



Labor Division

February 2024 Newsletter

In a few short weeks the Spring 2024 Labor Division meetings will commence. Working with NSC staff, the newly minted division executive has set forth an excellent agenda. The spring meetings this year are more in the last days of winter rather than spring, but to serve the best interests of all concerned the spring meetings take place immediately following the IBEW Safety Caucus. The Safety Caucus runs from March 4th to March 6th while the Labor Division meetings run from March 7th to March 9th. The meetings are being held at the Omni Providence Hotel in Providence Rhode Island.

Registration Information:

[2024 NSC Labor Division Spring Meeting - Choose Registration \(eventscloud.com\)](https://www.eventscloud.com)

Labor Division meetings are always a treasure trove of safety and health information. There are many sources of this information at division meetings, and they can be found in educational sessions, committee meetings, keynote speakers and in networking with peers and experts from across the nation and Canada.

If you are an experienced Labor Division member, we need you to be present at the upcoming meetings and division meetings going forward to help spread the word and to guide the newcomers. If you are thinking about attending a division meeting or that you and/or your organization need to expand the knowledge of safety and health available, then the Labor Division and the division meetings are the place for you and your colleagues.

Two of the most touching moments at any Labor Division meeting take place when the assembled take time to remember those having lost their lives, made ill or injured because of their work and when time is set aside to record in the permanent record of the division the names of those lost since our last meeting. Those being recorded in this manner are not only those lost directly due to the workplace, but this record is a place to enshrine and memorialize departed workplace friends, colleagues and friends and colleagues of the Labor Division.

The Labor Division always takes time to celebrate those making significant contributions to safety and health. In the Labor Division there is no division award more prestigious than the Soldier of Safety and while we celebrate the recipients it is never far from our hearts and minds that we remember one such recipient. From IBEW Local 103, Chuck Monahan recently passed away and the world of safety and health is vastly poorer for his loss. However, his fifty plus years of activism resulted in lives saved,

injuries prevented, and occupational illness avoided in numbers that are so significant that they are but impossible to count.

Slightly early, but with March being the date of the next division meetings, we can never forget that before we reach the end of April we will come to Workers' Memorial Day, or as the day is known the world over, the Day of Mourning, where time will be taken to remember all workers killed, injured, or made ill from their work or workplace.

As we approach the meetings in March, and at all times for that matter, please consider some of the items causing concern in workplaces. Contrary to many of the concerns about the adverse health effects of heat over the last year or so, consideration of work in extreme cold must be part of the conversation as we continue through the winter and early spring months. Not only must there be a conscientious effort to protect against hypothermia and frostbite, but ensuring proper hydration even in the coldest environments needs to be at the top of the list in preparation for work in cold environments.

With cold also comes the dangers of winter driving. This is not only a personal concern for items such as daily commutes and other personal and family activities, but it is an occupational safety and health concern. As far as driving and working on or near roadways for a living, there are many such examples and winter will likely create significant safety and health concerns for all of them. If we just consider roadworks and snow plowing the risk of injury and death are very high. In snow plowing extended sitting will result in muscular skeletal disorders while work near or on roadways with decreased visibility and traction will result in significantly increased possibility of being hit and severely injured or killed.

In the aftermath of the recent holiday period and the darkest days of the year, let us all be aware that some of our colleagues will be suffering mentally and emotionally while others may find themselves drawn to lifestyle choices that may involve drugs and/or alcohol. The Labor Division has always put mental health and psychosocial hazards very high on the priority list and as we work towards March, please be sensitive to your colleagues, friends, and loved ones as they may be struggling.

Lastly, as the new Chairperson of the Labor Division, I ask each of you to seriously consider attending in March and if possible, bring along at least one other person. Together we can grow the Division and make workplace safety a priority for all workers.

In Solidarity

Bob Stone, National Safety Council, Labor Division Chairperson

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