

Comp Time

Doug Schultz of Herlihy Mid-Continent Company makes a point during August's Contractor Safety Forum, which covered recent workers' compensation legislation, changes to OSHA regulations, drug testing and a number of other topics.



AthletiCo Presentation On Workers' Compensation Takes Center Stage At Safety Forum

State agencies continue to play catch-up when it comes to Illinois' revised Workers' Compensation law, and the Illinois Workers' Compensation Commission continues to work on a handbook on the new rules for employers.

Safety personnel from Builders Association members got a peek at the ins-and-outs of the new law and what it means for jobsite operations during our August Contractor Safety Forum. While the new regulations are confusing in some areas and contractors didn't get everything they wanted in the bill, changes that were made generally were adopted to make Illinois more business-friendly, said presenter Michael Trombetta of Forum Sponsor AthletiCo.

Trombetta also hammered home the point that an informed and active businesses will be the best to deal with the changes.

"If you're using an insurer and entrusting them with aspects of this, you're the customer," he said. "As the customer, you should be jumping up and down and screaming for input on the process when it



comes to what's actually in your insurance plan.

"The huge disappointment with the Act was that nobody effectively addressed causation. In Missouri, you have to prove that at least 50 percent of the injury you're claiming compensation for occurred on the job. The bottom line is the 'burden of proof' is on the employee."

In addition to Trombetta's presentation, the Safety Forum included in-depth discussions of:

- The Builders Association's new SafeSite Program
- Changes and updates to OSHA enforcement policies and regulations,

presented by OSHA representatives

- Third-party safety inspections
- Drug testing
- Lessons learned from safety mistakes or successes

SafeSite is an upcoming initiative to both reward companies for excellent safety records and highlight how the Builders Association keeps Chicagoland's construction workers coming home safe. The program will encompass and improve existing safety initiatives such as the OSHA Partnership and Contractor Safety Forums, while serving as a public relations tool to promote the Builders Association members for their dedication to safety. Look for more information on what it takes to qualify as a SafeSite participant in future communications.

Changes for OSHA's sling regulations were on the minds of the attendees, as well, and OSHA Chicago North Area representatives were on hand to explain those and other coming changes. OSHA expects updated rules for silica containment before the end of the year.