

The TBB Safety Committee met at the Corpus Christi chapter office on August 7-8, 2014. There were a total of 14 members in attendance, with the group being made up primarily of General Contractors and Chapter employees.

August 7, 2014

The meeting started out with introductions from the attendees. Following the introduction, Michael Rivera, OSHA's Corpus Christi Area Director, gave a presentation on the current trends in the local area office. He touched on the most commonly cited violations in this area as well he discussed the fatalities that had occurred in the last year. The other area that he talked about was the emphasis programs that the Corpus area was concentrating on. These include some of the common ones as well as the Crane directive sent out by National OSHA and the current respiratory protection program.

Following lunch several issues were brought to the group's attention that had been discussed at the national AGC Safety Committee meeting in Portland the previous month. Among these were some clarifications that had been mentioned regarding the new crane standard. These pertained to the definition of a crane as it applies to a forklift with a boom and hoist, verification of ground conditions by a controlling contractor, enforcement of the new flagger and rigger requirements, as well as an emphasis on crane inspection requirements. It was also mentioned that the new silica requirements are starting to be enforced with regards to respiratory issues.

Another item that was brought to the group's attention was a recent article discussing union officials joining OSHA inspectors on site visits to non-union projects. The article discusses a Letter of Interpretation from OSHA that would allow union representatives and other non-employee third parties to accompany OSHA inspectors on site visits. This interpretation changes the current law which does not allow this to occur. Currently the National AGC in part with the Coalition for Workplace Safety has sent comment regarding their concerns to OSHA regarding this matter, asking that the Letter of Interpretation be withdrawn.

Following the National AGC discussion, an update was given on state level issues. Among the items discussed was TBB's request to have the safety committee draft a bill regarding training requirements. It is not believed that this will be needed during this session but TBB would like to have it just in case. Another hot topic was the current state of the Worker's Defense Program. It was brought to the group's attention that the WDP is offering 10 hour OSHA outreach training funded by a Susan Harwood Grant. There is some speculation that during the break periods of these training sessions there has been a union representative speaking with the students. National AGC is currently looking into this issue.

The group was also updated on a new inspection procedure in the Austin area. The city of Austin has recently employed an inspector whose purpose is to inspect for proper water breaks and to check to see that posting requirements are being upheld. These inspections are primarily complaint driven.

To finalize the day's discussions, the Houston AGC discussed their current standing with regards to partnership agreements with OSHA. They had recently submitted a draft of a partnership agreement

only to have it denied by Region VI. They were informed that OSHA will no longer be honoring partnerships and that they are moving towards alliances in the future.

August 8, 2014

Friday's session began with a regulatory overview that was open to all South Texas AGC members. The topics discussed were updates to the crane standard, OSHA's heat emphasis program, and a training session on the new HazComm standard. The sessions were very informative and feedback was positive.

Following the training sessions each of the subcommittees met to discuss their current topics and progress that had been made since the last meeting. Below is summary of the topics that were discussed in the subcommittees:

Safety Initiatives and Work Practices

- Updates to the webpage from last meeting
- Send information for web update to Mike Chatron
- Add the list of useful apps to the website
- November 6-7 meeting will be in Abilene
- Add directive to the website
- Having issues with the traffic counter that need to be looked into
- Need to get info out to chapters that the website is there for their use. Perry Vaughn will do this.

Information and Resources

- need respiratory guidelines for next meeting
- What do each of the chapters need?

Government

- Discussed the issue with the press release in the Dallas Morning News
- Need to be more proactive – positive PR, PSAs
- OSHA third party involvement in inspections

Professional Development

- Need training to offer to this group

The meeting was concluded following the reports from the Subcommittee chairman.