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To: Kester, Tonykester@aging.sc.gov
Date: 2/12/2015 9:24:22 PM
Subject: The DOL Newsletter - February 12, 2015: Boosting Apprenticeship; Talking JOLTS; #LoveYourServer

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DOL News Brief

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February 12, 2015

What's New

Each week, this space will bring you [the best from our blog](#).

- [Veterans, Repeat After Me: Get to an American Job Center](#): Every time I meet a veteran in the midst of a job search, or one who is looking to take a great leap forward in his or her career, I tell them to get to an American Job Center, writes Terry Gerton, deputy assistant secretary for policy at the Veterans' Employment and Training Service.
- [A New Approach to Expanding Job-Driven Training](#): Thirteen agencies, in partnership with the White House, are collaborating on ways to ensure that ready-to-work Americans are prepared for ready-to-fill, high-demand jobs and careers, writes Secretary Perez.
- [Celebrating a Labor Legend During Black History Month](#): During Black History Month, I'm reminded yet again of the ways that the struggle for civil rights is interwoven with the struggle for workers' rights, writes Secretary Perez.

#LoveYourServer

Valentine's Day is traditionally a busy one for the nation's estimated two million waiters and waitresses. Unfortunately, in most states, food servers' wages are low, based primarily on patron's tips. Employers must only pay workers who depend largely on tips a lower, so-called "tipped minimum" wage that, when added to their tips, must equal at least the full minimum wage. The federal minimum wage for tipped workers has remained unchanged at \$2.13 per hour since 1991. Food servers — most of whom are working adults — are three times more likely than other workers to experience poverty. Secretary Perez is determined to change that and has called on Congress to raise the full minimum wage and the tipped minimum wage. He's not alone: 71 percent of Americans support increasing the minimum wage for tipped workers, according to a recent poll.

- [Watch Video About Food Servers](#)
- [Learn About Minimum Wages for Tipped Employees](#)

Doing Good and Doing Well

U.S. Secretary of Labor Thomas

E. Perez traversed North Carolina and visited its famed Research Triangle on Feb. 11 to highlight businesses that understand doing right by their employees is a recipe for doing well for their organization. His first stop was Bühler Aeroglide, an industrial manufacturing operation in Cary. The North Carolina Triangle Apprenticeship Program brought together seven businesses to offer high school students a head start through apprenticeships in advanced manufacturing and health care. The four-year program provides on-the-job experience while students earn a paycheck and, ultimately, earn an associate's degree at Wake Technical College. Perez then headed to Durham to attend the Sustainable Business and Social Impact Conference hosted by Duke University. The event featured students and business leaders who share the belief that shared prosperity is good for their bottom line. Afterward, Perez joined several business and thought leaders to discuss bringing the model of "doing good and doing well" to scale on a national level. "We all succeed only when we all succeed," he said.

- [Read the Blog Post](#)

What's Next in the National Skills Movement

The halls of Congress were a little busier than usual recently as a broad cross-section of organizations focused on expanding skills training in America descended on Washington. For Secretary Perez, the gatherings were opportunities to discuss what's next for expanding opportunity and strengthening the middle class. At the National Skills Coalition's Summit on Feb. 9, Perez addressed 200 attendees from the workforce system, community colleges, non-profit organizations and labor-management partnerships. His remarks focused on existing efforts to better collaborate across the federal government to grow apprenticeship and to change the way many view skills development. Three days later, Perez visited the Community College National Legislative Summit organized by the Association of Community College Trustees and the American Association of Community Colleges. Speaking to more than 500 leaders from the country's community colleges, Perez talked about the important role these institutions play in helping connect job seekers with local employers. He remarked, "Education is the great equalizer. That doesn't mean everyone needs a college degree, but it does mean that everyone should be looking beyond high school, and when they do, one of the best places to start is a community college."

- [Learn About Skills Initiatives](#)
-

Expanding Opportunities for Youth

Success for too many of our nation's youth is blocked by overwhelming barriers. Nationwide, teens face unemployment rates markedly higher than they were generations ago. The "My Brother's Keeper" initiative launched by President Obama in 2014 helps many communities actively address these challenges. In Durham, N.C., on Feb. 11, Secretary Perez joined community leaders to discuss four key issues — educational equity, job training and placement, the criminal justice system and health disparities — that impede progress for teens. Perez highlighted his commitment to improving cradle-to-college outcomes for youth — especially for boys of color — through initiatives such as summer job opportunities, apprenticeships and business engagement. "This isn't just a moral imperative. It's not just the right thing to do to expand opportunity for an underserved population; it's the smart thing to do to for the whole country," he said.

- [Learn More About My Brother's Keeper](#)

Job Training Reform Coming

Communities nationwide are preparing to implement the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, the first major reform in federal job training programs in more than 15 years. Against this backdrop, the National Association of Regional Councils held its 2015 regional conference on Feb. 8-10 in Washington, D.C. Portia Wu, assistant secretary of labor for employment and training, delivered the keynote address on the conference's closing day and emphasized that regional planning is key to enacting the new law successfully. WIOA seeks to increase collaboration at all levels of government with regional communities so workers have access to training and career opportunities, and employers can find the workers they need to grow.

Health Enrollment Ending

Feb. 15 is the last day for individuals and families to enroll in 2015 health coverage through the Affordable Care Act Marketplace. Go online or call 1-800-318-2596 / TTY: 1-855-889-4325 to find out about coverage options.

- [Learn About Enrollment](#)

First-Time Moms at Work

Did you know that two out of three first-time mothers work during their pregnancies or are increasingly likely to work into their third trimester? To highlight the important contributions that pregnant women make to our nation's workforce, the Women's Bureau has released a new infographic. Using the most current U.S. Census data available, it shows that more women are working while pregnant and returning to work sooner after giving birth.

- [See the Infographic](#)
- [Learn About the Women's Bureau](#)

National News

Help Us Make Smarter Regulations

Do you have ideas for a regulation you think should be modified, streamlined, expanded or even repealed? We want to hear from you. With workplaces constantly changing, the department is always reviewing its existing regulations to update rules that may be out of date, ineffective, insufficient or excessively burdensome. Recently, we launched an interactive website to engage interested parties in suggesting what needs to change. Submit your ideas by Feb. 25 to provide input that will help us implement effective and smart regulations that bring opportunity and economic security to working families, job-seekers and retirees.

- [Visit the Interactive Website](#)
- [See Retrospective Review Progress Reports](#)

Take Three: JOLTS

There are several indications that the job market continues to improve — the unemployment rate is down nearly a full percentage point from one year ago and the economy has added more than three million jobs in that time. Issued on the heels of the monthly employment report, the Job Opening and Labor Turnover Survey — also known as JOLTS — often doesn't get the attention it deserves. The department's chief economist, Dr. Heidi Shierholz, answers three questions about the importance of this valued indicator.

What exactly is JOLTS? *JOLTS is a survey of employers who are asked about their employment activity in the past month. Responses are grouped into three main buckets — job openings, hires and separations, which includes layoffs as well as people quitting voluntarily.*

What can we learn from the report? *JOLTS data is really important to understanding where the economy is now and what might happen in the near future. When job openings increase, we know that employers are feeling confident enough about the economy to hire new employees. What isn't as obvious is the 'quits' number. In bad economic times, that number is generally low because people are interested in maintaining their current job. When that number starts to rise, as we are seeing now, it means workers are getting more confident and they are willing to take a risk to quit their job to find a better one. Moving from one job to another may also mean people are finding better paying jobs.*

What should we look for in future reports? *One of the key data points we've tracked since the recession is the ratio between the number of unemployed people and job openings. At the height of the recession, there were nearly seven unemployed individuals for every job opening. That number has come down dramatically — to 1.7 people for every job opening, right in line with what we saw prior to the recession. As that ratio declines, employers will start competing for good workers, not the other way around. That's a good sign for the economy and may lead to a much needed acceleration in wage growth.*

- [Read the Report](#)
- [Watch the Secretary's Video](#)

International Scene

\$2 Million Awarded to Combat Labor Abuses in Uzbekistan

With a \$2 million award from the Bureau of International Labor Affairs, the International Labour Organization will conduct a technical cooperation project to implement a Decent Work Country Program in Uzbekistan. A study of working conditions in Uzbekistan by ILAB identified a range of areas where meaningful actions might be taken to advance the elimination of child labor and forced labor, particularly in the cotton sector. The ILO will take a similarly multifaceted approach to these issues, within its framework and the Republic of Uzbekistan's commitment to work together to realize fundamental principles and rights at work. The ILO will research recruitment practices in agriculture and local and national stakeholders to advocate about labor issues, as well.

- [Read the Project Summary](#)

Foreign Labor Certification Report

The Employment and Training Administration's Office of Foreign Labor Certification promotes economic growth in sectors that face domestic labor shortages while protecting access to opportunities for U.S. workers. An approved labor certification or labor condition application is often the first step for many of the employment-based visa programs, both temporary and permanent, that enable employers to hire foreign workers where workforce needs cannot be fulfilled through the U.S. workforce. An OFLC annual report for Fiscal Year 2013 data released on Feb. 2 reports that it received requests from employers for temporary and permanent labor certifications for approximately 1,232,470 job opportunities and processed 490,833 applications. In the report's foreword, Assistant Secretary of Labor for Employment and Training Portia Wu writes, "We believe this report provides useful information to employers, educators and the public workforce system to highlight the occupations and careers that have seen employers seek out foreign talent."

- [Read the Annual Report](#)

'Igniting Innovation'

From a large pool of applicants, the American Council on Technology-Industry Advisory Council named the department's Open Government Enforcement Data Initiative as one of the top 30 government innovations at the "Igniting Innovation 2015 Showcase and Awards" on Feb. 5 in Washington, D.C. The initiative is part of the department's commitment to the value of open government transparency, participation and collaboration in the service of the American public. The U.S. State Department's "myServices" program, the New York City Department of Transportation's Permit Management System, and innovative federal and state digital services initiatives also were recognized.

- [See the Top 30 Finalists](#)

Migrant Workers Schooled on Rights

In harvest season, Deming, N.M.'s, green chile fields are a popular destination for migrant and seasonal workers. On Jan. 30, nearly 170 agricultural workers employed in the hand harvesting and processing of produce attended the biannual Work Search Skills Enhancement workshop there. Staff from the El Paso, Texas, Wage and Hour Division's Area Office shared information about workers' rights under the Fair Labor Standards Act and the Migrant and Seasonal Worker Protection Act. Ensuring wage, safety and housing compliance from agricultural employers is a priority initiative of the district. The New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions hosted the workshop.

- [Read About the FLSA](#)

It Happened on the Hill

House Testimony Highlights Efforts to Create Opportunity for Veterans

With the release of President Obama's 2016 budget proposal, the House of Representatives Veterans Affairs Committee's Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity called Teresa Gerton, deputy assistant secretary of labor for Veterans' Employment and Training Service, to testify on Feb. 12 about the department's veterans' employment programs. She provided a wide-ranging overview of VETS' many successes in creating opportunity for veterans based on a model that aims to "Prepare, Provide, Protect and Promote." VETS *prepares* service members for civilian transitions through its Transition Assistance Program, which delivered training to more than 207,000 participants last year. It *provides* employment resources and expertise through intensive services at American Job Centers, where 1.2 million veterans sought assistance in 2014, and it *provides* homeless veterans reintegration grants. The agency enforces laws that *protect* veterans' employment rights, and it *promotes* veterans' hiring with extensive outreach to the business community. "Creating opportunity for our veterans to thrive in the civilian economy through meaningful employment is a priority for Labor Department leaders and for every agency within the department," Gerton said.

- [Read the VETS Fact Sheet](#)
- [Read the Testimony](#)

DOL Working for You

Detroit Attorney Fights for 'Courageous' Whistleblowers

In the past year, Detroit attorney Robert Fetter has brought numerous whistleblower complaints to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration after his clients were disciplined or terminated for raising workplace safety concerns. Their complaints included violations of commercial motor carrier, worker safety and other laws. An employment law specialist with Miller Cohen P.L.C., Fetter calls these workers "courageous" and says their rights as whistleblowers must be protected. "These employees are on the front lines ensuring that the products we have are safe and that our laws are obeyed," Fetter said. "It is important that their legal right to do so is protected." Many of his cases have involved violations under the Surface Transportation Assistance Act, which regulates conditions for commercial motor carriers and the numbers of hours drivers spend behind the wheel. When these laws are ignored, overworked drivers put themselves and the public at risk. "These workers feel vindicated when we are able to work with the Department of Labor under the whistleblower statutes, and they are awarded compensation for their losses," Fetter said. "These workers were willing to do the right thing and report violations of the law, and then they and their families have suffered because they stood up for their rights." Fetter is working now with a public school employee disciplined after reporting asbestos exposure, an action protected under the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act. "Her voice needs to be heard," Fetter said.

- [Learn About Whistleblower Protection Rights](#)

DOL in Action

Investigation Concludes That Roofer's Death Was Preventable

A 42-year-old roofer fell 16 feet to his death after losing his balance and a 25-year-old coworker was seriously injured when he fell trying to save the falling man because their employer failed to provide them fall protection, an investigation by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration has determined. The two men were installing a heavy-duty, weatherproof tarpaulin last September on a residential home in Grand Island, Neb. OSHA found that Roeder Construction committed two serious and one other-than-serious safety violation.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Lawsuit: Employee Shouldn't Have to Choose Between Job and Health

U.S. Cotton LLC, of Cleveland, Ohio, wrongfully terminated the employment

Farmworkers Resource Fair

Nearly 400 farmworkers attended the 12th Annual Farmworker Appreciation and Resource Fair in Mendota, Calif., on Jan. 30 to learn about community and employment resources, career and trainer information, agricultural worker rights and safety. At the event, Wage and Hour Division representatives conducted a training workshop on legal rights for farmworkers and how to file a labor complaint. "Working together in these partnerships is important in order to bring Wage and Hour's message to the communities that need us the most," said Nora Pedraza, the division's assistant district director in Fresno.

- [Learn About Migrant Worker Protection](#)
- [Learn How to File a Complaint](#)

Thwarting Misclassification

An alarming trend in the construction industry has employees being misclassified as independent contractors. To prevent violations before they happen, the Wage and Hour Division's district office in Austin, Texas, teamed up with the University of Texas on Jan. 28 to deliver a presentation on misclassification and other provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act. Employers constructing a medical facility at the university were told the practice of misclassification is a serious threat to workers who deserve good and safe jobs, and to employers who obey the law. Misclassified workers don't receive overtime and minimum wage protections, are forced to pay taxes their employers are legally obligated to pay, and have no protections if they are injured or discriminated against in the workplace. As misclassified independent contractors, they may be further denied protections like unemployment insurance and family and medical leave.

- [Learn More About Misclassification](#)

Weekly UI Claims

Seasonally adjusted initial Unemployment Insurance claims rose to 304,000 for the week ended Feb. 7, the department reported. The advance figure was up 25,000 from the previous week's revised level. The four-week moving average was 289,750, down 3,250 from the previous week's revised average.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Upcoming Deadlines & Events

Open Funding Opportunities

EBSA — Choose a Retirement Solution for Your Small Business Today Webcast

- **February 26 — Washington, DC**

EBSA — Getting It Right: Know Your Fiduciary Responsibilities Seminar

- **March 5 — Philadelphia, PA**

EBSA — Savings Fitness Workshop

- **February 26 — Boston, MA**

OFCCP — Affirmative Action Program Development for Small or First-Time

of a pregnant machine operator who requested leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act due to her pregnancy-related illness. A complaint filed on Feb. 4 by the department seeks reinstatement, back wages and liquidated damages for the worker. "This worker did everything required to protect her job, while enduring a medical condition that her employer knew may create unexpected absence. The Family and Medical Leave Act allow employees to balance job and family responsibilities. An employee should never have to choose between their job and their health," said George Victory, district director for Wage and Hour Division in Columbus.

- [Read the News Brief](#)

Lack of Fall Protection Cited in Death of Tower Painter

A 49-year-old man plunged about nine stories to his death while painting a communication tower near Stockton, Ill., because his employer, Sherwood Tower Service, did not provide an adequate fall protection system while he worked high above the ground. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration investigated the August 2014 fatality and cited two willful and one serious safety violation. OSHA has placed Sherwood Tower, which specializes in communication tower painting and maintenance, in its Severe Violator Enforcement Program. Last year, 12 people died in the United States while engaged in work in the communication towers industry.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Missouri Manufacturer's Equipment Lacked Proper Safety Mechanisms

Workers at a Union, Mo., aluminum parts manufacturing facility were exposed to amputation and other serious hazards while operating presses, Occupational Safety and Health Administration inspectors found. Consequently, OSHA cited Gateway Extrusions for one repeated and eight serious safety and health violations with fines of \$63,000. "Lack of worker protections at this facility exposed workers to serious and life-altering injuries," said Bill McDonald, OSHA's area director in St. Louis. An October 2014 visit found that two operating machines, including a sander and multi-purpose press in the fabrication area, lacked proper safety mechanisms. The company was cited in 2013 for a similar violation at this facility.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Illinois Union to Hold New Officer Election

Machinists District Lodge 141 in Elk Grove Village, Ill., recently agreed to conduct a new election for its officer's positions under the supervision of the Office of Labor-Management Standards. An OLMS investigation of Lodge 141's June 2014 election revealed that the election notice mailed to members had wrong information about the local election's location, polling hours and dates, and a candidate's reasonable requests for distribution of campaign literature (at the candidate's expense) were denied. The new election will be held within the first two weeks of June.

Workers Exposed to Corrosive Chemicals at Pork Processing Facility

Seaboard Foods LLC, a pork-processing facility in Guymon, Okla., was cited for seven serious violations related to the safety of its ammonia refrigeration systems, an Occupational Safety and Health Administration inspection that began last October found. OSHA's standards contain specific requirements for preventing or minimizing the consequences of catastrophic releases of highly hazardous chemicals, such as ammonia. The inspection determined the employer did not provide written operating procedures on safety systems and how to use them; did not develop and use safe work practices to guard against hazards in operations; did not train workers involved in the anhydrous ammonia process; and did not inspect and test process equipment to make sure it still worked. The violations could incur \$51,000 in penalties.

- [Read the News Brief](#)

Motor Freight Line Faces Penalties After Explosion Injures 4

A St. Louis, Mo., trucking terminal faces \$119,000 in penalties levied by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration after four employees were injured — two of them critically — in an explosion at Saia Motor Freight Line LLC. OSHA determined a forklift's ignition source and a loose coupling connection to a liquid propane gas tank sparked the explosion. An inspection found one willful and 11 serious safety and health violations. "Workers must be trained to avoid deadly combinations of flammable fuels, ignition sources and confined spaces, which allow vapors to ignite quickly," said Bill McDonald, OSHA's area director in St. Louis.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Supply and Service Contractors

- February 18 — Baltimore, MD
- March 18 — Baltimore, MD

OFCCP — Audit Through the Eyes of an Investigator

- February 24 — Chicago, IL

OFCCP — Complaint Procedures

- March 18 — Orange, CA

OFCCP — Complying with the Section 503 and VEVRAA Regulations

- March 11 — Baltimore, MD

OFCCP — Construction 16 EEO & Affirmative Action Specification

- February 18 — Columbia, SC
- March 18 — Columbia, SC
- April 15 — Columbia, SC

OFCCP — Construction Reviews in Sixteen Steps

- February 19 — San Francisco, CA

OFCCP — Good Faith Efforts, Exceptional Results

- February 17 — Chicago, IL

OFCCP — New Regulations Implementing the Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act

- March 19 — Richmond, VA

OFCCP — New Regulations Implementing the Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act

- April 16 — Orange, CA

OFCCP — New Scheduling Letter

- April 16 — Orange, CA

OFCCP — New Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act & VEVRAA Regulations

- March 5 — Pittsburgh, PA

OFCCP — Veterans & Persons with Disabilities Hiring Expo

- March 27 — Los Angeles, CA

OLMS — Compliance Assistance Seminar

- March 5 — Dallas, TX

OSHA — White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders Interagency Working Group Webinar

- February 19 — Richmond, VA

OWCP — Town Hall Meetings to assist nuclear weapons workers

- February 25 — Carlsbad, NM

WHD — Presentation on Labor Standards to Mexican Nationals

- February 24 — Springdale, AR

Employees of Maine Manufacturer Face Machine Hazards

Employees at Formed Fiber Technologies LLC's Auburn, Maine, manufacturing plant use a variety of machines — including robots — to make polyester carpets and thermo-formed trunk liners. Occupational Safety and Health Administration inspectors found these workers at risk of injuries because their employer did not properly protect them from the hazards presented by the machines they operate. The workers faced possible lacerations, finger injuries and amputations because machines were not fully powered down and locked during maintenance or repair. Robots used in the production process were capable also of reaching beyond their safety perimeters and striking their operators or others nearby. The company faces \$108,800 in fines.

- [Read the News Release](#)

NJ Contractor Cuts Safety Corners with Tree Trimming

An East Hanover, N.J., contractor exposed tree-trimming workers to dangerous fall hazards, an October 2014 investigation by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration concluded. Northstar Contracting Group received one willful violation for allowing an employee on an aerial lift on the job in nearby Morris Plains to work with no fall protection. Investigators also saw another employee with no protective helmet while tree trimmers worked above. Proposed penalties totaled \$53,900.

- [Read the News Brief](#)

Childcare Initiative Finds Violations in New Mexico, West Texas

Investigations of the child care industry in New Mexico and West Texas found wage violations of the Fair Labor Standards Act in 84 percent of cases. A related initiative by the Wage and Hour Division's Albuquerque District Office yielded more than \$30,000 in back wages for 111 vulnerable, low-wage workers. Sadly, the problem exists nationwide. Of more than 2,200 investigations of child care providers in the United States in the last two fiscal years, violations were revealed in 85 percent of the investigated employers and 11,452 employees received their share of \$4 million in recovered back wages — more than 40 percent of those back wages were owed to workers in the division's Southwest region.

- [Read the News Brief](#)

Ohio Tank Cleaning Company Puts Workers in Danger

Employees at a London, Ohio, tank cleaning facility risked potentially lethal suffocation caused by dangerous fumes because the company did not test the atmosphere and properly ventilate food transport tankers before allowing workers to enter. An employee complaint led the Occupational Safety and Health Administration to investigate Reynolds Nationwide last August. OSHA issued two willful and six serious safety violations involving permit-required confined spaces and fall hazards with fines topping \$179,000.

- [Read the News Release](#)

California Construction Workers Get Belated Benefit Plan Payments

Wage and Hour Division investigators recently discovered that Napa, Calif.-based Avcon Constructors Inc. did not make timely benefit plan payments on behalf of 19 employees at the San Francisco Veterans Affairs Hospital and the Training Exercise Warehouse at Fort Hunter Liggett. The projects' employees were working on federally financed contracts subject to Davis-Bacon and Related Acts regulations. The DBRA requires that contributions to funds for bona fide fringe benefits must be made at least quarterly. "The agency will take action to recover payment when workers are denied their rightful compensation. We do so to create a level playing field for employers, ensuring those who shortchange workers do not gain a competitive advantage," said Susana Blanco, division director in San Francisco.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Honolulu Subcontractor Pays Back Wages at 10 Projects

M.H. Electric paid \$290,588 in back wages to 65 workers after the Honolulu-based subcontractor violated federal wage and hour laws at 10 federally funded construction projects in Hawaii. The company also paid \$14,507 in back wages and damages for overtime violations under the Fair Labor Standards Act. "Federal contractors owe it to taxpayers to comply with all applicable laws, including paying their workers fairly and fully," said Terence Trotter, district director for the division in Honolulu.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Call for Removal of Defective Forklifts in 9 States

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Employees at Central Transport LLC's 170 freight shipping terminals nationwide use forklifts daily to move and handle freight and other materials. Multiple inspections in the last several years by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration found that the company has repeatedly left dangerously defective forklifts in service in at least 11 shipping terminals in nine states: Connecticut, Georgia, Illinois, Massachusetts, Nebraska, New Jersey, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin. As a result, the department filed a complaint with the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission seeking an order to require the Michigan-based freight shipper to remove damaged, defective and unsafe powered industrial trucks from service at all its locations. "A systemic problem demands a systemic solution," said Dr. David Michaels, assistant secretary of labor for occupational safety and health.

- [Read the News Release](#)
- [Learn About Forklift Safety](#)

Massachusetts Clinic to Pay \$190,000 for Systemic Pay Bias

Lahey Clinic Hospital, Inc. will pay \$190,000 to resolve allegations of systemic pay discrimination at its medical center in Burlington, Mass. During a compliance review, the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs found that, from 2010 to 2012, Lahey discriminated against 38 female housekeepers — predominantly Haitian, Creole-speaking African Americans — by paying the women 70 cents less per hour than their male counterparts. Executive Order 11246 mandates that federal contractors such as Lahey must not discriminate in pay or other compensation on the basis of sex.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Texas Company Exposed Workers to Numerous Safety Hazards

Plumbing and heating equipment producer, PVI Industries LLC of Fort Worth, Texas, has received 18 violations for exposing workers to numerous safety hazards. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration launched an inspection last August as part of the agency's Site Specific Targeted inspections. Serious violations included failure to ensure no more than one day's use of chemicals was stored in a paint booth; not guarding a drill press, bench grinder and other machinery; not annually inspecting overhead cranes; and developing written procedures on fully shutting and powering down machines to avoid starts during maintenance. The violations carry fines totaling \$93,700.

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