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OR-OSHA, 350 Winter Street NE, PO Box 14480, Salem, Oregon 97309-0405

## **Oregon agriculture benefits from safer workplaces**

Agriculture makes a profound contribution to Oregon's economy, adding \$3.6 billion dollars to the state's production in 2002. The Department of Consumer and Business Services - Occupational Safety and Health Division (Oregon OSHA) would like to help keep agriculture strong by letting agricultural employers know about the many services available from Oregon's workplace safety and health agency.

### **Consultation Assistance**

Oregon OSHA consultants are available to evaluate your business operations and make recommendations which may assist employers in reducing the number of hazards to which your workers are exposed. The consultant's services are provided to you free of charge. In addition, calling a consultant for assistance will not result in an enforcement action.

### **Inspection Exemption**

The Oregon legislature in 1995 approved a law that agricultural employers with 10 or fewer employees are exempt from regularly scheduled Oregon OSHA inspections, provided the employer has met all of the following conditions:

- There has not been a safety or health complaint made to Oregon OSHA within the preceding two-year period; or there has not been a fatal accident or a serious disabling injury resulting from a violation of Oregon OSHA rules during the past two years; and
- The employer, and principal supervisors of agricultural employees annually attend four hours of instruction on agricultural safety conducted or approved by Oregon OSHA. A listing of training classes is available in Oregon OSHA's Public Education Workshop Catalog, available on-line from the Oregon OSHA Web site, [www.orosha.org](http://www.orosha.org), or by calling Oregon OSHA at 888-292-5247 (select option two). In addition,
- All agricultural activities are inspected once every four years by an individual acting in a safety consultant or loss prevention consultant capacity. Any safety violations noted by a consultant must be corrected within 90 days of the inspection. No-cost, confidential consultations provided by Oregon OSHA can be arranged by calling our toll-free number 800-922-2689.

If the employer meets all these requirements for an inspection exemption, documentation of the steps taken (training records, consultant reports, OSHA 300 Form, etc.) should be readily accessible for review. If an Oregon OSHA compliance officer arrives at your work site for a scheduled inspection, please let them know that you have met the requirements for a small-employer exemption. If the exemption documentation is valid, the compliance officer will not begin an inspection and instead move on to their next scheduled work site.

### **Ergonomics Help and Accident Prevention**

Soft-tissue repetitive motion injuries occur in agricultural workplaces, not just offices, construction sites or manufacturing facilities. The Oregon OSHA Web site, [www.orosha.org](http://www.orosha.org), features expanded ergonomics information designed to help employers prevent these costly and painful injuries. In addition to general ergonomic information, you'll also find the result of practical research and real-world models designed to improve workplace safety. The Web site features the published findings of past recipients of Oregon OSHA's Worksite Redesign Program grants and information on how to borrow audiovisual training tools from the Oregon OSHA's Resource Center. Employers looking for additional training can search the Web site which features information about the four ergonomics training courses (including one on-line!) and ergonomics information featured in the "Safety for Small Business" class presented by Oregon OSHA.

Preventing accidents by identifying potential hazards is an important step towards protecting your workers, and yourself. The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) has recently released two 'Hazard Alerts' of interest to agricultural employers. "Hazards Associated with Using Farm Tractors to Move Large Bales" ([CDC Hazard Alert 13](#)) and "Ignition Hazard from Drilling into Sealed Frames of Agricultural Equipment" ([CDC Hazard Alert 14](#)). These are available on the Oregon OSHA Web site, [www.orosha.org](http://www.orosha.org) or on NIOSH's Web site, [www.cdc.gov/niosh](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh).

### **Who to Contact**

For more information about the agricultural small employer exemption, please contact Oregon OSHA's Salem Field Office at (503) 378-3274. For information about scheduling a visit by an Oregon OSHA consultant, please call our toll-free number, (800) 922-2689. You may also contact Oregon OSHA's Resource Center at (800) 922-2689 to find out about the no cost or low-cost safety information available to Oregon employers.

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### **For more information, contact:**

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