

## NECA-IBEW Joint Safety Committee Minutes

November 17th, 2022

### Attendance

Bob Henderson - Capitol Electric, Troy Nichols - StonerGroup, Ilene Ferrell - Cochran Electric, Debbie Spickerman - IBEW 48, and Barry Moreland - NIETC

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m. Minutes from the September meeting were reviewed and approved.

### Communications - Safety Resources

- OR-OSHA [Manganese Fact Sheet](#)

### Old Business

- Manganese - The committee reviewed OR-OSHA's Fact Sheet on compliance requirements for welding & grinding operations. Specifically, the application of Table OR Q-2. This particular rule only applies to employers who have their employees performing welding and grinding tasks, not when they are exposed to welding fumes from other trades.

### New Business

- Personal Medical Return to Work - BOLI weighed in on employers obligation to pay for a Dr. visit to establish personal injury severity IF they require employees to bring a note for personal (non-work related) injuries. Employers can require this as long as they have an established policy and apply it uniformly throughout their company.

**BOLI** - *Where job related and consistent with business necessity, an employer may apply a non-discriminatory policy of requiring medical examination as a condition of continued employment/ return to work. NOTE this is not the same as requiring a note verifying the need for sick leave for the event itself – employers generally need to refrain from requiring medical verification under sick leave until after three consecutive workday absences.*

*Under ORS 659A.306, employers must pay the cost of any medical examination or the cost of furnishing any health certificate.*

- Workplace Poster Revisions - Barry shared new / revised [Federal](#), [Oregon](#) and [Washington](#) workplace posters for placement January 2023. The NIETC will have PDF and hardcopies ready for distribution in December.
- Construction Fall Protection Exemption Misapplication - The group reviewed an [OR-OSHA interpretation](#) on the “first person up” concept of fall protection exemption. There are a number of situations where a worker may be exposed to fall hazards without the use of fall protection however, OSHA will take a very narrow view on how to apply the exception, especially if construction work is actually being performed by our teams OR other sub-contractors on site.
- Voluntary Use of Respirators (1/2 or full face tight fitting style) - OSHA regulations allow for voluntary use of respirators however, employers are NOT required to allow this. If they do, FIT TESTING is not required however medical clearance IS required for all respirators other than “filtering face pieces” (N95 P 100 style). This [OR-OSH Fact Sheet](#) helps employers navigate the voluntary use requirements.
- IBEW Safety Caucus 2023 - June 5-7 in St. Paul MN. IBEW Safety Reps encouraged to attend.

### Round Table / Injury Reports

- Barry shared information about 9 apprentice recordable injuries - most of which were MSD / ergonomically related AND happened 90% of the time to either brand new apprentices or those within

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their first year of training. 2 JW injuries were discussed - one back strain and the other was a hand caught up in a drill. 2 Material Handler injuries were also reported, both strains.

- Troy talked about Stretch & Flex programs that only happen in the AM and may cause workers to not properly prepare for rigorous physical work later in the day.
- Ilene shared information about new battery drills that have an anti-torque feature and reported that safety management knows how to prevent other “more dangerous” injuries related to construction (EEW, Falls etc.) but we need to do a better job at the ergo / MSD type injury prevention. Taking micro breaks - especially when performing repetitive motion tasks - may be one good option. She also shared information about the use of new cable pulling equipment that attaches to a drill motor which can reduce strain injuries.
- Debbie shared job site observations about communication barriers when assigning work tasks to apprentices and taking the necessary time to evaluate / assess / remind them on proper tool use and best methods to reduce associated risk and hazard identification. Always in a rush and assuming workers know how to do the job and avoid hazards seems to be the norm.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 PM. The next meeting is scheduled for January 19th, at 2:00 PM at the NIETC.