

Reflections on the Oregon Governor's Occupational Safety and Health Conference

March 5th, 2019, Portland, OR

Risk Communication for Safety Professionals & Disaster Preparedness: at home, at work, and at play:

For the risk communication session, one of the main points is that risk communication needs to be a part of the risk assessment process. Overall, this process is: **Hazard Identification, Risk Assessment, Risk Communication, Risk Control, and Risk Monitoring**. Another main point is that instead of using vague statements that are often seen in standards and regulations, give clear examples that anyone can understand.

For the disaster preparedness session, a lot of material was covered. The two most important points are that the people in the PNW are not prepared, and that relying on the government for help afterwards is a bad idea. An estimated 1.5 million people will be in need of relief after this impending earthquake. Being able to take care of yourself, your families, and your neighbors will help take the load off of emergency personnel who can spend their time with more vulnerable communities instead (i.e. older populations, low-income communities, etc.). In this session we discussed some of the key elements of an emergency kit. Two helpful tips are: build emergency kits for work, home, and your car, and for food to select high calorie content food.



OSU-ASSP (Cristian Reyes, Jillian Cote, Salman Alquwayi, Stephanie Fitch, Larry Miller, Chris Burman, Meredith Cox)

-Jillian Cote, OSU-ASSP President

Resilience in the Face of Climate Change:

Resilience in the Face of Climate Change was put on by the Oregon Health Authority's (OHA) Climate and Health Program. The session covered climate impacts on human health and how it will affect Oregon workers. **Climate change is happening in Oregon**. The mean annual temperature has increased 2.7°F in the last century and it is projected to increase an additional 3-7°F by 2050. The number of extreme temperature days are increasing, with a predicted 40 to 60 more days above 86°F by 2050. Already, OHA has seen record numbers of emergency room visits due to heat related illness during hot days. Oregon will have heavy, extreme rain events paired with chronic droughts over the summer due to low snowpack. The implications of climate change for Oregon workers include amplification of existing safety and health hazards such as: 1) increased heat-related illnesses, 2) increased pesticide usage, 3) increased heat and solar radiation, 3) increased exposure to vector-borne diseases, 4) increased gastrointestinal disease from contaminated water due to winter storms, flooding, and harmful algal blooms, 5) increased violence from irritation caused by heat waves. OHA acknowledges that this is uncharted territory and highlights the **important role held by safety professionals** in the face of climate change and their responsibility to watch for emerging hazards.

- Stephanie Fitch, OSU-ASSP Secretary