to break a job down into a sequence of steps, look for potential hazards and then recommend actions to reduce risk.

If you break the job into too many tasks, you'll never get the job done. If you list too few steps, you risk missing hazards.

Employees who actually perform the tasks can help develop JSAs with that have the right amount of details.

So you have to gain employees' trust so they want to participate in creating JSAs.

'How can I help?'

Building employee trust depends on how you frame the task of creating JSAs.

The employees need to see the benefit in it for them.

"How can I help you do your job better?" is a good question to ask.

Good employees are always concerned about doing their jobs better.

The object is to see the job from the employees' perspectives.

You'll see how a job is actually done in the field, not just how you think it's done. You'll learn a lot.

For the employees, the most important part is that you're willing to go through the process with them.

Learning about how they actually

do their jobs, uncovering the hazards they face and finding ways to alleviate risk will build trust.

The result: You have JSAs built by workers, you've gained their trust and your employees are more engaged in safety.

(From a presentation by Colin Brown, Professional and Organizational Manager, Board of Certified Safety Professionals, Indianapolis, at the National Safety Council's Virtual Congress 202One.)

Memorial Wall: How we say 'never again'

Not too long ago, we had a very tough year at our company.

We had two employee deaths in the course of one year.

In one incident, an employee was removing a pole from a truck, touched a main line and was electrocuted.

In the other case, a worker was working on a water line that had become pressurized. He took a cap off and was in the line of fire.

Tangible reminder

As a result, we created a Memorial Wall in memory of those who died on the job at our company.

It's something that's tangible – you can touch it.

It's portable, so we take it to all of our headquarters and have a ceremony.

I'll never forget one time, three girls, the daughters of one worker who died, came up to the wall. One of the girls etched her father's name on a piece of paper. It was an opportunity for her to connect with dad one more time.

The Wall has a lot of impact. We didn't leave any space for additional names. That's because we've made a commitment to never let another employee death on the job happen again.

(Adapted from a presentation by Dan Pfeffer, Co-chair of Culture Team, Consumers Energy, Jackson, MI, at the NSC Virtual Congress 202One)

TRAINING TIPS

Helping employees deal with workplace stress

Being a truck driver or working in a busy warehouse or manufacturing plant can be extremely stressful for employees.

All of these workplaces can involve tight deadlines and often require an intense amount of focus, which can lead to workplace stress.

And workplace stress can take its toll on employees' mental and physical health, according to the Washington State Department of Labor & Industries.

Companies can reduce workplace stress by including stress management and training in their safety programs.

Things to cover include:

- eating healthy and staying hydrated
- making sure to keep a healthy work/family life balance
- getting enough sleep
- getting a sufficient amount of exercise
- the importance of regular medical exams, and
- learning methods to control stress such as meditation.

More info can be found in the "Stress Less, Feel Better" post of L&I's Keep Trucking Safe blog.

Lesson learned from fatal fire at packaging plant

A fire at a North Carolina packaging plant claimed the lives of two workers and resulted in \$118,000 in OSHA fines.

The heat gun one worker was using fell into a bucket of resin, causing the fire.

Fire hazards are a concern at many workplaces, and it's important workers are trained how to properly handle flammable materials and what to do if a fire does break out.

RECORDKEEPING

OSHA to cease enforcing 'double reporting' requirement

In a new interpretation letter, OSHA has removed its requirement for "double reporting" a fatality that occurs immediately after a worker hospitalization.

When the COVID-19 pandemic began, OSHA started issuing citations if an employer failed to report cases involving an admission to a hospital followed by a fatality, but a recently published interpretation letter indicates that has changed.

OSHA's area offices took the position that a second call to OSHA was required in the case of a fatality even if the employer already notified the agency of an injury requiring a hospitalization within the mandated 24-hour notification period.

This led to some employers being hit with proposed penalties of up to \$9,639, according to law firm Constangy Brooks Smith & Prophete.

The interpretation letter, which is dated Jan. 8, says that once OSHA has been advised of a case serious enough to require a hospitalization, "the agency is already in a position to seek information about the conditions that led to the admission and to decide whether an inspection is needed."

In other words, if OSHA is advised of the hospital admission, failure to

make a second call when the employee dies doesn't impede its ability to conduct an inspection.

4-hour rule still stands

However, the law firm reports OSHA hasn't changed its stance that an employer must produce OSHA 300 logs and summary forms within four business hours of a request.

That's something the agency had been more lax about in the past, typically giving employers a few days to produce the records, but has cracked down on since the start of the pandemic.

DOL boss wants more analysis on COVID ETS

President Joe Biden gave OSHA until March 15 to come up with an ETS addressing the coronavirus, but gave the agency more time when that deadline came and went without a draft of the standard.

Now Marty Walsh, the new Secretary of Labor, issued a statement saying he has "reviewed the materials and determined that they should be updated to reflect the latest scientific

analysis of the state of the disease," according to the Wall Street Journal.

Walsh ordered a "rapid update" based on the latest Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) data and information on vaccinations and COVID-19 variants present in the U.S.

Owner pleads guilty to \$30K workers' comp scam

Jose Velasquez pleaded guilty March 30 to two counts of felony insurance fraud and had already paid full victim restitution in the amount of \$30,483 to his insurer, Wesco Insurance Company.

From March 1, 2015, through March 1, 2020, Velasquez, owner of Velasquez Gardening, systematically misrepresented the number of his employees and the total amount of his payroll.

This resulted in his underpaying insurance premiums by a total of \$30,483, according to a news release from the Ventura County District Attorney's Office.

Sentencing is set for April 28, 2021.

Velasquez faces a maximum sentence of six years in jail.

SHARPEN YOUR JUDGMENT – THE DECISION

(see case on Page 2)

Yes, the company won when the court vacated the citation.

Pete's company claimed the release was "controlled" – something more akin to when untrained workers can keep a liquid spill from turning into a real release by rolling a drum with a hole in it on its side.

OSHA argued it was "uncontrolled" and was a true emergency response under the HAZWOPER standard, requiring the rovers to wear SCBA since they didn't know the exact size of the release.

The court found the fact that some amount of ammonia was released into the air doesn't establish an uncontrolled release, and if that was the case then virtually every release

of a hazardous substance would require an emergency response, making the inclusion of that language in the standard meaningless.

■ ANALYSIS: WHEN IS IT OK NOT TO USE PPE?

Safety pros know PPE isn't always the answer. Other controls are preferred with PPE being a last resort.

Sometimes, PPE itself can be an added risk. For example, wearing a respirator or SCBA when it's not really needed can create an added risk for slips, trips and falls due to the limited vision it creates. Another example: Wearing work gloves while operating machinery with rotating parts can create risk because those parts could grab the glove and pull a worker's hand into the danger zone.

Cite: *Secretary of Labor v. Tampa Electric Co.*, Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission, No. 17-2144, 3/19/21. Dramatized for effect.

Government notices on workplace safety

Here's SCA's digest of key notices that appeared recently in the Federal Register (FR) or on OSHA's website concerning workplace safety issues. For the FR listings and other related links, go to [SafetyComplianceAlert.com/category/federal-activities](https://www.safetycompliancealert.com/category/federal-activities).

MINE SAFETY

An audit by the Department of Labor's Office of the Inspector General (OIG) found MSHA doesn't ensure that mine operators abate hazards by the deadlines set by the agency and grants abatement due dates that are too lengthy.

The OIG wanted to know if MSHA properly managed its process to issue, terminate, modify and vacate violations, so it analyzed more than 736,000 violations and reviewed inspection and supervisory reports from six MSHA districts.

According to the audit report, MSHA didn't do a good job managing this process, resulting in "significant weaknesses" including:

- Failure to timely verify operators' abated hazards. For more than 215,000 violations out of the 706,000 reviewed, the agency hadn't verified that operators corrected hazards until after the required due date.
- Giving longer than necessary violation abatement due dates and unjustified extensions. Long hazard abatement periods can expose miners to hazards for longer than necessary and can affect penalty assessments for operators, the report states.
- Failure of MSHA inspectors to write violations complying with Mine Act and MSHA handbook requirements. A lack of internal compliance controls resulted in thousands of non-compliant issued and modified violations, which could result in court challenges and inaccurate penalty assessments.

The OIG report made 10 recommendations for correcting these weaknesses, including providing refresher training to inspectors,

introducing new metrics and updating system controls.

FEDERAL OSHA

Douglas Parker, the current head of Cal/OSHA and former Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy at MSHA under the Obama Administration, is President Joe Biden's nominee to head OSHA.

Before his Cal/OSHA stint, Parker was executive director of Worksafe, a nonprofit dedicated to protecting workers, according to a White House news release.

Safety experts were happy with the pick, according to Politico, finding that his track record in California for policing COVID-19 in the workplace spoke for itself.

Debbie Berkowitz, an adviser at OSHA under the Obama administration, pointed out to Politico that Cal/OSHA conducted "almost as much enforcement in one state in 2020 as the federal OSHA did altogether."

WHISTLEBLOWER

A New York-based barge company and several of its management officials have paid \$375,000 in restitution to the brother of one of two workers killed in a barge explosion off the coast of Texas.

Investigators were looking into the cause of the Oct. 20, 2017, explosion of the barge, which occurred off Port Aransas, TX, killing two Bouchard employees, including the whistleblower's brother, according to a Department of Labor news release.

The brother began cooperating with the investigation several days after his brother's death and was allegedly fired three months later on Jan. 31, 2018, with no reason provided for the termination, so he filed a whistleblower claim with OSHA.

Bouchard must also remove any reference to the termination from its files, provide a neutral reference if contacted by any prospective employer and train its managers and employees about workers' rights.

WHERE TO GET HELP

NEW VERSION OF PPE BURN RATE APP INTRODUCED

Having a hard time keeping track of your PPE inventory? The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health has a recently updated app that will help.

The PPE Burn Rate Calculator was designed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to help both healthcare and non-healthcare systems track their PPE inventory and estimate how long supplies will last.

Version 2 has more options for users to collect and view PPE data, and now has more capability to meet the needs of large companies and facilities with complex inventory tracking needs.

To download the tool or get more information, go to [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/ppe-strategy/burn-calculator.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/ppe-strategy/burn-calculator.html)

What safety officers told us

Will most companies track employee COVID-19 vaccinations?

48%
Will not

8%
Will

Source: Gartner Inc. survey of 227 HR leaders at large global organizations

However, the same poll reveals that 36% of participants plan to have employees self-report vaccination status. But those employers won't require proof.

Each issue of SCA contains an exclusive survey to give safety professionals insight into what their peers nationwide are thinking and doing.

WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

Here's a challenging scenario you could encounter. We've asked three of your peers what they'd do. How would you handle it?

Employee concerned about forklift driver suffering from COVID 'brain fog'

The Scenario

Manager Mike Kelly just wanted to go home for the day.

"Ken, what time does second shift have its first break?" he asked the day shift manufacturing supervisor.

"Four, I think," Ken replied. "Are you itching to leave already?"

"It's been a long day, I still have errands to run on my way home and yard work to do before it gets dark," Mike said. "So, yes, I'm itching to leave."

Before they could continue their conversation, second shift worker Jon Cormier approached.

"Mike, can I talk to you alone for a moment?" Jon asked.

'Takes longer to react to things'

"I feel bad for bringing this up, but I have some safety concerns

about one of my co-workers," Jon said after Ken left the room.

"Don't feel bad," said Mike. "You have every right to express your concerns."

"One of our forklift operators just came back to work after having COVID," Jon said. "He had it bad enough he was in the hospital for a while.

"He used to be a pretty energetic guy, but he always seems tired now," Jon continued. "And he's just slower now, if you know what I mean. Like he takes longer to react to things."

"So you think he's suffering 'brain fog' from COVID?" Mike asked.

"Yes," said Jon. "And I'm afraid he's going to get into an accident on that forklift. I've already seen him have one close call."

If you were Mike, what would you do in this situation?

 Click www.safetycompliancealert.com/category/what-would-you-do/ to see other safety pros' comments on challenging scenarios

Reader Responses

1 Carl Nash, Plant Manager, DYWIDAG Systems International, Bolingbrook, IL

What Carl would do: Because of the close call, I would reassign him to a different position until his forklift driving could be re-evaluated.

Reason: You would have to be sure this practice is consistent with everyone.

2 Gordon Webb, Medical Director, LOHS, Alexandria, LA

What Gordon would do: Mike needs to talk to the questionable forklift operator. If Mike agrees there is a safety issue, then he should be removed from safety-sensitive duties and sent to an occupational medicine clinic for a fit-for-duty evaluation.

Reason: This background will help the provider perform a complete

evaluation directed at post-COVID Syndrome and safety issues.

3 Joseph Wickenhauser, Safety and Security Systems Leader, Wieland Group, Chicago

What Joseph would do: We ran into this same situation earlier this year. The safety of this team member and those that work around him were our primary concern, so I immediately had him escorted to our onsite medical facility for an evaluation. Our site doctor was the first to call it possible COVID "brain fog." He was sent out to his PCP for an evaluation, along with a communication describing the types of behaviors we were seeing. Our team member's PCP agreed with the diagnosis of our medical team and placed him on medical leave.

Reason: Important to note, in these types of situations, we don't let the team member drive home themselves.

OUTSIDE THE LINES

■ UNCLE SAM WANTS YOU ... TO HAVE A COMFY MASK

Masks have proven to be an effective way to help mitigate spread of COVID-19, but they can be a major pain to wear.

Foggy glasses, irritation where elastic straps fit around the ears and stifled breathing are a few of the complaints people make when wearing cloth masks.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services feels the "mask pain" – a term I just made up – just like the rest of us, so it has "put out the call for new mask designs that battle both discomfort and coronavirus-carrying droplets, with \$500,000 in prizes," according to the Fierce Biotech website.

NIOSH is helping with the endeavor, which will see inventors competing in a "'Shark Tank'-style pitch competition."

Because why not?

Did you know ...

Review your severe weather emergency plan with workers



OSHA says **severe weather emergency procedures** should be **reviewed** to ensure workers are **prepared**.

Source: OSHA

Employers and workers may be required to deal with a weather emergency when it's least expected, so proper planning is necessary to respond effectively, OSHA says.

This feature in each issue of SCA charts trends in national workplace safety and health to help safety professionals perform their jobs.