



DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

News Release

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**CONTRACTORS AND LABOR ORGANIZATIONS JOIN STATE TO LAUNCH
STATEWIDE FALL PROTECTION MEDIA AWARENESS CAMPAIGN TO
PROTECT CONSTRUCTION WORKERS AND THEIR FAMILIES**

HONOLULU – Governor Linda Lingle, state Labor and Industrial Relations Director Nelson Befitel, contractors and union organizations today launched a workplace safety campaign designed to raise awareness among construction industry workers and their families about the importance of Hawaii’s Fall Protection Law. The campaign will also emphasize how workers can protect themselves from injury or death as a result of a fall.

The campaign entitled “Tie Off...It’s Your Life” is primarily aimed at educating construction workers and their families about the importance wearing fall protection equipment or “Tie Off” to reduce the risks of falls on construction sites.

In Hawaii, the majority of construction safety violations cited by the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR) Hawaii Occupational Safety and Health division (HIOSH) are for workers failing to wear fall protection equipment or "Tie-Off". Since January of 2004 HIOSH has issued 442 fall related citations. From January 2002 to December 2004 Hawaii's construction industry has suffered over 1,000 injuries due to falls. Events surrounding these types of injuries often involve a number of factors, including unstable working surfaces, misuse or non-use of fall protection equipment, and human error.

State law requires employers to equip or protect workers with the use of either Personal Fall Arrest System ("PFAS") or passive fall protection when construction work is performed at heights greater than six feet. When used and worn correctly, the PFAS is designed for the worker to don a full-body harness, tethered by a shock-absorbing lanyard, and properly connected to an anchor point, which will exert minimal force and serious injury to the worker in the event of a fall.

The statewide public media awareness campaign includes:

1. Two 30-second television commercials;
2. Radio spots;
3. Advertisements at University of Hawaii sporting events at the Stan Sheriff Center and Aloha Stadium;
4. Advertisements in selected shopping centers throughout the state;
5. Construction site banners emphasizing the importance of fall protection;
6. Fall Protection Training videos made available to employers and employees free of charge on DVD and on the DLIR's website.

The PSAs and training video are produced by local production company Double Vision Productions and will be hosted by local actor Pomai Brown, who was featured as "Nick the Chef" in the 2004 "50 First Dates" movie starring Adam Sandler.

"This initiative demonstrates that in Hawaii, labor and business, as well as government can work together and combining our resources and efforts to ensure our working families a safe and healthful workplace," said Nelson B. Befitel, Director of Labor and Industrial Relations.

"This outreach effort is vital in helping to build a culture of safety for our workers and their families," said Governor Lingle. "I congratulate the Department of Labor and Industrial relations for their initiative to help our construction workers."

"We are in the infancy stages of the construction boom and need to reduce the number of needless workplace fall-related injuries on the job site," noted Patrick Conroy, Safety Consultant with King and Neel. "We want to educate the workers families, so they can remind their loved ones to "tie-off" when they get to work."

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2005 FALL PROTECTION AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

Background

The Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR), in partnership with contractors and labor organizations has developed an awareness campaign designed to educate those who work within the construction industry, as well as their families, about the Fall Protection Law and the potentially devastating consequences of not adhering to it. The DLIR will also engage construction companies in supporting and participating in a strategic campaign designed to highlight Hawaii's leaders in workplace safety.

- Fifty-seven (57%) percent of fatal falls occur at 30 feet or less. Falls are the leading cause of fatal injuries in the workplace—half of which occur on construction sites.
- During the period of July 1, 2002 to June 30, 2003, 173 fall protection-related violations were cited, making this violation the number one most cited standard by the Hawaii Occupational Safety and Health Division.
- Seventy-two (72%) percent of construction-related fatalities nationwide involved workers at their task site, such as falls while on a roof, scaffold or aerial lift.

State law requires employers to equip or protect workers with the use of either Personal Fall Arrest System (PFAS) or passive fall protection when construction work is performed at heights greater than 6 feet. When used and worn correctly, the PFAS involves the worker donning a full-body harness, tethered by a shock-absorbing lanyard and properly connecting to an anchor point, which will exert minimal force and prevent serious injury to the worker in the event of a fall. In the construction industry, this process is commonly called “tying off.”

Awareness Campaign

With the rise of the construction industry in Hawaii, more workers are on construction sites and many of them inexperienced about safety. Therefore, it is important that we heighten the awareness of “tying off” within our community with direct-impacting messages to workers to do so. The primary goal is to portray children, spouses and other family members as secondary victims of accidental workplace fatalities and injuries. Consequently, another goal is to encourage family members to remind their loved ones in the construction industry to “tie-off.” Additionally, the campaign will:

- Create partnerships with successful local contractors and labor organizations in support of a strategic campaign designed to highlight Hawaii's leaders in workplace safety.
- Produce and air a series of 30-second public awareness and promotional television messages.
- Produce and air public service radio announcements.
- Feature television and print media stories regarding fall protection.
 - Testimonials from fall protection victims.
- Entail the use of banners and posters which encourage the use of fall protection equipment.
 - Construction sites, training sites and labor organizations.
 - University of Hawaii sporting venues.
 - Public areas with high visibility.

Target Audience

- Construction workers.
- Spouses and children of construction workers.

Fall Protection Initiative Partners

- Actus Lend Lease LLC
- Associated Builders and Contractors
- Castle and Cooke Homes Hawaii, Inc.
- Dick Pacific Construction Co. Ltd.
- GASPRO
- Hawaii Building and Construction Trades Council, AFL-CIO
- Hawaii Carpenters Union Local 745
- Hawaiian Dredging Construction Company
- International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local 1186
- International Brotherhood of Painters & Allied Trades, Local 1791
- Ironworkers Local Union No. 625
- KD Construction
- KGMB-9
- KHON-2
- Kiewitt Pacific Co.
- Laborers International Union of North America, Local 386
- Metcalf Construction Company, Inc.
- Nordic Construction, Ltd.
- Parsons Construction Group (RCI)
- Roofers Union, Local 221
- Safety Systems
- King & Neel