

Sept. 21, 2011

Minnesota OSHA's (MNOSHA's) mission is to ensure every worker in Minnesota has a safe and healthful workplace. To accomplish this mission, MNOSHA has established a goal of reducing occupational hazards through compliance inspections and direct interventions.

Since 2005, employers that have scheduled a MNOSHA Workplace Safety Consultation visit have been exempt from MNOSHA Compliance inspections for 60 business days, or 12 weeks. This extended period has resulted in more exposure to unsafe practices than originally anticipated. Therefore, effective Oct. 3, the exemption period will be reduced to 10 business days.

Also, because of the dangers inherent in construction, MNOSHA has allocated significant resources to construction activities and has worked with the industry to develop partnerships and two exemption programs, the Minnesota Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program (MNSHARP) and the Minnesota Star (MNSTAR) Program. This collaboration has resulted in the state of Minnesota having a lower rate of days away, restricted or transferred (DART) in the construction industry than the national average.

To continue this success, Minnesota OSHA will expand its MNSHARP and partnership programs in construction. The number of construction sites supported through MNSHARP will increase from two to a maximum of 12. A key member of the MNOSHA management team will work with Associated General Contractors (AGC) of Minnesota and the Minnesota Chapter of Associated Builders and Contractors (MN ABC) to expand the partnership agreements.

For more information about these changes: contact MNOSHA Workplace Safety Consultation Director Patricia Todd, at patricia.todd@state.mn.us or (651) 284-5372; contact MNOSHA Compliance Director James Krueger, at jim.krueger@state.mn.us or (651) 284-5462; or visit the website at www.dli.mn.gov/Mnosha.asp.

Sincerely,
Ken Peterson
Department of Labor and Industry Commissioner