

Keep 5 **ALIVE!**



The CSEA Central Region 5 Safety & Health Committee Newsletter

Joe Miceli, Safety & Health Committee Chair

Colleen Wheaton, Central Region President

Safety Happenings: Around the Region

A Regional Safety Overview from Occupational Safety and Health Specialist Josh Kemp

Unified Court System: Following up on Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) concerns in Cortland and Oneonta locations; testing was performed and currently under review.

NYS DOT: Continuing to work on tow plow concerns, Workplace Violence Prevention (WVP) with flaggers, tree work and bloodborne pathogens.

CNY Psych. Center: PESH Complaint filed regarding WVP. Continuing work on safer security measures in forensic wards.

Auburn Correctional Facility: Held two permit-required confined space entry trainings. Currently scheduling four more.

Cayuga Correctional Facility: Development of Permit Required Confined Space Entry program. Currently scheduling training.

CNY DDSO: Assisted with mold abatement, bed bug infestation and violence concerns.

NYS OCFS: Worked with Taberg and Finger Lakes facilities regarding violence and "throwing."

Oxford Veterans Home: Worked with Local president to resolve ergonomic concerns with patient input system.

SUNY Binghamton: Assisted with chemical and radon exposures on campus. Assisted with mumps outbreak on campus.

SUNY Delhi: Held Safety and Health Committee training. Assisted with mold and potential asbestos exposures.

SUNY Oswego: Held Safety and Health Committee training. Conducted an inspection and Labor-Management (L-M) meeting regarding malfunctioning refrigerant alarms and asbestos exposure. Currently working with PESH and L-M regarding the campus permit-required confined space training entry program.

Cayuga County: Assisting with WVP program and chemical release in county office building.

Chenango County: Conducted inspection of ergonomic concern at county landfill.

Herkimer County: Held lunch and learn trainings on Active Intruder, Heroin, WVP and Bullying. Assisted with IAQ concerns in the printer room at Herkimer Community College. Provided assistance with asbestos abatement in county office building.

Lewis County: Performed Work Zone-All Hazard training. Provided assistance regarding removal of lead-based paint.

Oneida County: PESH Program inspection performed.

Onondaga County: Working on Emergency Action Plans for County buildings. Annual PESH variance inspection was performed. PESH Complaint filed in DOT garage

regarding excessive pigeon feces in work areas.

Massena Hospital: "Basics of Safety and Health" lunch and learns performed.

North Syracuse School District: Working on violence and security concerns in the district.

City of Rome: PESH inspection resulting from two members being hospitalized from an overexposure to chlorine gas. spoke at Local membership meeting. L-M to discuss CSEA-offered trainings. Scheduling work zone training for DPW.

Town of Cicero Highway: Work Zone-All Hazard training performed. IAQ Inspection performed in garage.

Town of Otsego: PESH issued ten citations following the death of member Adam Burgess.

Town of Webb: PESH Complaint filed regarding WVP, Lockout-Tagout, trenching, work zone and various other concerns.

Village of Potsdam: Assisted with WVP Program, Lockout-Tagout Program and Permit-Required Confined Space Entry program, following PESH citations.

Village of Herkimer: Assisted with the Village WVP Program.

Safety Report: Our Peer Training Program

By Occupational Safety and Health Specialist Josh Kemp

No one knows their work site better than those who work in it. CSEA's **Peer Trainer Program** focuses on the most hazardous job duties workers face and trains workers in these fields to allow them to train their co-workers and eliminate preventable fatalities and injuries resulting from such hazardous work.

This cost-effective, labor/management initiative creates an internal safety and health training structure that allows for site-specific, compliant trainings for workers by workers.

CSEA and management participants undergo 32-40 hours of train-the-trainer courses through CSEA's OSH Department. Topics include: Emergency Response to Hazardous Materials; Confined Space Entry; Hazard Communication/Right-to-Know; Temporary Traffic Control for Emergency Response; Trenching & Excavation for Emergency Response; Mold; Safe Refuse Collection; Asbestos Awareness; and Lock-Out/Tag-Out.

Following their training, the peer trainers return to their workplaces to deliver the training, which is free and available to all employees, not just CSEA members.

The result is a safer workplace as well as a decrease in injuries, lost work days and workers' compensation claims. This saves employers and taxpayers money.

We salute our Region's twelve Peer Trainers!

Never quitting on safe and healthy workplaces

Observing Workers Memorial Day every April always gets me to thinking about safety and health in our workplaces. After all, every worker I know wants to go home at the end of the day in the same condition she or he came in to work, but when we reflect on those who have died or been hurt on the job, we realize that not everyone gets to do so.



Colleen Wheaton

Our union has a vital role to play in advocating to keep our members safe and healthy in the workplace, and occupational safety and health is a priority for CSEA. That's why we have a whole department of staff professionals who work to do just that. We are committed to doing everything we can to make sure none of our members are killed or injured on the job due to preventable hazards.

You will read an update in this issue from our Region Occupational Safety and Health Specialist Josh Kemp, who along with our Region Safety & Health Committee members, have been

handling many issues in our locals and units to raise awareness of and eliminate hazards to our members.

At the State level, we continue to fight for getting school workers added to the list of employees covered by workplace violence prevention laws. We were also successful in the past year getting sanitation and recycling workers added to the list

of workers covered by New York's "Move Over" Law, so that hopefully fewer workers in that industry are injured on the job.

At the Federal level, I worry. I worry that existing safety and health protections for workers will be repealed or not enforced. Even more so, I worry that in the coming future where union membership is completely voluntary, we will lose several things related to job safety and health. First, we could lose the political resources to stand up for stronger safety and health laws,

standards and enforcement. Second, I worry about our union's ability to maintain a vigilant and effective Occupational Safety and Health Department, staffed by experts in the field, if we have to scale back operations due to a lack of resources when members quit on each other and our union.

So we need to double down on extending our "Never Quit" message to the important issue of keeping all of us safe and healthy at work.

If we can all agree that we want to go home safe and whole at the end of the day, then we all need to agree to stick with our union and support having strong safety laws and union professionals who can investigate and enforce them. We cannot just leave this to chance or to some external agency. We need to make sure that WE are standing up for ourselves and our own safety on the job. We cannot afford to quit, because lives can literally be at stake, as I was recently reminded on Workers Memorial Day.

In Solidarity,

Colleen

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Is an official publication of the
CSEA Central Region
Safety & Health Committee

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A message from the Chair

by Joe Miceli, Chair, Region 5 Safety & Health Committee

Our 8th Workers Memorial Day observance was a beautiful day and a wonderful way to remember those we've lost. This year we only read one name. I look forward to the year when no names are read. That will mean we're doing our jobs better and safer.

I'd like to thank Matthew Harper for all his help setting up our observance. There's a lot that goes into this and Matt found and set up the site, arranged for our color guard, bagpipes and pastor, along with having the mayor deliver a proclamation. Every year, we have great

help, so thank you to all who've helped in the past. Thank you also to all who attended. We are already trying to determine next year's location.

Let's all have a safe summer and remember to Slow Down to Get Around and Don't Zone Out. These are not just sayings, they save lives.

Be Safe,

Joe



Workers Memorial Day in pictures

Photos by CSEA Communications Specialist Mark Kotzin



Workers Memorial Day 2017 (clockwise from top):

Attendees bow their heads as Pastor Dennis Murray delivers his benediction; (R-L): Health & Safety Committee Chair Joe Miceli, Region President Colleen Wheaton, City of Oneonta Unit President Matthew Harper, Oneonta Mayor Gary Herzig and Otsego County Local 839 President Tim Backus stand by the living memorial tree; Region President Wheaton accepts a proclamation from Mayor Gary Herzig; City of Oneonta Unit President Matthew Harper places the plaque dedicating the tree; bagpipers and the Mt. Vision Volunteer Fire Department Honor Guard present the flags to begin the observance; and a close up shows the plaque marking the tree we planted as a living memorial from CSEA.

We need to know!



If you come across a **serious workplace hazard** or have any type of **emergency situation** arise that has or could jeopardize the safety of CSEA members, you should immediately notify your nearest CSEA Officer, and request that they **immediately report the situation to CSEA's Occupational Safety and Health Specialist Josh Kemp.**

CSEA can most effectively respond to emergency situations and protect your safety with **prompt notification.** This allows us to assess the situation and to hopefully address problems **before** anyone is hurt.



OSH Specialist Josh Kemp can be reached at **(800) 559-7975, ext. 3376.**

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Note: Our Safety & Health Committee is always seeking additional activists to be appointed by their presidents who have a commitment to safety and health issues. Committee nomination forms are available by calling the Region Office at (800) 559-7975.

Remembering our fallen on Workers Memorial Day

By Communications Specialist Mark Kotzin

Our Region Safety and Health Committee recently planted our eighth “living memorial” tree in Otsego County as a reminder of workers killed or injured on the job.

Since 2010, our Region Committee has participated in the annual national observance of Workers Memorial Day by planting a living memorial in one of our twenty counties. We now have eight counties covered, including: Onondaga; Jefferson; Schuyler; Broome; Oneida; St. Lawrence; Oswego and Otsego.

Region President Colleen Wheaton said the Committee’s goal is to plant a tree in each county until all twenty counties in our Central Region have one. If we keep to this schedule, our entire Region will be covered by the year 2029.

“We plan to continue this proud tradition of recognizing those we’ve lost with this living reminder and tribute,” she said.

This year’s tree planting at Neahwa Park

in Oneonta was extremely well attended, with more than 50 people attending from around our Region, including activists from Jefferson, Oswego, Onondaga, Oneida, Cortland, Broome, Otsego, and Delaware Counties, to name a few.

Safety and Health Committee Chair Joe Miceli kicked off the observance, introducing the bagpipers and the Mt. Vision Volunteer Fire Department’s Honor Guard, who presented the flags for the ceremony. The Mt. Vision VFD participated in memory of Adam Burgess, a CSEA member working in the Town of Otsego Highway Department who was killed in 2015 after being struck by a falling tree. He also served as a first assistant chief in the fire department.

During the ceremony, Pastor Dennis Murray from the Sidney Center Baptist Church offered an opening prayer and poem. He was followed by Wheaton, who welcomed the crowd and introduced City of Oneonta Mayor

Gary Herzig. Mayor Herzig read aloud a proclamation he issued on behalf of the observance. Following his remarks, Region Committee Chair Joe Miceli read aloud the name of CSEA Local 815 member Donald F. Schultz II, who was killed on the job last October, as City of Oneonta Unit President Matthew Harper installed the plaque dedicating the tree the union planted for this year’s observance.

“It was a very nice, moving ceremony, and I’m proud of our Region Committee for all the work they put into the observance,” Wheaton said.

Living Memorial Tree Locations

- East Syracuse
- Watertown
- Watkins Glen
- Binghamton
- Utica
- Massena
- Oswego
- Oneonta