

McCall Says New Safety Program for State Government Means Safer Working Conditions

Editor's Note: The new Occupational Accident and Fire Prevention Program for Oregon state government which was developed by George J. Wolnez, coordinator of safety and fire prevention, was strongly endorsed by Gov. Tom McCall in the following statement to all state agencies.

The Legislature of the State of Oregon has authorized the employment of a Safety and Fire Prevention Coordinator. This is a strong and enlightened step forward. It will mean safer working conditions for state employees; firm protection of state property; and a major means not only to save lives and property, but to reduce accidents as well.

We are now embarking upon a top priority program—definitely planned and seriously undertaken. I urge all state agencies to cooperate in every possible

way and to promote the program and its purpose to all employees.

Every supervisor should accept the responsibility for the safety of his entire staff. If we pursue this excellent program with intelligent motivation, we will not only save state loss, but we will be setting a valuable example for both public and private employments.

There are many ways this campaign can be instructed, enacted, and monitored. It is expected that supervisory personnel will follow these procedures and report upon them. The vital importance of this activity is esteemed high enough that enthusiastic cooperation with it now becomes a consideration in promotions and salary increases.

The Legislature has made this activity a law, demanding the provision of safe working conditions at

all locations of employment. These statutes—ORS 654.005 to 654.990—apply to both public employment and private industry.

It is not necessary to convince anyone that protection from death and injury is a basic human drive. That we have now given instinct a basis in law adds emphasis to the issue.

People are the only essential resource we have. To protect this resource, we must cooperate with each other and follow the safety program that is now presented to us.

As Governor—and as a fellow worker—I urge you to join wholeheartedly in this humanitarian project. I promise to give you my own full and continuing support. Let us end this needless loss, and let us end it now.

Tom McCall
Governor

Safety Requires Teamwork; Both Employer And Employee are Given Responsibilities

Editor's Note: "Safety requires teamwork; it requires close cooperation between labor and management." That litany is recited daily by safety experts and programs throughout the nation, in both public and private employment. The fact that both employers and employees in state government have responsibilities for safety is set forth in the following provisions of Oregon's Safety Code.

EMPLOYER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

1-2-13. The employer shall see that his workmen are properly instructed and supervised in the safe operation of any machinery, tools, equipment, process, or practice which they are authorized to use or apply.

1-2-14. When conditions arise that cause unusual or extraordinary hazards to workmen, additional means and precautions shall be taken to protect workmen or to control hazardous exposure. If the operation cannot be made reasonably safe, regular work shall be discontinued while such abnormal conditions exist, or until adequate safety of workmen is ensured.

1-2-15. All places of employment shall be inspected by a qualified person or persons as often as the type of operation or the character of the equipment requires. Defective equipment or unsafe conditions found by these inspections shall be replaced or repaired or remedied promptly.

1-2-16. Wherever required in this safety code, a written and dated report, signed by the person or persons making the inspection, shall be kept.

1-2-17. Organized safety programs should be conducted in all operations. They should be in accordance with standards adopted by the (Workmen's Compensation) Board or other responsible and acceptable agencies or organizations.

1-2-18. Each employer shall investigate or cause to be investigated every lost time injury that his workmen suffer in connection with their employment, to determine the means that should be taken to prevent recurrence. He shall promptly install any safeguard or take any corrective measure indicated or found advisable.

1-2-19. At the request of authorized (Workmen's Compensation) Board representatives, it shall be the duty of employers, their superintendents, foremen, and workmen to furnish all pertinent evidence and names of known witnesses to an accident and to give general assistance in producing complete information which might be used in preventing a recurrence of such accident.

1-2-20. Any foreman or person in charge of work is held to be the agent of the employer in the discharge of

his authorized duties, and is at all times responsible for: (a) The execution in a safe manner of the work under his supervision, (b) The safe conduct of his crew while under his supervision, (c) The safety of all workmen under his supervision.

EMPLOYEE'S RESPONSIBILITIES

1-2-21. Employees shall conduct their work in compliance with the safety rules contained in this code.

1-2-22. All injuries shall be reported immediately to the person in charge or other responsible representative of the employer.

1-2-23. It is the duty of all workmen to make full use of safeguards provided for their protection. It shall be a workman's responsibility to abide by and perform the following requirements:

(a) He shall not operate a machine unless guard or method of guarding is in good condition, working order, in place, and operative.

(b) He shall stop the machine or moving parts and properly tag out or lock out the starting control before oiling, adjusting, or repairing, except when such machine is provided with means of oiling or adjusting that will prevent possibility of hazardous contact with moving parts.

(c) He shall not remove guards or render methods of guarding inoperative except for the purpose of adjustment, oiling, repair, or the setting up of a new job.

(d) He shall report to his supervisor any guard or method of guarding that is not properly adjusted or not accomplishing its intended function.

(e) He shall not use his hands or any portion of his body to reach between moving parts or in removing jams, hangups, etc. (He should use hook, stick, tong, jig, or other accessory.)

(f) He shall not work under objects being supported that could accidentally fall (such as loads supported by jacks, the raised body of a dump truck, etc.) until such objects are properly blocked or shored.

(g) Workmen shall not use defective tools or equipment. No tool or piece of equipment should be used for any purpose for which it is not suited, and none should be abused by straining beyond its safe working load.

1-2-24. Workmen shall not remove, deface, or destroy any warning, danger sign, or barricade, or interfere with any other form of accident prevention device or practice provided which they are using, or which is being used by any other workman.

1-2-25. Workmen must not work underneath or over others exposed to a hazard thereby without first notifying them and seeing that proper safeguards or precautions have been taken.

Accidents That Shouldn't Have Happened Cost Money and Time

The State of Oregon lost nearly \$1.3 million and more than 17,000 work days in fiscal 1968-69 because of accidents suffered by state employees.

Most of the accidents were minor and resulted in no time lost and very little cost. A few, however, were serious and resulted in large amounts of lost time and money.

One thing the accidents had in common, according to George J. Wolnez, director of the state's new Occupational Accident and Fire Prevention Program, is that most of them should never have happened. He said most of the accidents could have been prevented if employees would have used proper equipment or more care.

The following examples were taken from reports published by state government:

Agency: Motor Vehicles Division. Accident: a clerk strained his back lifting some boxes into a cart. Time lost: 2 days. Total cost: \$58.02.

Agency: Oregon State Police. Accident: a state policeman fell coming down steps, twisted his knee, tore muscles in his leg and injured his knee cap. Time lost: 45 days. Total cost: \$1,879.86.

Agency: Public Utilities Commission. Accident: a clerk caught her heel on a bump, fell down, injured her forehead, both knees and broke her glasses. Time lost: 10 days. Total cost: \$179.40.

Agency: Public Welfare Division. Accident: a clerk-typist was changing a typewriter ribbon and cut her index finger with a scissors. Time lost: 1 day. Total cost: \$73.15.

Agency: Secretary of State. Accident: a custodian was cutting off the head of a mop with a knife; the knife slipped and he cut his forearm. Time lost: 4 days. Total cost: \$74.92.

Agency: Oregon State University. Accident: a plasterer fell off a ladder, struck a wall and suffered a concussion, bruised lower back. Time lost: 181 days. Total cost: \$39,346.69.

Agency: Fish Commission. Accident: a biologist weighing fish slipped on a wet floor and bruised his knee. Time lost: none. Total cost: \$24.00.

Agency: School for the Deaf. Accident: a teacher tripped on a cord and fell against a desk, bruising her breast. Time lost: none. Total cost: \$10.00.