

# NC Labor

## LEDGER

August/September 2003



## Lead and Silica Dust Pose Danger to Workers

By Scott Mabry  
Health Compliance Officer

Construction work is not for the faint of heart.

The work can be grueling. The weather is often uncooperative. Mistakes can be deadly. And to make matters tougher, other hazards can be difficult if not impossible to see, feel or hear.

Lead and silica dust represent two of those dangers.

*Worker cuts through steel beam, a potential hazard for lead exposure.*

“Lead and silica dust are some of those dangers that you know about but think you’ll never experience,” said Tom Hayes, compliance east bureau chief for the Division of Occupational Safety and Health. “The trouble is, the danger is real and it’s out there a lot.”

Exposure to lead or silica can have devastating effects on a worker’s health.

Lead affects the body in a number of ways, depending on exposure levels.

Common symptoms of acute lead poisoning include loss of appetite, nausea, fatigue, headache, and joint and muscle aches. Severe symptoms include tremors, convulsions and seizures.

Silica dust can cause silicosis, a deadly lung disease.

Silicosis can take up to 10 or more years to develop when a

worker is exposed daily to low concentrations of silica dust. When exposure levels are high, symptoms can occur within weeks. Symptoms include difficulty in breathing, regular coughing, fever, weight loss and night sweats.

Construction work that often exposes workers to lead and silica includes bridge repair and demolition; paint removal from various surfaces; water tank repair and demolition; commercial and residential remodeling; factory up-fits; rock drilling; stone cutting; masonry and foundry work.

Follow these safety tips to avoid exposure to lead and silica dust on the worksite:

- Control dust levels by using proper exhaust ventilation.
- Stay out of the dust clouds when dry cutting upwind.
- Use wet-saw methods to control silica dust when cutting bricks or blocks.
- Wash hands frequently when working with lead.
- Use disposable clothing to reduce contamination at home or work.
- Limit the use of blasting agents that contain quartz.



*Dust masks can protect against silica exposure.*

For more information, contact the Education, Training and Technical Assistance Bureau at 1-800-NC-LABOR or 807-2875.

## Special Emphasis Program Designed for Dangerous Jobs

Besides its random inspection program, the N.C. Department of Labor has launched other initiatives to reduce fatalities, injuries and illnesses among workers throughout the state.

One of these initiatives is what the labor department calls a Special Emphasis Program to reduce exposure levels to lead and silica.

A key element to the program includes the identification in the state of the industries known to pose a higher likelihood of exposure to the two substances. As the program name implies, the initiatives calls for

an increased number of visits to potential exposure sites to ensure that workers are safe from the two hazards.

To increase program effectiveness, the NCDOL Division of Occupational Safety and Health works with the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services to identify potentially dangerous sites.

Employers who would like additional information about the special program or about technical assistance can call the Division of Occupational Safety and Health at 1-800-625-2267.



**From  
Commissioner  
Cherie K. Berry**

September is the beginning of fair season in North Carolina.

Each year at this time, the N.C. Department of Labor inspects from 7,500 to 8,000 amusement rides and devices across the state. We are very grateful at the labor department that there has never been a fatality on an amusement ride in North Carolina because of faulty equipment.

We go to extra lengths to make sure this safety is maintained. For instance, we're the only state that inspects inflatable devices. Inflatable devices are currently very popular, but they can be dangerous. Inflatable devices are often used at birthday parties and carnivals.

This year, look for the official N.C. Department of Labor inspection sticker or tag on these rides and devices and help make this fall another safe and fun fair season.

See a sample of the inspection sticker and tag in the lower right corner of this page.

*Cherie Berry*

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## Apprentice Contest Schedule Announced for the N.C. State Fair

The annual apprentice contests are one of the many labor-related highlights of the N.C. State Fair and this year will be no exception.

Top apprentices from across the state will gather in Raleigh to compete for prizes and awards during the fair. The four-day event kicks off with the Masonry contest Oct. 20, followed by the Electrical contest Oct. 22, the Carpentry contest Oct. 23 and the Plumbing contest Oct. 24. The contests will take place under the large white tents across from the grandstand, near gate 9.



**Cherie K. Berry**  
Commissioner

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**Communications Division**  
(919) 733-0348

**1-800-NC-LABOR • www.nclabor.com**

## Ride Safety Is High Priority at North Carolina Fairs, Carnivals and Amusement Parks

All amusement rides, devices and inflatables operating in North Carolina, will display these stickers or tags after they have passed a safety inspection.

*Mechanical  
Ride Sticker*

*Inflatable  
Tag*



### Amusement Device Certificate of Operation



Elevator and Amusement  
Device Bureau  
1101 Mail Service Center  
Raleigh, NC 27699-1101

STATE NO. \_\_\_\_\_  
DATE INSPECTED \_\_\_\_\_  
LOCATION \_\_\_\_\_  
VOID AFTER \_\_\_\_\_  
BY \_\_\_\_\_

GS 95-111.10 requires accidents involving this equipment that result in injury requiring more than first aid or damage to the device to be reported within 24 hours to the N.C. Department of Labor Elevator Bureau by calling 1-800-NC-LABOR or (919) 807-2770 or faxing to (919) 807-2777.



### McNeely Named New OSH Director

Allen McNeely recently became the new director for the Division of Occupational Safety and Health of the N.C. Department of Labor. The division conducts more than 4,500 inspections a year, offers free consultative services to more than 180,000 private and public employers, and offers education and training through its Education, Training and Technical Assistance Bureau.

## WORKPLACE WORRIES

**Q:** Are employees who work 40 hours a week entitled to two 10-minute breaks a day, as well as a 30-minute lunch/dinner break?

**A:** The North Carolina Wage and Hour Act (WHA) does not require mandatory rest breaks or meal breaks for employees 16 years of age or older. Also, there are no restrictions on the number of hours employees over 18 years can work either by the day, shift or week. However, 14- and 15-year-olds must be given a break of at least 30 minutes after five hours of consecutive work.

A break must be at least 30 minutes in order for the employer to deduct the time from an employee’s pay. An employer does not have to let employees leave the premises as long as the employee is completely relieved of duty during the 30-minute break. An example of an employee being “completely relieved of duty” is one who is not waiting for customers to come in or to call. Waiting for customers to come in or to call is clearly work time even if the employee is free to eat or read a magazine while waiting. Generally, breaks of less than 30 minutes, such as a 15-minute rest break, have to be paid by the employer.

To review the federal rules on hours worked and rules on breaks that apply in North Carolina, click here [http://www.dol.gov/dol/allcfr/Title\\_29/toc.htm](http://www.dol.gov/dol/allcfr/Title_29/toc.htm).

## Mine, Quarry Training Center Dedicated

The mine and quarry industry got a recent boost when a Raleigh quarry operator dedicated a new training center that will be used primarily for safety and health training for the industry.

Hanson Aggregates Southeast, a local open-pit quarry operator that produces crushed stone, renovated a building on its property and converted it into a training center.

Labor Commissioner Cherie K. Berry accepted the building keys on behalf of the N.C. Department of Labor. The center was named the Hanson Mine Safety Training Center.

“We are overwhelmed by your generosity,” Berry said. “Finding a place to conduct safety and health training in Raleigh has been a huge challenge for our Mine and Quarry Bureau. We can’t thank you enough for helping us solve that problem.”

Scott Hartness, Hanson’s safety coordinator, was instrumental in making the training center a reality. After joining Hanson in February 2003, Hartness noticed the old building and suggested the idea to the owners because he knew there was a need for local training space. The owners liked the idea and renovations began.



*Hanson Aggregates Southeast officials Scott Hartness, safety coordinator, and Jim Sprinkle, vice president of operations, with Labor Commissioner Cherie K. Berry in front of the new training center.*

Training demands increased in North Carolina in 2000 when the U.S. Mine Safety and Health Administration enacted a rule that made mine safety and health training mandatory. Training was required before 2000 but had not been enforced.

The center—located at 10501 Capital Blvd.—will be used to train independent contractors and miners. Other facilities that have been available to the N.C. Department of Labor for training include:

- Wake Stone Corp., *Knightdale*
- Vulcan Materials Co., *Winston-Salem*
- Martin Marietta–East Alamance Quarry, *Burlington*
- Barnhill Contracting Company, *Rocky Mount*
- Cummins Atlantic, *Charlotte*
- Hilco Trucking Co., *Greensboro*
- Caldwell County Public Library, *Lenoir*

# Hatteras Yachts Reaches Safety Milestone

By Dolores Quesenberry  
Public Information Officer



Bill Naumann, president of Hatteras Yachts, addresses employees at the Million Hour Award celebration.

**New Bern**—Hatteras Yachts here is not only passionate about boat building these days, it is passionate about safety.

Hatteras Yachts in July celebrated a major safety milestone: The company had gone more than 1 million hours worked without a lost-time injury. The milestone was a dramatic turnaround for a company that in 2001 experienced more than 2.2 accidents a week.

Labor Commissioner Cherie K. Berry presented the Million Hour Safety Award to Hatteras Yachts recently.

“Safety is a journey,” Berry said. “You have proven that you are on that road now. I look forward to coming back to celebrate the Two Million Hour Award with all of you in the near future.”

The achievement highlighted a far-reaching campaign to provide a safe working environment for Hatteras employees.

“We have an obligation to send our employees home to their families in the same condition in which they arrived,” said Bill Naumann, Hatteras president and chief executive officer. “It’s an obligation we take seriously and work very hard to meet.”

In the last six months of 2002, Hatteras experienced eight injuries compared to the 24 of the previous six months. In the first six months of this year, the company experienced only 10 injuries, putting it well on the way toward its goal of reducing recordable injuries by 25 percent.

North Carolina’s injury and illness rate is currently at an all-time low. In 2001, the figure dropped from 5.3 for every 100 full-time employees to 4.8. Commissioner Berry attributes the drop, in part, to companies like Hatters that have made workplace safety a major priority. The N.C. Department of Labor in 2003 presented a total of 51 One Million Hour Awards—12 more than last year.

Companies interested in finding out more about the Million Hour Awards may contact LaFonda Mauldin at [lmauldin@mail.dol.state.nc.us](mailto:lmauldin@mail.dol.state.nc.us) or call her at (919) 807-2908.

# Safety Award Highlights

The N.C. Department of Labor in June wrapped up another season of safety awards. The labor department hosted 29 banquets this year and presented a record 1,849 awards to companies throughout North Carolina for demonstrating outstanding safety records. Following are some of the highlights from the season.

## **Eight Million Employee Hours**

Sara Lee Underwear, Stratford Road Plant, Winston-Salem  
*Eight Million Hours without an injury*

## **Seven Million Employee Hours**

Day & Zimmerman International, Charlotte  
Mundy Industrial Contractors, Services Division, Kinston  
*Seven Million Hours without an injury*

## **Six Million Employee Hours**

ADP Marshall, A Fluor Company, Raleigh  
Campbell Soup Company, Maxton  
Dana Corporation, Spicer Off-Highway Products, Statesville  
WestPoint Stevens Inc., Bob Stevens Distribution Plant, Wagram  
*Six Million Hours without an injury*

## **Five Million Employee Hours**

Elementis Chromium, LP, Castle Hayne  
Glen Raven Inc., Knit Fabrics Group, Glen Raven  
Kentucky Derby Hosiery of N.C., Plant #2, Mount Airy  
Perdue Farms, Lewiston Complex, Lewiston Woodville  
Progress Energy, Harris Nuclear Plant, New Hill  
Sara Lee Underwear, Davie Narrow Fabrics Plant, Advance  
*Five Million Hours without an injury*

## **Four Million Employee Hours**

Barrus Construction Co., Division of APAC-Carolina, Kinston  
DAK Americas, Cedar Creek Site, Fayetteville  
Fluor Global Services, GlaxoSmithKline Site, RTP  
Galey & Lord Inc., Flint Plant, Gastonia  
John Deere, Southeast Engineering Center, Charlotte  
Mountaire Farms of N.C., Lumber Bridge  
Thomasville Furniture Industries, Central Office, Thomasville  
*Four Million Hours without an injury*

## **Consecutive years in the Annual Safety Awards Program:**

Thomasville Furniture Industries, Central Office, Thomasville (44)  
Celanese Acetate, LLC, Dreyfus Research Park, Charlotte (41)  
Vulcan Construction Materials, LP, Mideast Div., Elkin Quarry (37)  
Broyhill Furniture Industries, Main Office (36)  
Bost Neckwear Co. Inc., Asheboro (36)  
Lindsay Hosiery Mill Inc., Hildebran (35)  
Melatex Inc., Charlotte (33)  
Ethan Allen Inc., Maiden Division, Upholstery Plant, Maiden (33)  
DAK Americas, Cape Fear Support Employees, Leland (32)  
DAK Americas, Cape Fear Power Employees, Leland (32)  
DAK Americas, Cape Fear Monomers Employees, Leland (32)  
Dula Construction Co. Inc., Charlotte (31)  
ECNO Oil Inc., Clinton (31)  
Georgia Pacific Resins, Healing Springs Plant, Denton (31)  
Bernhardt Furniture Company, Corporate Office, Morganton (30)

The N.C. Department of Labor is proud to recognize these outstanding companies for their accomplishments.

**Get your electronic subscription to the Ledger!**  
**Call (919) 733-0348 for more information.**

# How Labor Picks Employers for Inspections

By Bennett Allen  
Statistical Research Assistant III

The N.C. Department of Labor every year makes unannounced visits to about 1,800 businesses out of a total of more than 200,000 employers in the state.

The inspector walks in, asks for you, and after showing you NCDOL identification, informs you that you've been picked for one of our random inspections. You stand there thinking, *How in the world did these guys pick on me?*

You can thank the number crunching that identified your particular line of business.

"I'm sure most people think it's a bad day when our inspectors show up," said Allen McNeely, NCDOL director of occupational safety and health. "But we're there to help. We're there to help employers identify potential dangers for their employees. The overwhelming majority of our visits can be very constructive."

Although the formula used to schedule random inspections is complicated, the process boils down to a few essentials: What's your line of work? How many people lose their lives? How many are injured or fall sick doing your type of work?

The labor department—through its Planning, Statistics and Information Management Bureau—targets inspections by tracking the types of work in both the private sector and state and local government. NCDOL tracks companies in general industry, construction and agriculture. It also tracks businesses with a high exposure to lead, methylene chloride and silica.

Methylene chloride is often used as an industrial solvent and paint stripper. Some experts estimate that 1 million U.S. workers are exposed to silica every year, with more than 250 dying from silicosis.

The random inspection process helps to identify companies that work in the most dangerous industrial sectors. Not counting random inspections, the labor department carries out about another 2,700 inspections that are triggered by fatalities, accidents, referrals or complaints.

However, under the random system, dangerous jobs stick out like a sore thumb because of the high incidence of injuries and illnesses and the severity of those cases.

Depending on how the figures look for any given year, the

labor department comes up with an inspection schedule that targets companies for either a safety inspection or a health inspection.

"We're obviously not going to concentrate on your local ice cream shop," McNeely said. "We're going to go to construction sites, plants with dangerous manufacturing processes, companies that store dangerous chemicals."

Once the company has received a safety inspection, it will not be revisited for another safety inspection for three years.

Similarly, a health inspection will not be scheduled for a company that received a health inspection in the past three years.

The inspection formula uses one index for safety information and a second index for health data. The safety index uses incidence rates produced by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. It also uses additional information from the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

The health index uses OSHA data that ranks serious health violations. The rankings—which track information over a three-year period—determine which industries are targeted for inspection. Companies assigned a high hazard index ranking have a greater chance of being targeted for a comprehensive safety or health inspection.

So what does the labor department do with this information?

NCDOL uses the two indexes to rank companies in five classes, with Class I being the most hazardous. The labor department then uses a computerized selection process to schedule inspections randomly for companies. The random inspections account for about 38 percent of the total of 4,700 inspections conducted each year.

"The process is complicated because we want it to be fair and we want it to be random," McNeely said. "So we use data from the U.S. government, we use construction data from the University of Tennessee, and we have special programs that target particular counties or industries in the state.

"There's a lot more to keeping employees alive and safe than you'd think and that's understandable," McNeely said. "One of our responsibilities is to help employers and employees realize what these dangers are to their particular sector."

**"We're there to help employers identify potential dangers for their employees."**

— Allen McNeely



Have labor-related questions? Call...

**1-800-NC-LABOR**



# Bulletin Board

## Wage and Hour Seminars

**Sept. 11, 2003**

Greenville/Winterville, N.C.  
Pitt Community College  
(252) 321-4200

**Oct. 16, 2003**

Charlotte, N.C.  
Central Piedmont Community College  
(704) 330-4667

**Feb. 12, 2004**

Cary/Raleigh, N.C.  
Wake Tech, Small Business Center  
at Waverly Place (*in Cary*)

**March 11, 2004**

Greensboro, N.C.  
Guilford Technical Community College

**April 22, 2004**

Asheville/Waynesville, N.C.  
Haywood Community College  
(*Pending*)

*For more information, contact the Wage and Hour Bureau at 1-800-NC-LABOR (toll free) or locally at (919) 807-2796.*

*NCDOL has a **NEW** mailing address!*

**1101 Mail Service Center  
Raleigh, NC 27699-1101**

## Hanson Mine Safety Training Schedule

### September

22 – Part 46 Miner Training – 8 a.m.  
25 – Part 46 Annual Refresher Training – 8 a.m.

### October

27 – Part 46 Miner Training – 8 a.m.  
30 – Part 46 Annual Refresher Training – 8 a.m.

### November

17 – Part 46 Miner Training – 8 a.m.  
20 – Part 46 Annual Refresher Training – 8 a.m.

### December

15 – Part 46 Miner Training – 8 a.m.  
18 – Part 46 Annual Refresher Training – 8 a.m.

**Visit the NCDOL Display  
at the N.C. State Fair**

(Located in the Commercial Building)



**Oct. 17-26, 2003**