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April 2023

OSH Update

Ask the Director:

Can you explain the recent changes to our CSHO job postings and how those changes will help with recruitment and retention?

In last month's column, I mentioned some of the new recruitment and retention strategies adopted recently by the Director's Office, with the assistance of the Commissioner's Office and Human Resources. As we all know, the vacancy rate for positions across state government is at an all-time high. And of concern for us in the OSH Division, the vacancy rate for compliance safety and health officers has remained between 30-35% over the past couple of years. Thanks to Commissioner Dobson and the department's leadership team, many positive changes have already come to fruition – namely, salary increases, retention bonuses and additional leave and work-at-home options. However, after many rounds of CSHO postings that closed with zero qualified applicants, we realized that we had to take additional steps to increase the pool of candidates applying for our positions and make it easier for trainees to be released for independent inspections.



One significant change for the fully qualified Safety Compliance Officer position involves reducing the safety inspection experience requirement from three years to two years for a fully qualified candidate. This change had to be approved by the State Human Resources Commission, and thanks to the hard work of Renathe Cotten, the Commission signed off on the changes during its February meeting. This change is important for two reasons. First, it should result in more qualified candidates without significantly reducing their level of experience. Second, the change will allow the positions to be posted as a Safety Compliance Officer trainee with a two-year training progression (as opposed to a three-year, as previously) to become a fully qualified SCO.

Another change is that some – but not all – SCO and HCO postings will include language stating the position will be evaluated for trainee candidates (with no safety and/or IH experience) *if there are no fully qualified candidates*. The number of those postings will be closely monitored by the Director's Office to ensure that we do not end up with too many "trainees" and not enough fully qualified CSHOs. All SCOs – fully qualified or trainee – will be hired as a grade GS 16, but the hiring salary for a SCO trainee is \$52,875, while the hiring salary for a fully qualified SCO I is \$58,000.

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Director's Message Continued

All HCOs – fully qualified or trainee – will be hired as a grade GS 17, but the hiring salary for an HCO trainee is \$55,518, while the hiring salary for a fully qualified HCO I is \$60,900.

Since we are now able to hire SCO and HCO trainees with degrees, but no experience, the interviews for trainees versus fully qualified candidates will involve completely different questions. Fully qualified candidates will be asked typical questions about safety and/or industrial hygiene issues, OSHA standards, hazard recognition, etc. SCO and HCO trainee candidate questions will focus on the “Knowledge, Skills and Abilities / Competencies” portion of the job posting.

Since these changes became effective in February, our supervisors are already seeing much wider and varied applicant pools, which is exciting for all of us. While it may take many months to see the full impact of these changes, we fully believe that the result will be fewer vacancies and, ultimately, more experienced compliance officers. In addition to the OSHR website, we are sharing our job opportunities on multiple platforms. Beyond those efforts, the most effective way of sharing these jobs is through your own networks. I encourage you to let other folks know about our job openings and the changes we've made to increase access to these jobs.

Happy Easter to you and your families, and I hope you have a wonderful month and enjoy the spring weather!

-Jennifer



Strategic Management Plan

Within the North Carolina OSH Division, strategic planning is a very important process. It is especially important when resources are limited, and divi-



on operational dollars must be used efficiently. The strategic plan is a blueprint for all division activity and specifically documents where resources will best be utilized. The OSH Division is currently in the last year of a five-year planning cycle that com-

mits resources to activities to support two primary outcome goals. These goals are, by the end of FY 2023, to reduce the rate of workplace fatalities by 2% and to reduce the rate of workplace injuries and illnesses by 5%. The areas of emphasis in the plan determine where activity will be assigned. This includes compliance, consultative, and training activity.

A strategic planning meeting was held on March 24, 2023, to develop the Division's new 5-year strategic plan. Meeting attendees included the Director, Assistant Director, Bureau Chiefs, strategic goal emphasis area team leaders and a few others. One of the primary purposes of the meeting was to review all emphasis areas currently included in the strategic plan and ascertain if OSH has achieved the desired outcomes.

Finally, the group needs to determine if OSH should focus efforts and resources on any new emphasis areas to achieve the fatality and injury/illness reduction goals. This process includes the review of the most current Bureau of Labor Statistics injury and illness data in North Carolina for industries, activities and injury/illness groups.

As well as determining where best to allocate resources, there are a few other reasons to complete the strategic planning process. First of all, the federal Government and Results Act requires agencies to establish a strategic plan. Achieving the goals included in the Plan are also part of the mechanism for requesting and securing federal OSHA funds. The strategic planning process is also a way to secure involvement and input from employees throughout the Division to achieve established goals and allocate resources.

After the goals and areas of emphasis are established, employees have direct involvement in managing the planning activity relating to the emphasis areas through participation on the Strategic Management Plan Committees. The entire process is explained in Administrative Procedure Notice 19K.

Achieving established outcome goals is also an important way to justify the work we do to the general public and to the General Assembly that determines where state funds will be allocated.

Partnership Agreement Closing Ceremony



On March 28, Commissioner Dobson and many representatives from the OSH Division visited the new Charlotte Pipe and Foundry site in Oakboro to celebrate the completion of the Division's Partnership Agreement with Barnhill Contracting. The event included a closing ceremony with remarks and presentation of the completion certificate, a tour of the new facility and a barbecue lunch. A big thanks to Bruce Pearson, Partnership Chair, and the entire partnership team for their efforts toward making this a successful partnership! The partnership was originally signed in October 2020, and the project was completed with well over 1 million man hours worked without any significant injuries.

Karen Padgett Retires

Karen Padgett is a native North Carolinian who has lived her entire life in the Wake and Johnston County area. She has always had a strong feeling of purpose and duty to serve the people of North Carolina, as her father did in his forty years of state service. She has worked in state government for over 35 years, with almost the entire time of her career being with the Department of Labor.



Karen and her husband Lynn

She worked for United Parcel Service before seeking employment with the state government.

Karen first started her state service with the Department of Labor as a clerk typist in the Occupational Safety and Health Division's statistical group and was next promoted to a help desk position in the IT Division of NCDOL. She was promoted and returned to the OSH Division as an administrative assistant for the Consultative Services Bureau and was promoted within that same bureau to the safety awards coordinator position.

Her next promotion was to a position she accepted with the Department of Commerce, but she quickly realized that was not the right fit for her. Karen applied for a position in the Planning, Statistics and Information Management Bureau within the Department of Labor's OSH Division, was hired, and returned to work with Labor. She was responsible for conducting an annual injury and illness survey, which provided specific site information for high hazard businesses in North Carolina. Within the same bureau in the OSH Division, Karen was next promoted to the targeting system administrator position and held that position until her retirement from state service.

Karen is married and has two adult children and two grandchildren with another grandchild on the way. Her favorite pastimes are spending time with her family, attending concerts, riding motorcycles with her husband, and spending time with her many friends.

Karen has been a very valuable and exceptional state employee for over 35 years and will be truly missed. Please take a moment to thank Karen and wish her well on her retirement.



Karen and her son Adam and Daughter Casey

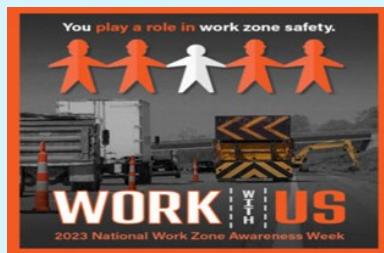
Congratulations

A Heads-Up on Stand-Downs

National Stand-Down to Prevent Struck-By Incidents

April 17-21, 2023

The National Stand-Down to Prevent Struck-by Incidents is a voluntary event for employers to talk directly to employees about safety.



Any workplace can hold a stand-down by taking a break to focus on "Struck-by Hazards" and reinforcing the importance of training and prevention. The event is held in conjunction with "National Work Zone Awareness Week," and Work Zones are a sign to slow down. They are both being recognized from April 17 -21.

Struck-by hazards are present on nearly every job site, and include things like falling and flying objects, vehicles and heavy equipment, and swing hazards from cranes. These incidents are the number one cause of nonfatal injuries in construction and the leading cause of death among heavy and civil construction workers, but they can be avoided by careful planning, training, and the use of controls. ETTA will be posting training and announcing events. Please encourage participation.

National Safety Stand-Down to Prevent Falls In Construction

May 1-5, 2023

In the construction industry, "safety stand-downs" are used to describe activities where normal work is paused and the entire site focuses on a specific safety issue. Some employers may use stand-downs to call attention to specific hazards present on their site as an intervention. The Stand-Down was originally conceived by OSHA in 2014 as part of the National Campaign to Prevent Falls in Construction to raise awareness surrounding the severity of fall hazards in construction and the importance of preventing them. This year's event is being held May 1-5.



Fatalities caused by falls from elevation continue to be a leading cause of death for construction employees, accounting for 378 of the 986 construction fatalities recorded nationally in 2021 (BLS data). **Those deaths were preventable.** The National Safety Stand-Down raises fall hazard awareness across the country in a effort to stop fall fatalities and injuries. NCDOL will be promoting and participating in Stand-Downs with Labor One.

Upcoming Labor One Stand-Down Events:

Monday, May 1, 2023, Time: 9:00 AM-12:00 PM

Location: North Carolina State Fairgrounds, 1025 Blue Ridge Rd., Raleigh, 27607

Company: Barnhill Contracting/ DHHS Project

Tuesday, May 2, 2023, Time: 9:00 AM-12:00 PM

Location: 5501 Josh Birmingham Pkwy., Charlotte, 28208

Company: HEFL partnership at the Charlotte/Douglas International Airport

Thursday, May 4, 2023, 9:00 AM-12:00 PM

Location: 11751 New Hill Rd., Holly Springs, 27540

Company: Fuji Films/Jacob Engineering

You Look Familiar, Are You New Around Here?

Meet Gerald Miller.

Gerald is from Duplin County, "home of swine and wine" as he likes to refer to it. Gerald is currently a Compliance Safety and Health Officer (CSHO) with the Agricultural Safety and Health Bureau (ASH) under Bureau Chief Beth Rodman. Gerald conducts housing inspections primarily in Sampson, Cumberland, Hoke, Bladen, Columbus, Robeson, and Brunswick counties.

Gerald came to ASH after a ten-year stint with Employment Security Commission (later known as the N.C. Department of Commerce, Division of Employment Security). Gerald last worked as an Agricultural Employment Consultant (AEC) in the counties of Wayne and Duplin, assisting farmers with labor demands and assisting Farm Labor Contractors (FLCs) with completing their contractor license documentation with the USDOL.



Gerald graduated from NC A&T State University with a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and Government. Gerald has always been about service and safety, as he has served as a volunteer fireman for over 20 years, serving as Assistant Chief for four years (2016-2020). During his tenure as Assistant Chief, he assisted his department in obtaining rescue certification and purchasing a light-rescue apparatus, and with the completion of its first N.C. Department of Insurance's Insurance Services Office (ISO) inspection, which lowered the insurance

premiums of the residences of his district. Gerald has also been involved in his local county N.C. Farm Bureau Young Farmer and Rancher program, promoting farm safety education in the community and local schools and has also served as a county board of director (2015-2020). Gerald was chosen to participate in the N.C. Tobacco Trust Fund Leadership Development Program from 2014-2016 and had the opportunity to network with 35 other Agribusiness professionals from across the state and tour farms and agribusinesses throughout the U.S. and Brazil.



Gerald enjoys working with the ASH Bureau, getting to travel across the state and meeting various farmers and farm-workers, ensuring the workers have adequate housing and proper safety training. The ASH team may be small, but they have a large impact on the migrant and seasonal population that comes to North Carolina to work on farms and agribusinesses that feed the world.

Outside of work, Gerald enjoys spending time with his family, especially his daughter Abigail. Gerald also likes to grill, ride four wheelers, hunt, fish, and travel to the beach and mountains and follow UNC Tarheel basketball. Gerald also enjoys working with his dad on their family farm, raising their livestock (pasture-raised hogs), operating their farm equipment, and tending to their garden and row-crops of corn, wheat, and soybeans.



Wednesday, April 12, 12:00 noon

The newest Lunch & Learn seminar will feature Jill Warren HCOII and George Thrower SCOI, from West Compliance who will be discussing the bloodborne pathogen standard and recent inspection activity associated with the standard. Please take advantage of this opportunity and tune in on Wednesday, April 12, at noon via Lifesize. They are looking forward to seeing you then!

Safety Award Season Begins

Kiley Willard, our safety awards coordinator, has been busy with the logistics for the 2023 Safety Awards Season which kicked off in Wilmington on March 21.



This is a time where NCDOL recognizes private and public firms throughout the state that achieve and maintain good safety records. The program is designed to stimulate interest in accident prevention and to promote safety in the workplace by providing an incentive to employers and employees to maintain a safe and healthful workplace. This program has been in continuous operation since 1946.



Employees of GE Hitachi Nuclear Energy-Nuclear Services receive a ten million hour award plaque.

Commissioner Dobson will be the keynote speaker at each of the events. The time and location for the events are posted on the DOL intranet and the DOL website.

ASH Gold Star Growers

ASH held its 29th Annual Gold Star Growers meeting at the NCSU McKimmon Center on February 2.

One of the winners, Warren Farms Partnership, was not able to attend the meeting and on Wednesday, March 15, 2023, Commissioner Dobson, Jennifer Haigwood, Beth Rodman, and Gerald Miller went on the farm to walk through the migrant worker labor camp that consisted of two large living quarters (135 capacity) and a separate dining hall/kitchen. WF Partnership representatives were excited about having Commissioner Dobson and NCDOL come out to their farm for the presentation and a tour of their prized labor camp.



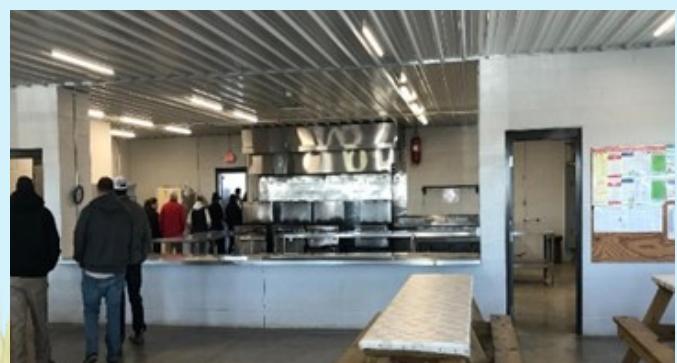
Warren Farm Labor Camp

Warren Farming is a diversified, fourth-generation family farm, in Newton Grove. The Partners include Gerald Warren, his son Brian and cousins Brandon and Bartley Warren.



Gold Star Presentation at WF Partnership with Beth Rodman, Bartley Warren, Brandon Warren, Gerald Butler, Brian Warren and Commissioner Dobson.

Warren Farming spans three counties in North Carolina and produces crops, cattle, and swine on approximately 8,000 acres. Crops include tobacco, sweet potatoes, corn, cotton, soybeans, wheat, and hay. They farm 6,500 acres of row crops, raise a large beef cattle herd and operate a farrow-to-finish hog operation with 3,300 sows. Brian, Bartley and Brandon all studied at N.C. State.



Warren Farm dining facility and commercial kitchen.

Status of Fiscal Year Compliance Inspection Goals (through 2/28/23)

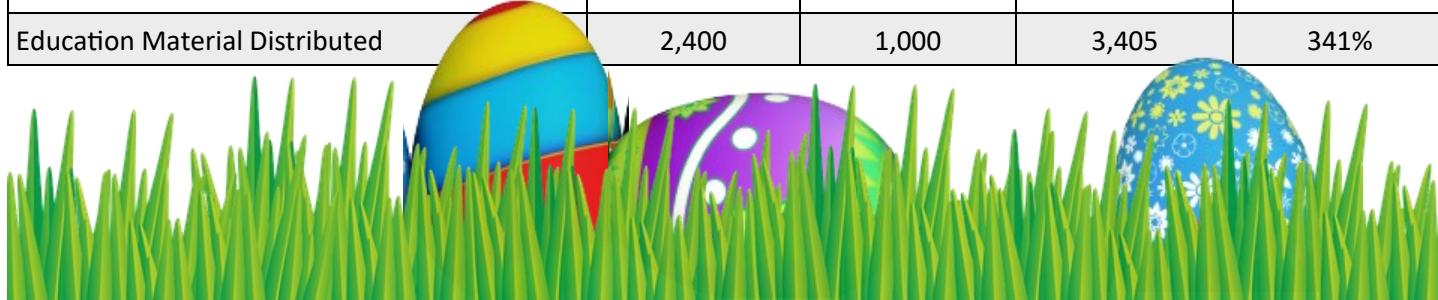
Type of Inspection	FY2023 Goal	5-Month Goal	5-Month Actual	% of Goal to Date	Trend
Total Compliance Inspections	1,900	792	624	79%	↑
Construction Inspections	800	333	318	95%	↑
Public Sector Inspections	95	40	49	123%	↑
Logging/Arborist SEP Inspections	20	8.3	5	60%	↔
Health Hazard SEP Inspections	60	25	31	124%	↑
Long Term Care SEP Inspections	24	10	13	100%	↑
Grocery & Related Products SEP Inspections	20	8.3	5	60%	↑
Food Manufacturing SEP Inspections	25	10.4	10	96%	↔
Amputation SEP Inspections	150	63	65	103%	↑

Status of Fiscal Year Compliance Strategic Goals (through 2/28/23)

Strategic Goal	Goal	Actual to Date
In-Compliance Rate (all inspections in FY2023)	<35%	34.7%
SAMM In-Compliance Rate – Safety (based on closed/issued cases)	<35%	33.1%
SAMM In-Compliance Rate – Health (based on closed/issued cases)	<35%	37.8%
SAMM Lapse Time – Safety	< 40 days	56.8 days
SAMM Lapse Time – Health	< 40 days	65.4 days
Follow-up Inspections (%)	5%	1.9%
Logging Fatalities	7 fatalities during baseline year	1 (on pace for 2 fatalities)
Construction Fatalities	32 fatalities in baseline year	9 (on pace for 22 fatalities)

Status of Fiscal Year ASH Compliance Strategic Goals

Strategic Goal	FY 2023 Goal	5-Month Goal	5-Month Actual	% of FY Goal to date
Pre-Occupancy Camps Inspected	1,875	782	1,268	162%
Certificates Issued	1,750	729	1,065	146%
Outreach to Hispanic Farm Workers	100	42	29	69%
Education Material Distributed	2,400	1,000	3,405	341%



Status of Fiscal Year Consultation Strategic Goals

Strategic Goal	FY2023 Goal	5-Month Goal	5-Month Actual	% of FY Goal to date
Hazards Eliminated	4,800	2,000	2,661	133%
PRIVATE Consultative Visits	1,125	469	512	109%
Construction Visits	290	121	177	146%
Logging Visits	15	7	8	114%
LTC Visits	30	13	22	169%
Documentation of Health Hazard Inspections	125	52	96	185%
Food Inspections	12	5	9	180%
Program Improvements	750	313	506	162%

Status of Fiscal Year ETTA Strategic Goals

Strategic Goal	FY2023 Goal	5-Month Goal	5-Month Actual	% of FY Goal to date
Construction SEP 10 Hour Course	5	2	4	200%
Construction SEP 30 Hour Course	1	1	2	200%
Logging/Arborist Events	5	2	5	250%
LTC Events	2	1	0	0%
Health Hazard Events	20	9	9	100%
Public Sector Training Events	5	2	5	250%
Program Improvements	60	25	49	196%
Total Star Sites (new/recertifications)	20	9	7	78%
Total Star Program Interventions	100	42	61	145%
Total Persons Trained by ETTA	5,350	2,229	2,648	119%
Total Persons Trained in Identified Areas	1,500	625	1,051	168%
Publications Distributed	45,000	18,750	20,260	108%

Thanks for all you do!
Jennifer & Paul

