Women in Construction: Safe, Healthy, and Equitable Work Sites

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Women in Construction:
Safe, Healthy, and Equitable Work Sites

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Industry experience, business membership diversity, and an enhanced ability to make an impact in the industry makes NAWIC Baltimore #135 one of the most beneficial professional, construction trade and business organizations in the Baltimore area. Membership includes every category of professionals who are connected to the construction/design/engineering professions and related business and career paths there-in. From front office and management to back office and boots on the ground personnel, NAWIC is reflective of all the hands that touch construction.

Join NAWIC and paint the town RED. Relevant – Engaged – Dynamic

www.nawicbaltimore.org
www.nawic.org
WIC Week 2018

Friday, March 9

WEAR RED: Show your support for and raise awareness of women in construction by either wearing a NAWIC shirt or a red shirt. Ask others in your company to join you! Take pictures, post to social media with the hashtag #NAWICbaltimore.

www.nawicbaltimore.org

www.nawic.org
In 2018, NAWIC is partnering in support of OSHA's Safe + Sound Campaign. The Campaign is an initiative that aims to encourage every workplace in the United States to have a safety and health program that includes management leadership, worker participation, and a systematic approach to finding and fixing hazards.

Throughout the year, by linking to the website our membership will have access to free live webinars, educational content, and local events that can help support the adoption of safety and health programs. We'll be sharing information on these opportunities as they become available. Additionally, we encourage you to show your commitment to safety by hosting events and activities that can help energize or initiate a safety and health program during the second annual Safe + Sound Week on August 13-19, 2018.

OSHA and NAWIC are committed to providing NAWIC members and others with information, guidance, and access to training resources that will help them protect the health and safety of workers, and understand the rights of workers and the responsibilities of employers under the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSH Act). The goals of the Alliance include:

**Raising Awareness of OSHA's Rulemaking and Enforcement Initiatives**
- To share information on OSHA's National Emphasis Programs, Regulatory Agenda, and opportunities to participate in the rulemaking process.
- To share information on occupational safety and health laws, standards, and guidance resources, including the rights and responsibilities of workers and employers.
- To convene or participate in forums, roundtable discussions, or stakeholder meetings on construction to help forge innovative solutions in the workplace or to provide input on safety and health issues.

**Outreach and Communication**
- To share information on the recognition and prevention of workplace hazards (e.g., via print and electronic media, electronic assistance tools, and OSHA and NAWIC websites) with employers and workers in the construction industry.
- To speak, exhibit, or appear at OSHA or NAWIC conferences, local meetings, or other events.
- To encourage NAWIC chapters to build relationships with federal OSHA Regional and Area Offices, as well as State Plans and On-Site Consultation Projects, as appropriate, to address construction health and safety issues.
Institute for Women’s Policy Research

- Civic and Political Participation
- Employment, Education, and Economic Change
- Work and Family
- Poverty, Welfare, and Income Security
- Health and Safety

IWPR conducts rigorous research and disseminates its findings to address the needs of women, promote public dialog, and strengthen families, communities, and societies.

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www.iwpr.org
www.womenandgoodjobs.org
Women in Construction: Why Diversity Matters

- Women earned just 81 cents per dollar earned by a man (weekly full-time) in 2017.
- Women typically have to get more qualifications and training than men to earn the same.
- Construction jobs offer family sustaining wages without the need for a 4-year degree through apprenticeships, without college debt.
- Construction has lower than average wage gap
  - Earnings ratio for women and men working a full-time week in 2017 in construction trades: 100.2%
  - Earnings ratio for construction managers: 86.4%

Progress on closing the gender wage gap has stalled— if we continue at same rate as since 1960, it won’t close until 2059!

Ariane Hegewisch  hegewisch@iwpr.org
Many women work in construction:

- 888,000 women work in the construction industry across all jobs
- 243,000 women work in construction trade occupations
- 80,000 women work as construction managers
- 66,000 women work as construction inspectors

Women are only a small minority of all construction workers:

- 13.60% of all construction workers are women
- 7.40% of construction managers are women
- 3.10% of construction trades workers are women

Ariane Hegewisch  hegewisch@iwpr.org

“If you mean another electrician, there never is another woman. I am joined by other women when the cleaning brigades arrive.”
Women in Construction: Why Diversity Matters

“You could deal with the dangerous work if the men treated you right, or you could handle the men if the work wasn't so dangerous. It's the combination that's so hard.”

(Breaking New Ground, Chicago Women in Trades 1992)

HASWIC Report of the U. S. Department of Labor OSHA Advisory Committee on Construction Safety and Health (ACCSH) 1999

- In addition to the primary safety and health hazards faced by all construction workers, women face specific health issues.
- Safety and health problems in construction create barriers to women entering and remaining in this field.
- In turn, the small numbers of women workers on construction worksites foster an environment in which these safety and health problems arise or continue.

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Good practice examples on how to increases women’s recruitment and retention from National Center for Women’s Equity in Apprenticeship and Employment

http://womensequitycenter.org/best-practices/
SANITARY FACILITIES

- Lack of access/privacy/time
- Lack of hygienic conditions
- Inability to use can lead to UTI’s, heat stroke,

- If a new employee complained about the lack of adequate restroom facilities for women, "You'd see yourself bye-bye."
- “When I complained that there was no toilet they transferred me to another jobsite. They took me away from a really good partner and good overtime.”
PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

- Equipment on a worksite is often not properly designed to fit women’s body sizes
- “One size fits all” means all men’s sizes; women’s sizes are not small men’s sizes
- Poor fit may mean no fit and unworn
- Poor fit or retrofit compromises protection
- Equipment that does not fit is a safety hazard to others
- Difficulty in doing certain tasks
- Working less efficiently and slower
ERGONOMIC HAZARDS: A GENDERED VIEW

Gender Differences:

- Female body size and build require distinct techniques for lifting and handling materials and tools
- Tools and work stations may not be designed for women’s frames
- The grips of tools are typically too thick. Pliers require a wide grasp which puts inappropriate pressure on the palm
- Menstrual cycles influence women’s bodies.
- Broad hips mean knees are under slightly more stress

Leads to:

- Heavy, frequent, or awkward lifting
- Using excessive force, overexertion
- Using wrong tools for the job or using tools improperly
- Awkward grips and postures
- the loss of functional efficiency
Safer & Healthier Workplace: Things You Can Do

- Provide (or offer information on where to find) gender specific PPE and ergonomically designed tools
- Provide gender specific sanitary facilities – CA Law requires
- Provide clean sanitary facilities and hand-washing on site
- Seek modification to equipment and tools to improve ergonomic functioning
“Women in the construction trade...can't go out there whining...or we can't go out there and complain. We just have to bite our lip and deal with it if we want to keep our job and if we want to get along with fellow workers”.

- Concern with “fitting into” macho culture may preclude women from using PPE
- Women may receive less training to do their job correctly due to protectiveness, isolation or hostility
- Lack of job security, or desire for inclusion in male camaraderie limits hazard reporting or requesting safety equipment or practices
- Limited skill training or menial assignments can impede safe working practices
- Workplace cultural (macho/production demand) disdains and discourages attention to safety and H&S training
SAFER, HEALTHIER WORKPLACE FOR ALL

Everyone benefits when safety and health issues for women are addressed

All workers benefit from:
- Better sanitary facilities
- More fit-testing to ensure adequate PPE
- More knowledge about chemical and material health hazards
- Less adherence to the unsafe practices supported by a “macho” culture
- Less fear of reprisal for asking for health and safety equipment and practices
- More respectful and productive workplace
Creating Respectful Workplaces

Emerging Best Practices and Pilot Projects
Oregon Tradeswomen is dedicated to promoting success for women in the trades through education, leadership, and mentorship. Founded in 1989 as a small support group led by four tradeswomen (an elevator constructor, two carpenters and an operating engineer), they reorganized as Oregon Tradeswomen, a 501 (c)(3) non-profit, in 1999. Oregon Tradeswomen was founded on the principles that women deserve and can attain economic self-sufficiency through pursuing careers in the building, mechanical, electrical, and utility trades while helping and encouraging the trades industry build up a diverse workforce.
What is at Stake?

• Worker Turnover
• Lost Time Accidents
• Injury-related health care costs
• Lawsuits

FINANCIAL BOTTOM LINE

* OSHA estimates businesses lose $3-5 billion annually to workplace violence
Still Building a More Diverse Workforce
Maura Kelly - Portland State University
Oregon Heavy Highway Trades - Funded by BOLI/ODOT

Apprenticeship Rule Update – 29 CFR 30
U.S. Department of Labor – Office of Apprenticeship

2016 Harassment Report
Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

Workplace Bullying & Harassment Toolkit
Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
Promising Practices & Pilots

Starting Conversation

• Sista in the Brotherhood

• Builders, Not Bullies
Promising Practices & Pilots

Culture Change

• Bystander Intervention

• Respectful Workplaces
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Safer, Healthier Workplace for All

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Questions?
Resources for Women in Construction: Safe, Healthy, and Equitable Work Sites


- **Good practice resources**: National Center for Women’s Equity in Apprenticeship and Employment [http://womensequitycenter.org/](http://womensequitycenter.org/)

- **2016 U.S. EEOC Workplace Harassment Report**: with many resources and check list for employers, as well as chart showing harassment risk factors [https://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/task_force/harassment/report.cfm](https://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/task_force/harassment/report.cfm)


Resources cont.

• Still Building a More Diverse Workforce in the Highway Trades: 2016 Evaluation of the ODOT/BOLI Highway Construction Workforce Development Program
  (Lindsey Wilkinson and Maura Kelly, Department of Sociology Portland State University)

• Sista in the Brotherhood (video and discussion guide)
  http://www.sistainthebrotherhood.com/

• Builders, Not Bullies (video and discussion guide)

• Respectful Workplaces – Bystander Intervention Pilot
  https://alteristic.org/casestudy/oregon-tradeswomen/