Ironworkers... *On the Safe Side*

Safety and Health Bulletin Dedicated to Servicing Our District Councils, Local Unions and IMPACT Regional Advisory Boards Throughout North America

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Update on United States and Canada Safety and Health Initiatives

Drop-Test on Rebar Determines Impalement Hazard and False Sense of Security

The Safety and Health Department has been notified that an unsafe practice of bending rebar dowel ends is being used in lieu of appropriate protective covers. This safety bulletin highlights a recent rebar drop-test on “dowels fabricated with 90 degree bends and caned ends” to illustrate the impalement hazard and “false sense of security” of this unsafe condition. The photograph below illustrates the results of a drop-test using a 250 pound sand bag that was dropped 10 feet on #5 rebar dowels. The dowels were fabricated with 90 degree bends and caned ends, and spaced on 12 inch centers.

In an effort to observe and evaluate impalement hazards under similar workplace conditions, drop-tests on rebar were conducted at the Ironworkers Regional Training Facility in Benicia, California. The Ironworkers International Union, officials from the California OSHA Research and Standards Unit, Western Steel Council, and other reinforcing steel stakeholders observed test-drops to evaluate and document the drop-test results.

After observing the test-drops and documenting results, Mr. Eric Berg, Principal Safety Engineer of the Research and Standards Unit for California OSHA provided an official letter of clarification to the Ironworkers International. In Mr. Berg’s letter he stated:

> “Cal-OSHA does not accept the bending or hooking of rebar as an acceptable method of impalement protection. An employer that bends or hooks rebar for employee impalement protection instead of providing approved covers or troughs is in violation of Title 8, section 1712. Such an employer would be placing their employees at risk of serious injury.”

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Ironworkers Introduce Safety-Training Supervisor Certification Program

The International Association of Bridge, Structural, Ornamental and Reinforcing Iron Workers and IMPACT, the Ironworker Management Progressive Action Cooperative Trust, are pleased to announce the Ironworker Safety-Trained Supervisor (STSC) Certification Program for Union Ironworkers seeking safety positions with project owners, general contractors and signatory contractors throughout the US and Canada.

The program’s purpose is to increase workplace safety performance while creating higher-level employment opportunities for Ironworkers using this STSC Certification combined with their field or shop experience plus documented training from the Ironworkers National Training Fund.

An extension of the Ironworkers’ “2014 Zero Incident & Fatality – See Something! Say Something!” Campaign, the STSC Certification Program was established in accordance with the Board of Certified Safety Professionals (BCSP), an independent board nationally recognized as the leader in high-quality credentialing for safety and health practitioners. To encourage participation and certification, IMPACT reimburses Ironworkers for the application and exam fees once they have successfully completed their certification.

IMPACT's Labor Co-Chair, Walter Wise, and Management Co-Chair, William W. Brown, appreciate the support of the District Councils, Local Unions, Signatory Contractors and Signatory Contractor Associations like ACCNJ as they continue their initiative to achieve the first “zero fatality” year in the history of the International Association of Bridge, Structural, Ornamental and Reinforcing Iron Workers Union.

This program is administered through IMPACT by Dr. Cindy Menches, P.E., IMPACT Director of Contractor Training & Development. For more information, call 1-202-393-1147.

New Reinforcing Steel and Post-tensioning Standards Moving forward in the California State Approved OSHA Plans

Despite delays of federal OSHA to revised the “Subpart Q– Concrete and Masonry” standard and include provisions included in a petition from the Ironworkers International, reinforcing steel stakeholders provided testimony during two days of hearings before the California OSHA Advisory Committee as a precursor for adopting new safety standards for reinforcing steel and post-tensioning operations.
Petition and Proposed Standards – The basis of deliberation was the petition submitted by General President Wise to the California OSHA Standards Board. In addition to this petition, the recently revised ANSI A10.9 Concrete and Masonry Standard was introduced into the official rulemaking record as evidence of a “national consensus standard” that substantiated revisions to the previous standard. The California OSHA Standards Board will vote on the new safety standards in 2015. Special thanks to all the industry stakeholders who provided testimony.

Upcoming Events

- December meeting with California State Compensation Insurance Fund to continue discounts and program fees to the California Ironworkers Workers Compensation ADR Program.
- January safety updates presentation during the “New Officers Seminar.”
- January ANSI A10 Construction Committee meeting as newly appointed Vice Chairman.
- January meeting with Washington OSHA and Steve Pendergrass on petition to Washington OSHA to adopt new reinforcing steel and post-tensioning standards.
- January meeting with the SC&RA Labor Safety and Health Committee.
- January notice of revised “Ironworker Safety Honors Program” to expand opportunities for safety recognition approved by trustees.
- Oversight and promotion of “Ironworker Safety Trained Supervisor Certification Program”.
- Completion of “Shop Deadly Dozen Hazards” with John Bielak.
- Efforts to work with Lee Worley to complete design for structural mock-up that will integrated all fall arrest systems for apprentice and journeyman training.

Canadian Safety Initiatives Kick-Off Meeting in Alberta

On December 3rd and 4th the first of a series of “Canadian Safety and Health Roundtable Meetings” were held in Calgary, Alberta and Edmonton, Alberta. Jeff Norris, Canadian Safety Coordinator said, “It is time to establish a proactive labour-management reputation in the ironworking industry across Canada. We need to address incident trends and purse a course of action to increase safety performance.”

The objective for these meetings is to build on the achievements of the Ironworkers Union and signatory contractors with the goal being to learn what we can do together to achieve a healthier and safer workplace. To accomplish this, an agenda was established to enable an open forum to discuss the many existing safety and health problems and issues facing us today and then to determine the necessary solutions, actions, policies and programs. The results will be a healthier workplaces for our members; our contractor’s employees, into the future.
Mr. Darrell LaBoucan, General Vice-President and Executive Director of Canadian Affairs welcomed the many contractor owners, managers, safety and health representatives, supervisors, various association representatives, government and local union representatives in attendance. He reinforced that our combined involvement as leaders in the Ironworking industry will result in very successful forum.

General President Walter Wise welcomed attendees through a special video address from Washington, D.C. Mr. Wise stated, “Since 2001, regulatory implementation of Subpart R has drastically decreased the number of accidents and injuries in the Ironworking industry. We hope to get many of those same regulations put in place in Canada. And most importantly, anything we can measure, we can improve...and when we all work together with a common goal in mind, the mutual benefit is untold, and we will reach zero fatalities and zero incidents.”

Steve Rank, Executive Director, Safety and Health department commented that he will support our industry and has been directed from our President Wise to commit the necessary resources to assist our members and contractors to address safety issues that warrant special attention.

**Feedback From Contractors** – During an interactive forum Jeff Norris obtained objective concerns and recommendations from signatory contractors that included the following items:

- Cost of setting up safety programs
- Employee complacency and Compliance with safety policies
- Reporting of incidents
- Time vs. Cost-How far will owners push safety relating to cost?
- Failure to use safety equipment and employer assessed “risk tolerance”
- Consistent training for workforce with a focus the mobility of workers
- Lack of consistency among owners policies and rules
- Aging workforce (the need for recruitment of new, younger people)
- Maintaining “Old School” standards, while implementing “New School” that has to make sense
- Maintaining a high level of productivity, safety and productivity a part of good planning
- Language barrier, mostly at entry level (puts pressure on supervisors)
- Updating the Apprenticeship Program to reflect industry changes
- High level of training requirements for members to stay updated (Journeyman)
- Convincing and encouraging members to be responsible for safety behaviors

**Alberta Guest Speaker Addresses Attendees** - Mr. Ross Nairne, Executive Director of Alberta Occupational Health and Safety Policy and Program Development provided an update on the legislative framework, the act amendments including ticketing and administrative penalties and the 2015 Alberta Code review. He also expressed an interest in working with the Ironworkers Safety and Health Roundtable to consider new safety and health initiatives.
Proposed safety and health regulatory changes include:

- Approximately 300 existing sections and 30 new sections
- Approximately 1/3 of the Code (currently has 849 sections)

**Majority of the changes:**
- Technical standards (e.g. CSA) updates
- Wording changes for clarification and consistent interpretation

**Other changes:**
- Rule changes to include Subpart R – Steel Erection standards
- Consideration for new safety and health requirements

More Alberta Occupational Health and Safety information can be found at: [www.worksafe.alberta.ca](http://www.worksafe.alberta.ca)

The International Association will continue our "**ZERO INCIDENT-FATALITY CAMPAIGN**" in 2015 to increase safety performance and help protect our members in the field and shop. This goal challenges all members to "**See Something - Say Something**", to help recognize and avoid workplace hazards. Both Jeff Norris and I will continue to work closely with District Councils, Local Unions, and IMPACT Regional Advisory Boards throughout the United States and Canada to help improve safety performance. If I can provide any assistance, please contact me at the Safety and Health Department at (800) 368-0105. If you require assistance in Canada please contact Jeff Norris, Canadian Safety Coordinator at (780) 717-0071.

Steve Rank
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