



# MEDIA RELEASE

Jobs are Alaska's Future



ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR  
& WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
Commissioner Click Bishop

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## For Immediate Release

For More Information Contact: Alaska Occupational Safety and Health office (907) 269-4940

## Workers' Memorial Day

JUNEAU – Saturday, April 28, 2007 is Workers' Memorial Day across the nation. This date marks the anniversary of the federal Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 and is set aside each year to remember the workers who died on the job.

Labor Commissioner, Click Bishop, summed up Workers' Memorial Day like this, "By remembering the workers who passed away we show respect that can help bring some meaning to these tragic events. By applying safe practices on the job, we can prevent future tragedies."

The number and rate of workplace fatalities has dropped significantly over the past fifteen years in Alaska. However, the state continues to have one of the highest workplace fatality rates in the nation. As in the rest of the nation, most of Alaska's workplace fatalities result from transportation related incidents. Alaska's relatively small population combined with extreme conditions for air, highway and marine transportation work tend to have a strong negative effect on Alaska's fatality rate. The construction industry has also experienced a significant number of fatalities in Alaska.

Substance abuse can have serious impacts on workplace safety. In the past year, toxicology reports associated with a significant percentage of the workplace fatalities investigated by Alaska Occupational Safety and Health reflected marijuana in the victim's system. Substance abuse awareness and testing programs may help prevent workplace accidents and promote a healthier workforce.

For more information on workplace fatalities in Alaska, contact the Alaska Occupational Safety and Health office at (907) 269-4940 or visit the following web sites:

Research and Analysis Statistics: <http://almis.labor.state.ak.us/?PAGEID=67&subid=215>

AKOSH Fatality Information: <http://www.labor.state.ak.us/lss/forms/AKOSH-FATALGRAM-LOG.pdf>