

OSHA 10-HOUR CLASS by Rick Moore

On June 21st and 22nd I attended an OSHA 10 hour Voluntary Compliance for General Industry at NWTC in Green Bay, presented by Larry TeStroete. This class is an overview that covers a variety of general industry safety and health hazards, which a worker may encounter. It also provided introductory information about OSHA.

The class began with an explanation of the Occupational Safety & Health Act and its origins. OSHA was enacted in 1970 due to the rising injury and death rates on the job. It came to be with Public Law 91-596, December 29, 1970, as amended by Public Law 101-552, §3101, November 5, 1990 which states:

“To assure safe and healthful working conditions for working men and women; by authorizing enforcement of the standards developed under the Act; by assisting and encouraging the States in their efforts to assure safe and healthful working conditions; by providing for research, information, education, and training in the field of occupational safety and health; and for other purposes.”

The purpose of OSHA is first, enforcement, second, outreach, education & compliance assistance and third, creating partnerships and cooperative programs. The act covers those with employees engaged in business affecting commerce such as manufacturing, construction, long shoring, agriculture, law medicine, etc. Not covered by the Act are “self employed, immediate farm family, mine, Federal Agencies State or local government.

OSHA sets legally enforceable standards. Where there is no specific standard, employers are responsible for following the Act’s general duty clause. “The general duty clause, Section 5(a) (1) of the Act states that each employer ‘shall furnish... a place of employment which is free from recognized hazards that are causing or are likely to cause death or serious physical harm to his employees.’” The fact is that every OSHA rule or regulation is a result of an injury or death. The Regulations book Larry stated is in effect written in blood.

Both the employer and employee have rights and responsibilities. The employer must provide a safe and healthful workplace. They must comply with standards and regulations. They are to know OSHA standards. As employees we are expected to comply with OSHA standards, follow employer rules and report hazardous conditions. We are to wear or use prescribed protective equipment. There was an interesting discussion on PPE (personal protective equipment) and whose responsibility it was to provide. If the employer prescribes usage, they must provide the equipment. The Act does not outline exactly which type of PPE is used. It is left to the employer and the research they perform.

The class covered how an employer can and should protect itself from inspection and what they should do if an inspector were to show up. He stressed the need to educate the first line of entry, usually the receptionists or security. He recommended that a plan be in place in the event that an inspector arrives, such as designating holding room and outlining who needs to be

contacted within the company. The inspection process was explained outlining the established system of inspection priorities they are; Imminent Danger, Catastrophes and fatal accidents, Employee complaints, Programmed high-hazards and follow up. Details were provided in the study book in regard to citations, penalties, and appeals process.

The class then covered Walking and Working surfaces. The three main accidents were slips, trips and falls. A long discussion followed covering ladders and their use, when to use fall protection with ladders and when it is not needed. A video was shown detailing guarding and the requirements. We also covered Exit Routes, Emergency Action Plan (EAP) and Fire Prevention Plan (FPP). The important thing of note was follow through and usage. It's good to have a plan but better to take off the shelf and actually use it. Our student material covered fire protection highlighting classification, types and ratings. "Where portable extinguishers are provided for employee use, employees must be provided an educational program on the: principles of fire extinguisher use and the hazards of incipient (beginning) stage fire fighting."

The next topic that was covered was Personal Protective Equipment Subpart I- 1910.132-139. The section's objectives were to identify PPE- its use and limitations, assess hazards in the workplace to determine PPE requirements, and complete a hazard assessment. In the hazard assessment section, charts were provided to help identify what type of PPE would be needed. They are titled Personal Protective Equipment Assessment. These charts ease the determination of when and which PPE is needed.

After review of PPE, our next discussion was on Lock Out Tag Out (LOTO). The steps to success are Prepare, Shutdown, Isolate, Apply, Release energy, Verify, Perform, and Release form lockout. These steps were reinforced through a group exercise. The student material provided more detail than appropriate here.

Following LOTO, basics electricity was covered. Emphasis was placed on extension cords and power cords, their condition and when they should be taken from service. The discussion moved Electrical Safety and NFPA. Watching overhead for power lines was the hot topic. A minimum 10 feet of clearance should be maintained from overhead power lines. Training was important in this area, it is less expensive to train and prevent an accident than to deal with the repercussions after something happens.

We moved onto Machinery and Machine Guarding. The emphasis was that guards are necessary and should be used; the printed material provided lots of detail. Additional emphasis was place on limiting the access to the hazard. They outlined a safeguarding strategy, first guards, second devices and third other methods. OSHA 1910.212 addresses the general requirements for all machines. The section closed with a Machine Guarding Checklist, which should help determine the safeguarding needs of the workplace.

Our discussion then covered Hazard Communication 29 CFR 1910.1200. The instructor explained the different labeling systems. The stress was placed on relabeling chemicals when they are stored in something other than the original container. MSDS concluded the section along information and training.

The final section of the class was Safety and Health Management Systems. This section highlighted the hidden cost of accidents and the need for a program model to reduce injuries, the components are: Management Leadership & Employee involvement, Worksite Analysis,

Hazard Prevention & Control and Training. Again the important thing here was the actual use of the system. You can't just have this sitting on a shelf.

I found the class enlightening. It was particularly interesting to find out that when determining what type PPE is to be used. There are no qualifications as to what expertise an employer should have to determine which type of PPE is appropriate for the job or activity. This was a good "scratch the surface" class and I would encourage and strongly suggest that the members of the Safety Committee attend or have this brought the Union as a whole. The bonus of the class is that these hours count towards the OSHA 30-hour class. Each participant received Certificate and 10 Hours of Continuing Education for successful participation in the seminar.