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## DOL News Brief

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May 7, 2015

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

- **Hold the Flowers:** 3 Mother's Day Messages that Matter: On Mother's Day, we buy flowers and cards to show how much we care. But there are other ways we can value our mothers. Here are three messages you probably won't find in any greeting cards but would mean a lot to working moms.
- **Living With Unpaid Leave:** A Mom's Perspective: "My husband and I are just your average, middle-class recession survivors. We both work a nine-to-five job, on different shifts, and make enough to be comfortable. So something as natural as welcoming our first child shouldn't be daunting — but it is," writes Shawna Mascarelli, a working mom from Seattle.
- **Small Business Owners:** Are You Helping Protect Your Employees' Financial Security? "If you are a small business providing retirement and health benefits to your employees, you play an important role in your employees' financial security," writes Phyllis Borzi, assistant secretary of labor for employee benefits security.

### A Leg Up for Former Inmates

In the current national dialogue on criminal justice and prison reform, creating employment opportunities are discussed as a meaningful way to reduce recidivism and strengthen local communities. Federal attorneys from around the nation gathered at Department of Justice headquarters in Washington, D.C., on May 8 to discuss how to help people successfully transition back into their communities after release from jail or prison. Secretary Perez met with the attorneys to review departmental policies and programs that already are improving the lives of once incarcerated individuals — including job training and career counseling services for adults and youth who have been in the criminal justice system. He urged participants to work in their communities to make these opportunities more accessible to more people. "Helping individuals coming through the criminal justice system land on their feet is both a moral and economic imperative," Perez said.

## What's New

### Helping Baltimore as the City Heals

In the wake of the recent civil unrest in Baltimore, U.S. Secretary of Labor Thomas E. Perez visited the city on May 6 and met with local officials, community leaders, students and other stakeholders to learn about their needs and concerns, and discuss how the federal government can help. After the Ferguson protests last August, the department worked with Missouri state and local officials to help residents there — especially youth and young adults — access job training opportunities with a \$5 million demonstration grant to the State of Missouri and North St. Louis. A similar project tailored to the specific needs identified by the department's partners at the city and state levels — is expected to aid Baltimore in its recovery. "Our goal is get these resources out in a matter of weeks, not a matter of months," Perez said. "At the same time, we want to make sure we take the time to listen. We want sustainable success."

- [Watch the MSNBC Interview](#)

### 'Lead on Leave' Tour Heads to Oregon

Women's Bureau Director Latifa Lyles continued the "Lead on Leave" tour with a keynote speech at the State of Motherhood forum in Portland on May 1. Hosted by Family Forward Oregon and the Portland City Club, the event welcomed advocates to discuss family leave and related issues. "When mothers succeed, America succeeds," Lyles said to the packed crowd. Two bills are currently before the Oregon legislature aimed at providing paid sick leave programs for families. Since it began on April 1, the "Lead on Leave" tour has featured Secretary Perez, White House senior advisor Valerie Jarrett, other federal, state and local officials, business leaders and small business owners at events across the country. The initiative highlights how state, localities and businesses are taking the lead on providing workers with paid leave. Currently, the U.S. is the only industrialized nation without some form of national paid leave.

- [Read About Lead on Leave](#)
- [Learn More About the Women's Bureau](#)

## National News

### 2015 Fall Safety Stand-Down Is Up-and-Running

Companies and workers in all 50 states joined the Occupational Safety and Health Administration on May 4 to launch the second annual National Fall Safety Stand-Down. Through May 15, construction industry employers and employees are encouraged to voluntarily stop work to learn and discuss how to prevent deaths and catastrophic injuries. Industry, business leaders and others — including universities, labor organizations, and community and faith-based groups — have scheduled stand-downs nationwide. The U.S. Air Force is also joining the effort by hosting stand-down events at bases worldwide. One of the

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## Protecting Farmworkers

The nonprofit organization Farmworker Justice plays an important role in giving migrant and seasonal farmworkers a voice. At its annual awards reception in Washington, D.C. on May 6, Secretary Perez accepted an honor for the department's efforts on behalf of farmworkers, and acknowledged that the workers contribute greatly to our lives while facing high rates of wage, health and safety violations. "We all depend on the work of farmworkers — they put food on our dinner tables. But far too often, they can't afford to put food on their own," said Perez. "They are among the most vulnerable workers in our economy. Their work is often dirty and dangerous, done in unsafe or unhealthy conditions." Last year the Wage and Hour Division recovered more than \$4.5 million in unpaid wages for more than 12,000 agricultural workers nationwide, while assessing employers \$3 million in penalties.

- [Read the Blog Post](#)
- [Learn About Farmworkers' Rights](#)

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## Education: A Great Equalizer

Educators play a critical role in our efforts to transform the nation's workforce system, Secretary Perez told National Education Association board members at its headquarters in Washington, D.C., on May 1. As the department builds a modern "skills superhighway" that puts people on pathways to middle-class careers, educators are key in making sure schools are preparing students for the workforce. "Education is a great equalizer," he said. "Educators are at the center of the skills infrastructure." Perez also told board members that the Obama administration remains steadfast in its commitment to protecting educators' right to bargain collectively, and to making sure they have a voice in the workplace.

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## New Diversity Council Meets

The new Diversity and Inclusion in Government Council held its first-ever meeting on May 4. Opening remarks were made by Deputy Secretary of Labor Chris Lu, the council's co-chair and senior executive representative. "The establishment of this council can help us create and foster a federal workplace culture that values our employees' unique contributions and develops them to their full potential," said Lu. He was joined by the council's chair, Katherine Archuleta, director of the Office of Personnel Management. The council was created as a forum for improving senior leadership engagement and collaboration on strategic and operational diversity and inclusion priorities. Moving forward, it will develop guidance to cultivate a workplace culture of inclusion, collaboration, employee engagement, transparency, information-sharing, cognitive diversity and equity for all federal employees.

many events already held was led by students at Madison Park Technical-Vocational High School and YouthBuild Boston who have been safely building a low-income, affordable house there since September 2014. On May 5, they traded their tools for notepads and pencils during their own stand-down. Discussing the importance of fall safety, Assistant Secretary of Labor for Occupational Safety and Health Dr. David Michaels said: "People who fall are not just numbers — they are mothers, fathers, sisters and brothers. The cost of building our nation and economy cannot be the lives of its workforce, and that's what this Stand-Down is all about." In 2014, more than 5,000 employers and more than one million workers participated in the record-setting event. Organizers expect to set a new record for participation in 2015.

- [Read the News Release](#)
- [Learn More About the Stand Down](#)
- [Learn About Fall Prevention](#)

## New Protections Put in Place for Workers in Confined Spaces

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration published a final rule on May 4 to increase protections for construction workers in confined spaces. Manholes, crawl spaces, tanks and other confined spaces are difficult to exit in an emergency, and people working in confined spaces face life-threatening hazards such as exposure to toxic substances, electrocution, explosions and asphyxiation. Last year, two workers were asphyxiated while repairing leaks in a manhole, the second when he went down to save the first. "In the construction industry, entering confined spaces is often necessary, but fatalities like these don't have to happen," said Secretary Perez. "This new rule will significantly improve the safety of construction workers who enter confined spaces."

- [Read the News Release](#)
- [Learn About Confined Spaces](#)

## Capitol Hill Stands Down for Fall Safety

Restoration work at the U.S. Capitol dome has been a prominent feature of the Washington, D.C., skyline for more than a year now. Inside an impressive 288-foot vault wrapped by a web of scaffolding, the dome's workers safely climb in and out every day making repairs to cracks in the iconic structure. In the shadow of this historic project, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration joined Turner Construction in the Senate Park on May 6 for a fall safety stand-down event, part of the National Fall Safety Stand-Down taking place nationwide through May 15. Deputy Secretary of Labor Chris Lu delivered remarks alongside the company's representatives and safety experts. He reminded those responsible for the project's completion why fall prevention is so vital. "Your efforts will help preserve this national treasure and landmark of our democracy for many years to come. And as someone who worked in Congress for a dozen years, I feel a special connection to your work," said Lu. "This is a massive project that involves many challenges, including scaling great heights. But above all, we want to ensure that at the end of each day, every worker can go home safe." More than 300 construction workers die from falls or fall-related injuries each year, an average of about one worker per day.

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## News You Can Use

### The Heat (App) Is On!

Heat illness sickens thousands of workers every year, and severe cases can be fatal. To help keep outdoor workers cool, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration developed a free app to calculate worksite heat index and risk levels, and educate users about how to respond to a heat emergency. More than 187,000 people have downloaded the app since its 2011 launch. In the app's first big update on May 5, iPhone users discovered new features. With an attractive, easy-to-use interface, the new version is optimized for the latest iPhones. The app automatically provides the current conditions and maximum heat at your location and can accept manual input if users don't have cell service.

- [Get the App](#)
  - [Learn About Heat Illness](#)
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## Benefits of Safety Culture

Workplace injuries are costly for employers, workers and their families, Assistant Secretary of Labor for Occupational Safety and Health Dr. David Michaels reminded attendees at the Minnesota Safety and Health Conference in Minneapolis on May 5. He also discussed the importance of having a culture of workplace safety and how it prevents worker injuries and illnesses. Employers were encouraged to implement a safety and health management system. The system includes management leadership, worker participation, hazard identification and assessment, hazard prevention and control, education and training, and program evaluation and improvement.

- [Learn More About Injury Costs](#)
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## Pennsylvania Veterans Job Fair

More than two dozen employers with active job openings attended a veterans' job fair and apprenticeship information session on May 4, hoping to bring veterans into their workforce. Assistant Secretary of Labor for Veterans' Employment and Training Keith Kelly joined Rep. Mike Fitzpatrick of Pennsylvania at the American Job Center in Bristol, Pa., for the event. Among those present to recruit veterans were small businesses based in Bucks County, large businesses like Home Depot and Loews and the Philadelphia Police Department. "This was a great opportunity to work with our congressional partners to bring attention to the services available to both employers and veterans," noted Kelly. "We look forward to working with other members of the Congressional Veterans Job Caucus to promote these vital and effective services, and I hope veterans around the country will go to their local AJC to get started finding a career today." Staff from the Employment and Training Administration's Office of Apprenticeship assisted employers learning how to build apprenticeship programs and taught veterans how to apply for existing apprenticeship programs.

- [Find a Local American Job Center](#)
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## Not Defined by Disability

"My Disability Is One Part of Who I Am" is the theme of this year's National Disability Employment Awareness Month. The nationwide initiative annually raises awareness of employment issues faced by people with disabilities and celebrates their contributions to the workplace. While October is NDEAM, announcing the theme in May helps workplaces, individuals and communities begin planning activities. "This year's theme encapsulates the important message that people with disabilities are just that — people," said Jennifer Sheehy, acting assistant secretary of labor for disability employment policy.

- [Read the News Release](#)
  - [Learn More About NDEAM](#)
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## Of Note

### The 'Oscars' of Government Service

What do the Mine Safety and Health Administration mine rescue team, an Employee Benefits Security Administration investigator, and the department's operations "Mr. Fix It" have in common? They were all named as finalists in the prestigious Samuel J. Heymen Service to America Medals, more commonly known as the "Sammies." The award is presented each year by the Washington, D.C.-based nonprofit Partnership for Public Service to celebrate the accomplishments of a dynamic and innovative federal workforce that meets the needs of the American people. Thirty finalists were announced recently and invited to participate in events to highlight their service, including joining Katherine Archuleta, director of the Office of Personnel Management, on the field at Washington Nationals Park on May 4 as she threw out the first pitch. The winners of the 2015 award will be announced in October. Kevin Stricklin, MSHA administrator for coal mine safety and health, along with Virgil Brown, Jeffery Kravitz and John Urosek, are finalists in the Citizens Service category. Stricklin and his team have played pivotal roles in mine rescue and recovery efforts, crafting innovations that have saved countless lives. Anna Dozier, senior investigator at EBSA, is a finalist in the Homeland Security and Law Enforcement category. Dozier has spearheaded major investigations involving the mismanagement of retirement, health and welfare plans, and has protected and recovered millions of dollars for American workers. Edward Hugler, the department's deputy assistant secretary for operations, is a finalist in the Management Excellence category. Known for his skill in addressing management challenges, Hugler has helped oversee major departmental initiatives, including the recent transition of the financial management system.

- [Learn More About the Sammies and the Finalists](#)
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## DOL Working for You

### Missouri Manufacturer Learns It 'Pays to Be Safe'

Several years ago, Joyce Couch read about the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's On-Site Consultation Program, and saw an opportunity to help her co-workers at Husky, a Missouri company that manufactures gas nozzles and pump hardware. As a human resources manager for the Pacific-based company, Couch recognizes safety's importance in the workplace and using available resources to educate and train employees. With that in mind, she helped Husky pursue OSHA's Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program. SHARP is open to small businesses that are willing and able to meet requirements to ensure a safe workplace. Those that do are recognized for their exemplary safety and health management systems. Safety and health consultants visit often, giving safety talks and helping train employees on using new equipment. "Businesses sometimes get nervous when they hear the term 'OSHA,' but this is a true partnership with skilled professionals who can share safety and health information with our workers," Couch explained. "We are very excited about earning the SHARP designation. It is a sense of pride for our employees to know that they have an exceptional safety and health record. It also makes good business sense because our worker compensation premiums have decreased and those funds are reinvested into safety programs. It pays to be safe."

- [Learn About OSHA's Consultation Program](#)
  - [Read More About the SHARP Program](#)
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## DOL in Action

### \$7.5M to Help Kentucky Residents Hurt by Reduced Demand for Coal

In recent years, changes in how the U.S. sources its energy have reduced the demand for coal. As a result, mining communities have seen an increased number of layoffs by businesses that depend on the money spent by coal miners and their families. To help hard-hit coal-mining communities in eastern Kentucky, the department announced a \$7.5 million National Emergency Grant on May 7. Funds will provide job training and employment services to prepare affected workers for careers in the region's high-growth industries. Awarded to the Eastern Kentucky Concentrated Employment

## Older Women Mean Business

Approximately 80 people gathered at the National Press Club in Washington D.C. on May 6 for "Our Women Mean Business: Encore Careers After 40." Women's Bureau Director Latifa Lyles delivered remarks detailing the department's efforts to help meet the economic needs of women workers. "We must develop and deliver programs that work for women across their lifespans," she said. "As more and more women re-enter the workforce after taking time off for caregiving or embark on their second and third careers, their success is critical for today's working families."

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## Immigrant Working Women Heard

To hear and address issues faced by California's immigrant working women, Regional Administrator Kelly Jenkins-Pultz and Regional Secretary Representative Elmy Bermejo traveled from the Women's Bureau office in San Francisco to Fresno for a roundtable on May 4. They listened as 20 advocates, immigrant women workers and federal agencies representing rural communities discussed affordable child care, reliable transportation, job training opportunities and access to federal grants.

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## Women Building the Nation

The largest gathering of tradeswomen in the world — 1,200 from more than 25 states — convened at the "Women Building the Nation" Fifth National Conference in Los Angeles on May 2. Women's Bureau Director Latifa Lyles was invited to speak by its sponsor, the State Building and Construction Trades Council in Sacramento. In her remarks, she stressed the critical need women have for more opportunities in the trades. These opportunities provide a strategy to lift women out of poverty and help close the gender wage gap, noted Lyles, who also led a roundtable discussion for apprentices, journeyman, elected union leaders and apprenticeship coordinators to discuss the challenges and rewards of good jobs and sustainable careers.

- [Read About ApprenticeshipUSA](#)

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## Pacific Coast Safety Fest

At the Pacific Coast Safety Fest in San Diego, Occupational Safety and Health Administration's acting regional administrator Barbara Goto told attendees, "There are millions of workplaces in America and nobody benefits if workers are silent." Goto traveled from her San Francisco office for the May 6 event co-hosted by OSHA. "For safety and health, we need all workers to be our eyes and ears. Workplace safety and health is a win-win: for workers and businesses." The free event featured OSHA classes and seminars, in partnership with the OSHA Training Institute Education Centers at the University of California, San Diego; Chabot-Las Positas Community College; California State University, Dominguez Hills; and Arizona State University.

Program, Inc., the region's workforce development organization, the grant will serve approximately 685 individuals. "For so many places in Kentucky, coal mining hasn't just been the economic lifeblood, but also the fabric that defines and unites the community," said Secretary Perez. "The grants we're awarding today will help workers affected by these changes identify new opportunities, land new jobs and build a brighter future."

- [Read the News Release](#)

## Personal Safety Gear May Have Prevented Roofer's Death

A 30-year-old roofer's life was tragically cut short in November 2014 after a fall caused severe head trauma. The man was found unresponsive below a 32-foot extension ladder he used to renovate a roof at a two-story building at Missouri's Whiteman Air Force Base. Occupational Safety and Health Administration investigators found the victim's employer, Midwest Roofing, did not provide required fall prevention equipment. OSHA inspectors cited the company for six serious safety violations, and Infinite Energy Construction, the general contractor, for four serious safety violations related to OSHA fall standards. "Companies that put their workers dangerously high above the ground are responsible for protecting them," said Barbara Theriot, OSHA's area director in Kansas City, Mo.

- [Read the News Release](#)

## Partnering with Rhode Island to Protect Misclassified Workers

The illegal misclassification of workers as something other than employees, like independent contractors, harms workers by denying them critical protections and puts law abiding businesses at a competitive disadvantage. On May 7, officials from the department and the Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training entered into a partnership to combat this harmful practice. Under the agreement, both agencies will share information and coordinate law enforcement. To date, 21 states have entered into similar agreements.

- [Read the News Brief](#)

- [Learn About the Misclassification Initiative](#)

## Steel Manufacturer Fined \$45,000 for Hazardous Conditions

Occupational Safety and Health Administration inspectors found an upstate New York steel and pipe manufacturer allowed several hazardous conditions in Utica similar to those cited during previous inspections of Pacemaker Steel facilities in Binghamton and Manchester. In 2010 and 2014, OSHA discovered laceration and amputation hazards from poorly guarded saw blades, damaged and unsecured storage racks that drop materials on employees, and improperly loaded forklift attachments. They also found an exit door blocked that could have slowed employees from exiting in an emergency; a stairway without a safety railing; and wet shop floors where employees could slip. As a result, Pacemaker Steel was cited for seven violations of safety standards and faces \$45,500 in fines.

- [Read the News Brief](#)

## Safety Hazards Persists for Workers at a Plastics Manufacturer

A Mississippi plastics manufacturer exposed workers to hazardous conditions, including not developing procedures to avoid machine start-up during maintenance. Occupational Safety and Health Administration investigators also found that Suburban Plastics of Grenada did not protect workers from contact with live electrical parts nor ensure electrical conductors were properly covered. Proposed penalties total \$50,000.

- [Read the News Brief](#)

## \$3.2 Million Awarded to Laid Off Workers in Massachusetts

Nearly 400 laid-off Massachusetts workers will benefit from a \$3.2 million National Emergency Grant awarded on May 6. They will receive reemployment and training services after layoffs by six companies between July 2013 and August 2014 in the Metro South/West Workforce Investment Area of Massachusetts. Services will help prepare workers for jobs in advanced manufacturing, clean energy, green industries, health care and information technologies.

- [Read the News Brief](#)

## Suit Alleges Retirement Funds Used Illegally

The department has filed a suit alleging defunct, Oregon-based Park Place Wood Products Inc. and its owner, Charles W. Buller, violated the Employee Retirement Income Security Act. The action claims they failed to remit to the company's retirement plan at least \$53,611 in employee contributions and

## Weekly UI Claims

Seasonally adjusted initial Unemployment Insurance claims rose to 265,000 for the week ended May 2, the department reported. The advance figure was up 3,000 from the previous week's unrevised level. The four-week moving average was 279,500, down 4,250 from the previous week's unrevised average.

- [Read the News Release](#)

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## Upcoming Deadlines & Events

### Open Funding Opportunities

#### EBSA — Health Benefits Laws Compliance Assistance Seminar

- [May 12 — Indianapolis, IN](#)
- [May 13 — Indianapolis, IN](#)

#### EBSA — Getting It Right: Know Your Fiduciary Responsibilities

- [May 19 — Philadelphia, PA](#)

#### EBSA — Mental Health Parity Webcast: Important Information About Your Health Coverage

- [May 28 — Washington, DC](#)

#### OFCCP — An OFCCP Audit Through the Eyes of An Investigator

- [May 14 — Houston, TX](#)

#### OFCCP — Compliance Assistance Webinar: New Section 503 and VEVRAA Requirements

- [May 14 — Anchorage, AK](#)

#### OFCCP — Compliance Assistance Webinar: Theodore Levin U.S. Courthouse Alteration Project

- [May 13 — Washington, DC](#)

#### OFCCP — Construction 16 EEO & Affirmative Action Specifications

- [May 13 — Arlington, VA](#)

#### OFCCP — Filing an Employment Discrimination Complaint

- [May 28 — Chicago, IL](#)

#### OFCCP — New VEVRAA and Section 503 Regulations Affecting Veterans & Disabled Persons

- [May 21 — Dallas, TX](#)

#### OFCCP — Scheduling Letter Updates

- [May 13 — New Orleans, LA](#)

#### OLMS — Compliance Assistance Seminar

- [May 19 — Appleton, WI](#)
- [May 21 — Maple Grove, MN](#)

#### OSHA — Pacific Coast Safety Fest

- [May 8 — San Diego, CA](#)

#### WHD — Educational workshop for Farm Labor Contractors

- [May 27 — Goldsboro, NC](#)

#### WHD — Executive Order 13658:

loan repayments that were withheld from employee salaries. The suit also alleges that Buller withdrew \$131,550 from the plan. The funds were then deposited in his personal and company bank accounts, and used for non-plan purposes.

- [Read the News Brief](#)

#### Unsafe Scaffolding at Georgia Eatery Witnessed by Inspectors

Occupational Safety and Health Administration inspectors in Georgia saw employees working on unsafe scaffolding at a Bojangles' restaurant and began an inspection. Part of the agency's Regional Emphasis Program for Falls in Construction, the October 2014 inspection in Lilburn resulted in citations for contractors Greenway Construction Inc., W.H. Bass Inc., Juan Diaz, MMC Construction LLC and TWS Floor Covering LLC for 26 violations. Inspectors found the scaffolding was not fully planked; workers were allowed to climb the scaffolding frame without a ladder; and workers below were exposed to falling debris. The contractors face \$125,030 in penalties, and OSHA has proposed placing Greenway Construction in its Severe Violator Enforcement Program.

- [Read the News Release](#)

#### AFGE Union in Pittsburgh to Hold New Officer Election

The American Federation of Government Employees Local 2028 in Pittsburgh will conduct a new election for certain officer and delegate positions under the supervision of the Office of Labor-Management Standards. The action follows an OLMS investigation of the union's December 2014 election and a January 2015 runoff that found members were denied the right to vote when the local failed to mail ballots to eligible members. The union also failed to re-mail ballot packages that had been returned for having bad addresses, even after forwarding addresses for the members were provided. The new election will be held in July.

#### Additional Funds Awarded for Storm Recovery Work in Colorado

The state of Colorado has been awarded a \$637,464 incremental National Emergency Grant on May 5 to continue recovery efforts after severe storms struck three counties in late 2013. The storm triggered flooding, landslides and mudslides across a 1,918-square-mile area. The funds will extend 230 temporary clean-up and rebuilding jobs. The grant has a full value of \$4,609,937.

- [Read the News Brief](#)

#### Alabama Scrap Plant Fails to Protect Workers Exposed to Lead

An Alabama scrap metal processor has been found in violation of several safety standards related to lead exposure. In November 2014, Occupational Safety and Health Administration inspectors found Sabel Steel Service Inc. in Montgomery did not complete initial lead sampling. The company also did not provide proper clothing to workers exposed to lead or a room where they could change their clothes safely. Sabel also failed to train workers who were exposed to lead levels above the permissible exposure limit. OSHA initiated the inspection as part of the agency's Regional Emphasis Program on Lead and has proposed \$51,476 in penalties.

- [Read the News Brief](#)

#### Georgia Contractor Knowingly Puts Trench Workers at Risk

A Statesboro, Ga.-based contractor, which does business as DHC Contracting, was cited by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration following an October 2014 inspection at its jobsite in Guyton. OSHA issued the company willful and serious citations for workplace safety hazards, which included exposing workers to cave-in hazards while working in an unprotected trench; not providing a safe means to enter and exit the trench; and not ensuring workers inside the trench wore hard hats. The agency initiated the inspection as part of its National Emphasis Program on Trenching and Excavation. Proposed penalties total \$57,900.

- [Read the News Brief](#)

#### Arc Flash Injures Worker at Republic Steel Plant in New York

An electric technician at the Republic Steel Corp. manufacturing plant in Blasdell, N.Y., was removing wiring from a fan motor in an overhead crane when an ungrounded electrical conductor touched a grounded surface and caused an arc flash. The technician sustained third-degree burns on her hand and first-degree burns on her face. Following an investigation by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's Buffalo office, OSHA determined that Republic Steel failed to provide and ensure the use of

## Establishing a Minimum Wage for Federal Contractors

- [May 14 — Webinar](#)

## WHD — The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) Enforcement in the Construction Industry

- [May 28 — Houston, TX](#)

## WHD — What to expect during a WH investigation (in Spanish)

- [May 26 — Houston, TX](#)

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effective face and hand protection for its employees. Since Republic Steel was cited in early 2014 for similar hazards at its Lorain, Ohio, facility, OSHA cited two repeat violations — with proposed penalties of \$70,000 each — for these latest hazards.

- [Read the News Release](#)

## Bay Area Social Workers Recoup \$1.7 Million in Overtime

More than 100 social workers will share \$1.7 million in overtime owed to them by the San Mateo County Human Services Agency, thanks to Wage and Hour Division investigators who uncovered widespread violations. The agency determined that the county employees were paid overtime when they met with clients, but were not compensated appropriately when they worked more than 40 hours in a workweek to complete reports and other case-related paperwork. "These hardworking men and women, who spend long hours helping some of our most vulnerable and in-need members of society, must get paid for all the hours they work," said Susana Blanco, the division's district director in San Francisco.

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