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Fact Sheet

MNOSHA strategic partnership program

What is a partnership?

A partnership is a formal written agreement between Minnesota OSHA (MNOSHA) and one or more organizations to work together to improve worker safety and health in a cooperative, non-adversarial fashion. These groups include trade associations, unions, professional societies and single employers. The agreement lays out specific goals and objectives that the parties plan to achieve, along with clear strategies about how to achieve them. Typical agreements last from three to five years.

Why partnerships?

MNOSHA, like most organizations, has limited resources. With the partnership program, MNOSHA is able to pool resources with employers to positively impact workplace safety in ways that traditional enforcement and on-site consultation could not. Employers may receive training, technical assistance and help establishing comprehensive safety and health programs. They may also qualify for limited-scope inspections and reduced penalties. Besides the benefits of working together with their employers, employees learn more about occupational safety and health and hazard recognition. They are also able to take ownership for their protection. *Everyone* profits from the safer, healthier workplaces created by the efforts of the partners.

What are some of the other requirements for the partnership agreement?

Besides having clearly stated goals and objectives, the written agreement needs to specify what benefits the partners, including MNOSHA, will gain from this partnership. Additional requirements that must be included in the written program include:

- details about how employee involvement will be achieved;
- the methods and measurement criteria to be used to evaluate the program annually;
- a description of the roles and responsibilities for the implementation and oversight of the partnership; and

- the expiration date of the partnership, any conditions under which the program will be terminated earlier and conditions for renewal.

Some partnerships may have different levels of participation, depending on the employer's qualifications and achievements in safety and health, with different incentives.

Information submitted as part of the application or renewal process or obtained by virtue of participation in the partnership can be kept strictly confidential within the confines of the program.

Some examples of current partnerships

- Minnesota Associated Building Contractors
- Construction Health and Safety Excellence (CHASE) Minnesota, with Associated General Contractors of Minnesota

The goal of these partnerships is to reduce the number of injuries, illnesses and fatalities affecting participants by three percent annually. To achieve this result, the program focuses on the four leading causes of construction deaths, i.e., falls, struck-by, caught in/between and electrocutions, and the development of comprehensive written safety and health programs. Regular audits are conducted. There are three levels of participation in each partnership.

For more information, consult the MNOSHA Compliance Web pages at www.dli.mn.gov//MnOsha.asp or contact MNOSHA by mail, e-mail or phone.