



# MSEA News and Updates

Dedicated to helping association members create a safer work environment

## **GET EMPLOYEES INVOLVED IN SAFETY**

The best worker safety and health protection occurs when everyone at the worksite shares responsibility for protection. Basic principles of excellence have shown that wise employers use employees' unique knowledge to help find problems and resolve them. In addition, no one else has as much at stake to avoid accidents as the employees who are likely to be injured. The more that employees are involved in a variety of safety-related activities, the more that they will appreciate the potential hazards that exist at the worksite, the more likely that they will avoid unsafe behaviors, and the more likely that the overall safety culture of the organization will strengthen. Without employees' involvement and cooperation, accidents are difficult to prevent.

### **What are the advantages of getting employees involved?**

- Employees are the ones in contact with potential hazards and will have a vested interest.
- Group decisions have the advantage of the group's wider field of experience.
- Research shows that employees are more likely to support and use programs in which they have had input; employee buy-in for the needed changes is more likely.
- Employees who are encouraged to offer their ideas and whose contributions are taken seriously are more satisfied and productive.
- The more that employees are involved in the various facets of the program, the more they will learn about safety, what is causing injuries at their site, and how they can avoid be injured. The more they know and understand, the greater their awareness will be and the stronger the safety culture of the organization will become.

### **How can employees get involved?**

- Participate on joint labor-management committees and other advisory groups.
- Conduct site inspections.
- Analyze routine hazards in each step of a job or process, and prepare safe work practices.
- Participate in developing and revising safety rules.
- Participate as trainers for current and new hires.
- Participate in accident/near miss incident investigations.
- Participate in decision making throughout the company's operations.
- Participate in pre-use and change analysis.
- Participate as safety observers and safety coaches.
- Report hazards and be involved in finding solutions to correct the problems.



Don't forget, MSEA can help you with new and innovative ideas on getting your employees involved in Safety!

## **MARK YOUR CALENDERS FOR THIS YEAR'S SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETINGS!**

MSEA safety committee meetings will be held in Fort Lupton at The Branding Iron on March 7<sup>th</sup>, June 6<sup>th</sup>, September 5<sup>th</sup> and December 5<sup>th</sup>.

On the Western Slope, meetings will be held at UTEC in Grand Junction on March 15<sup>th</sup>, June 14<sup>th</sup>, September 13<sup>th</sup> and December 13<sup>th</sup>.

Hope to see you all there!

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## MSEA LOSS LESSONS

**Case #1:** The injured worker sustained an ankle fracture while walking through the man-camp. The company did a great job at offering modified duty for the injured worker while he recovered from the injury. Unfortunately, the injured worker was getting a ride to and from modified duty from another injured employee who had to leave work due to surgery. Then, the injured worker was placed on temporary total disability because he could not drive to work and the injured worker had no way to get to work. The injured worker is currently off of work while he recovers enough to drive, at which time, the company will again accommodate the restrictions for the injured worker.

**Lesson:** *The company, by simply offering modified duty, saved approximately \$8,221.20 in temporary total disability. It is true that the injured worker is currently off of work, but the cost of this claim would have been much higher had the company not stepped in to offer modified duty. The injured worker has also expressed to Pinnacol Assurance that he feels like the company really wants him to get better and return to work. Prompt modified duty saves money and also makes the employee feel valued.*

**Case #2:** The injured worker sustained a knee injury and was told that he would need surgery. The company offered modified duty immediately and let the injured worker know he would have modified duty to work until the date of the surgery. The injured worker expected surgery to be done right away, but after the evaluation with the orthopedic surgeon, the injured worker was told surgery would be postponed at least three weeks while he underwent physical therapy and waited for some of the swelling in the knee to resolve. The injured worker argued that he could not come to work because his ride to the rig had already left. A copy of the modified duty offer and a letter from Pinnacol Assurance stating that he was expected to return to work was sent. The injured worker was not paid for the three weeks he was off and he has not contested the issue.

**Lesson:** *Modified duty can also help to head off an injured worker who does not want to return to modified duty. Had the modified duty offer not been sent immediately, then Pinnacol*

*Assurance would have had to pay TTD benefits for at least three weeks while the injured worker was preparing for surgery. Again, a simple letter can save a great deal of money on a claim.*

**Case #3:** The injured worker sustained a lower leg fracture when he pulled a survey machine onto his leg. The injured worker was placed off of work, and Pinnacol Assurance started paying TTD benefits. The injured worker was released to sedentary work only and Pinnacol Assurance called the company to see if they could bring the injured worker back to modified duty. The company offered modified duty, but was unsure if they would pay him his full wages. It was explained to the company that Pinnacol Assurance would have to pay 2/3 of the difference in TTD and TPD benefits. The company then offered the injured worker full wages and lost time benefits stopped.

**Lesson:** *As most employees that work on the oil rigs are paid at the state maximum rate, even offering modified duty with reduced wages can still amount to a large weekly payment being paid by Pinnacol Assurance. Whenever it is possible, bring the injured worker back at full wages will make a difference in the monies paid on a claim.*

## MSEA SAFETY SEMINAR

The MSEA is sponsoring a seminar "Employee Injury and Company Response" on the following dates and locations:

February 20, 2007  
7:30 AM to 11:30 AM  
Aims Community College  
Room 129 A & B  
5401 West 20<sup>th</sup> Street  
Greeley, CO 80634

February 27, 2007  
7:30 AM to 11:30 AM  
UTEC  
Western Colorado Community College  
Room 191  
2508 Blichmann  
Grand Junction, CO 81505

This seminar is no cost for MSEA members and 50.00 per person for non-MSEA members. If you are interested in attending, please call Jennifer Wilke at 303-831-7100 ASAP.

## **BURNOUT EXPLAINS LINK BETWEEN JOB STRAIN, DEPRESSION**

Researchers announced they have found that workers with high levels of job strain are at increased risk of burnout, which seems to explain the relationship between job strain and depression.

Researchers used questionnaires to assess burnout and job strain in a representative sample of 3,270 workers. Workers with high scores for exhaustion and cynicism and low scores for effectiveness were considered to have burnout. High job strain was defined as facing high work demands with little control over one's work.

High job strain was present in 23 percent of workers and was the most important risk factor for burnout. After adjustment for other factors, workers with high job strain were seven times more likely to be "burned out" than those with low job strain.

High job strain was also the strongest risk factor for depression. Workers with high job strain were four times more likely to have depressive symptoms and 70 percent more likely to score in the "clinically depressed" range.

The relationship between job strain and burnout was little affected by adjustment for other factors, including indicators of physical and mental health. In contrast, the association between job strain and depression all but disappeared after adjustment for burnout. "This suggests that much of the association between job strain and depression is attributable to burnout," the researchers write. The concept of job burnout is still debated among occupational health researchers. Previous studies have shown a close relationship between burnout, which is supposedly work-related, and depression, generally regarded as a more pervasive problem. The new study is the first to simultaneously assess all three factors in a large population representing the full range of occupations. Although the study can't prove any cause-and-effect relationship, the results suggest that burnout is an intermediate step in the relationship between job strain and depression. Their researchers said their findings also suggest that various types of job strain may contribute to burnout.

## **OSHA ANNUAL SUMMARY POSTING DUE FEBRUARY 1, 2007**

Employers subject to OSHA's recordkeeping rule are required to complete and post the OSHA form 300A, Summary of Work-Related Injuries and Illnesses, by February 1, 2007. Here are the steps:

- Verify that all entries on the 2006 OSHA 300 Log are correct and complete.
- Total all the columns at the bottom of the OSHA 300 Log. If there are no entries, enter "0". Do not leave any spaces blank.
- Transfer the OSHA 300 Log totals to the Annual Summary. One Annual Summary must be completed for each OSHA 300 Log maintained.
- Complete the "Establishment and Employment Information," including the average number of employees and total hours worked by all employees in the workplace that is covered by the Annual Summary.
- Have a "Company Executive" certify, sign and date the Annual Summary. A "Company Executive" is defined as the owner of the company, an officer of the corporation or the highest ranking manager at the workplace or his or her immediate supervisor.
- Post the signed Annual Summary at the workplace from February 1 through April 30, 2007.

We encourage exercising care in completing the OSHA 300 Log and the Annual Summary. The OSH Act imposes significant penalties for OSHA recordkeeping violations or making false statements. By requiring a "Company Executive" to certify that the Annual Summary is true, accurate and complete, OSHA is imposing a higher standard of accountability for the accuracy of employer injury and illness data.

### **FYI**

Injuries and illnesses that happen to temporary workers are not recordable unless they are supervised on a day to day basis by the employer. These types of injuries and illnesses are recordable only for the temp agency that hired them...

*Adapted from an article by Rod Smith and Patrick Miller of Sherman and Howard, LLC.*

## MSEA AND OSHA RENEW ALLIANCE

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and Mountain States Energy Alliance (MSEA) recognize the value of establishing a collaborative relationship to foster safer and more healthful American workplaces.

On January 31<sup>st</sup>, the OSHA / MSEA Alliance was extended. The benefits to MSEA members include receiving information, guidance, and access to training resources that will help them protect employees' health and safety. All this can be accessed through Dan Klimek at Sisk and Company.

Why is this a benefit? According to Dan, "Many times employers are hesitant to contact OSHA and ask for help fearing the contact will make them a target for OSHA inspections. By working through the MSEA, members can receive the resources of OSHA and not be concerned their call will put them on the radar screen."

OSHA and MSEA will work together to achieve the following training and education goals:

- Provide information, guidance and training to contractors in the oil and gas field services industry.
- Increase the access to safety and health information and training programs.
- Communicate information on the most frequently cited OSHA standards.
- Speak, exhibit, or appear at MSEA meetings.



Pictured from left to right, Tom Sisk, Megan Meagher and Herb Gibson. The OSHA / MSEA Alliance was reviewed, and the agreement extended for 2 years.

*The Mountain States Energy Alliance (MSEA) is a not for profit association dedicated to helping members create a safer work environment in the oil and gas industry. The MSEA offers an exclusive workers' compensation program underwritten by Pinnacol Assurance for its members. MSEA members receive a 4% discount on their workers' compensation premium and may also qualify for a dividend payment based on favorable loss experience of the group. To see if your company qualifies for the program or for more information about the MSEA program contact:*

*Mike Eastop or Dave Tacha  
at Sisk and Company  
303-831-7100 or call toll free – 888-333-6620*

# SISK & CO.

Insurance and Safety Solutions

**If you have questions or comments about this newsletter, contact:**

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