



News Release

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JULIE, State of Illinois renew U.S. Labor Department OSHA alliance *Agreement highlights cooperative efforts to promote trenching safety*

PEORIA, Ill. -- Workers in Illinois will continue to benefit from the renewal of an alliance scheduled for signing on Jan. 6, 2009, between JULIE Inc. (Joint Utility Locating Information for Excavators), the State of Illinois Onsite Safety and Health Consultation Program and the U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

The alliance is designed to combine resources to prevent hazards faced by workers involved in trenching and excavation operations in the state of Illinois. The groups will sign the formal alliance at the JULIE Inc. office located at 3275 Executive Drive in Joliet, Ill.

"Excavation hazards are still one of OSHA's national emphasis programs and excavations that are entered without proper precautions present a significant risk for workers," said OSHA Area Director for Peoria Nick Walters. "We believe that this alliance will give employers and employees throughout the state a greater opportunity to understand the hazards associated with excavations and the controls that need to be used to prevent serious injuries."

The alliance requires each organization to contribute to the development of training sessions and materials on safe excavation activities. The groups will share resources and information to raise awareness and commitment to workplace safety and health. Information will be shared through participation in a variety of forums throughout Illinois.

OSHA health and safety alliances are part of U.S. Labor Secretary Elaine L. Chao's ongoing efforts to improve the health and safety of employees through cooperative partnerships with trade associations, labor organizations, employers and government agencies. OSHA currently has more than 470 alliances throughout the nation with organizations committed to fostering safety and health in the workplace.

Under the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, employers are responsible for providing a safe and healthy workplace for their employees. OSHA's role is to promote the safety and health of America's working men and women by setting and enforcing standards; providing training, outreach and education; establishing partnerships; and encouraging continual process improvement in workplace safety and health. For more information, visit www.osha.gov.

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