

Oregon OSHA, 350 Winter St. NE, Room 430, Salem, Oregon 97301-3878

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For more information:
Lisa Morawski, 503-947-7897

Employers to celebrate Safety Break for Oregon May 14

Sixth-annual event to raise awareness about workplace safety

(Salem) — Employers and workers throughout the state will take some time to focus on workplace safety and health during the sixth-annual Safety Break for Oregon scheduled for May 14, 2008.

The Department of Consumer and Business Services, Occupational Safety and Health Division (Oregon OSHA) coordinates the one-day event, designed to raise awareness and promote the value of workplace safety and health in preventing injuries and illnesses. The event – which occurs on the second Wednesday in May - takes place in workplaces across Oregon and is designed to be flexible to meet an employer's safety and health program needs.

“Safety Break for Oregon gives employers a chance to celebrate safety and health achievements and talk to their employees about ways to create safer workplaces,” said Michael Wood, Oregon OSHA administrator.

The theme for this year's event is “Building a Foundation for Safer Workplaces.” When businesses have a strong foundation, they can manage workplace safety and health just as they manage any other part of their business. The following are the seven critical elements to establishing that foundation:

- **Management commitment.** Business owners and managers are as committed to workplace safety as they are to any other critical part of the business.
- **Accountability.** Supervisors and employees are held accountable for following safe work practices.
- **Employee involvement.** Employees are involved in the day-to-day effort to maintain a safe workplace.
- **Hazard identification and control.** Supervisors and employees know how to identify and control hazards.
- **Accident and incident investigation.** Accidents and near misses are investigated thoroughly and their causes prevented from happening again.
- **Training and evaluation.** Employees learn safe work practices through classroom training and instruction.
- **Evaluation.** Business owners and managers evaluate their business safety goals at least yearly and use the evaluation to set new goals.

Many employers celebrate the Safety Break for Oregon with safety meetings, award recognition lunches, family gatherings, or special events. Such events promote management and employees working together on safety and health concerns, which results in fewer injuries and reduced workers' compensation costs for employers.

Additional information about the Safety Break for Oregon is available on the Oregon OSHA Web site, <http://www.orosha.org/subjects/safetybreak.html>.

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Oregon OSHA, a division of the Department of Consumer & Business Services, enforces the state's workplace safety and health rules and works to improve workplace safety and health for all Oregon workers. For more information, go to www.orosha.org.

The Department of Consumer and Business Services is Oregon's largest business regulatory and consumer protection agency. For more information, visit www.dcbs.oregon.gov.