

**North Carolina**

**State OSHA Annual Report (SOAR)**

**Fiscal Year 2024**



**December 13, 2024**

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## PART I - STRATEGIC PLAN OVERVIEW

### Program Outcome Goals

On October 1, 2023, North Carolina began its fifth five-year planning cycle as documented in the Strategic Plan (SP). The five-year SP ending on September 30, 2028, includes two primary goals:

- Reduce the rate of workplace fatalities by 2%
- Reduce the rate of workplace injuries and illnesses by 5%

### Outcome Goals Results

	Baseline	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Reduction
Fatality Rate	.00141	.00104	TBD				
Injury & Illness Rate	2.2	1.2	TBD				

### Areas of Emphasis Outcome Goals

- Reduce the construction industry fatality rate by 2% by the end of FY 2028
- Reduce the fatality rate in logging and arboriculture by 2% by the end of FY 2028
- Reduce the days away, restricted, or transferred (DART) rate for grocery and related product wholesalers: warehousing and storage by 5% by the end of FY 2028
- Reduce the DART rate in long term care by 5% by the end of FY 2028
- Support the overall outcome goal of reducing workplace injury and illness rate by 5% by the end of FY 2028 by addressing specific health hazards in the workplace
- Reduce the DART rate in food manufacturing by 2% by the end of FY 2028
- Reduce the number of Amputations in support of the overall outcome goals of reducing the rate of workplace injuries and illnesses by 5% by the end of FY 2028

### Areas of Emphasis Activity Goals

- Conduct inspections, consultative surveys and train employers and employees as documented for each area of emphasis

### State Demographic Profile

Sector	Establishments	Employees
Total Private Industry	371,215	4,189,761
Total Public Sector	6,676	640,614

\* Data only available through the 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter of FY 2024.

## **Goal Setting Process**

- Evaluate injury, illness, and fatality data
- Secure input from stakeholders
- Establish five-year outcome goals
- Select areas of emphasis and strategies to impact achievement of outcome goals
- As described in Administrative Procedure Notice (APN) 19, Strategic Management Plan Committee Activity, create a committee of division employees in each area of emphasis to manage the strategic planning process
- Determine level of activity for each emphasis area
- Share progress on achieving goals with staff on a monthly basis
- Alter strategies, if outcome goals are not being reached
- Evaluate the process

## **Areas of Emphasis**

North Carolina's strategy for reducing injury, illness, and fatality rates is based on addressing specific areas that have the greatest impact on the overall rates. The areas of emphasis in the current Strategic Plan include:

- Construction
- Logging and Arboriculture
- Grocery and Related Product Wholesalers
- Long Term Care
- Exposures for Health Hazards (lead, beryllium, isocyanates, silica, hexavalent chromium)
- Food Manufacturing
- Amputations

## **Strategic Activity to Support Outcome Goals**

- Improve safety and health programs through compliance, consultation, and training
- Expand safety and health recognition programs
- Develop construction partnerships at high profile construction sites
- Establish alliances in the areas of emphasis
- Implement Special Emphasis Programs (SEPs) for selected industries with specific intervention guidelines and activity goals
- Track activity and outcome goals monthly and share status with staff
- Conduct quarterly meetings for each area of emphasis committee

## **Factors Affecting Achievement of Outcome Goals and Strategic Activity Goals**

- Insufficient federal funding requiring the elimination or freezing of positions
- Number of trained division personnel released to provide division intervention
- Need to maintain vacant positions in response to budget uncertainty

- Turnover rate and the loss of experienced compliance safety and health officers (CSHOs)
- Strategies employed within each area of emphasis
- Resources committed to the areas of emphasis

**Program Statistics**

<b>Fatality Totals</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2026</b>	<b>2027</b>	<b>2028</b>
<b>Total</b>	71	48				
Construction	24	15				
Manufacturing	15	6				
Public Sector	3	5				
Logging/Arboriculture	2	4				
Hispanic	20	12				
Overall Rate	.00140	TBD				

<b>Injury and Illness Rates</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2026</b>	<b>2027</b>	<b>2028</b>
TRC (All)	2.2	TBD				
DART(All)	1.2	TBD				
Public Sector TRC	3.3	TBD				
Public Sector DART	1.6	TBD				

<b>Intervention Statistics</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2026</b>	<b>2027</b>	<b>2028</b>
Inspections	1,675				
Inspection Goals	1,700				
Consultation Visits	1,475				
Consultation Goals	1,355				
Trained	10,126				
Training Goals	5,350				

<b>Compliance Activity</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2026</b>	<b>2027</b>	<b>2028</b>
Serious Violations	1,823				
Willful Violations	6				
Average Serious Penalty	\$3,463				
Follow-ups	49				

**PART II - REVIEW OF SPECIFIC OUTCOME GOALS AND ACTIVITIES IN AREAS OF EMPHASIS**

**1.1 Reduce Construction Industry Fatality Rate Statewide by 2% by the end of FY 2028**

Significant safety and health strides have been made, reducing the fatality rate in the construction industry. During the last strategic planning cycle, the construction fatality rate increased. The construction industry continues to have a high number of workplace accidents compared to other industries, and this can have a significant impact on the state’s overall outcome goals of reducing injury, illness and fatality rates.

**Strategies for Achieving Specific Outcome Goal**

- Conduct Occupational Safety and Health Division (OSH) compliance, consultation, and training interventions and outreach
- Utilize inspection guidelines established for the construction industry
- Maintain strong working relationships with construction industry groups through partnerships, alliances and other outreach efforts
- Identify high fatality, high activity counties for special emphasis on an annual basis
- Re-inspect those employers with workplace fatalities
- Use informal settlement agreements to require employers to attend construction training
- Provide Hispanic outreach personnel to conduct construction training in Spanish
- Establish partnership agreements at high visibility construction sites
- Develop Spanish language publications and training materials specific to construction
- Distribute outreach letters and training materials for companies cited for five or more serious violations
- Promote recognition programs such as Building Sub-Contractor Star and SHARP
- Conduct consultative blitzes in high fatality and activity counties
- Inspect all cranes operating on construction sites
- Analyze statistical data to confirm validity of inspection targeting process
- Develop materials and training presentations specific to the construction industry

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Baseline</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2026</b>	<b>2027</b>	<b>2028</b>
Fatalities	73	15				
Rate	.00101	.00056				
Hispanic	N/A	8				

<b>Construction</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2026</b>	<b>2027</b>	<b>2028</b>	<b>Total</b>
Inspections	858					858
Goals	800					800
Consultation	487					487
Goals	300					300
Trained	1,391					1,391
Goals	1,000					1,000

## 1.2 Decrease Fatality Rate in Logging and Arboriculture by 2% by the End of FY 2028

The State has had success in reducing the number of fatalities in logging and arboriculture. The SEP for logging was initiated in FY 1994. This was in response to 13 logging fatalities in FY 1993. Experience has shown that a reduction in OSH activity can translate into an increase in the number of injuries and fatalities in this industry. For this reason, and the industry’s fatality history, logging Northern American Industry Classification System (NAICS 11331) and arboriculture (NAICS 56173) remain in the Strategic Plan.

### Strategies for Achieving Specific Outcome Goal

- Place increased emphasis on tracking specific injuries and fatalities on a monthly basis. If there is an increase in injuries and fatalities, additional resources could be allocated including inspection and focused training events
- Increase employer and employee awareness of regulatory requirements and safety and health work practices
- Change employer and employee behavior to improve job safety and health through education, consultation, and compliance interventions
- Establish and maintain strong working relationships with industries, associations, groups, and key individuals through alliances and other outreach efforts
- Continue use of meaningful safety and health programs with site specific safety training such as the Pro Logger training
- Develop materials and training presentations specific to the industry
- Focus training events and outreach to specific problem areas such as tree felling
- Evaluate SEP strategies to maintain effectiveness
- Utilize guidance documents that address workplace hazards that are common to the industry

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Baseline</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2026</b>	<b>2027</b>	<b>2028</b>
Fatalities	5	4				
Rate	.025	.0828				

<b>Logging</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2026</b>	<b>2027</b>	<b>2028</b>	<b>Total</b>
Inspections	13					13
Goals	24					24
Consultation	16					16
Goals	15					15
Trained	623					623
Goals	150					150

**2.1 Reduce the DART Rate in Grocery and Related Product Merchant Wholesalers (NAICS 4244 and NAICS 493) by 5% by the end of FY 2028**

The State’s strategic planning process includes statistical analysis to determine which industry groups have high injury and illness rates that could affect the state’s goal of reducing the overall injury and illness rate. The baseline rate for grocery and related product wholesalers is 3.4 which was more than twice the overall DART rate of 1.3. For this reason, this industry remains an area of emphasis in the current SP. Operational Procedure Notice (OPN) 145 was updated to provide guidance in identifying hazards and completing inspections in the grocery industry. The most recent industry DART rate is less than the baseline.

**Strategies for Achieving Specific Outcome Goal**

- Provide OSH compliance, consultation and training interventions
- Determine activity levels for OSH intervention
- Determine need for a grocery hazard alert and other industry specific training materials
- Evaluate inspection data to determine if there are any industry trends that should be addressed
- Advance alliances with industry trade groups
- Expand recognition programs such as Carolina Star and SHARP programs
- Evaluate employer’s safety and health program during intervention and recommend improvements

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Baseline</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2026</b>	<b>2027</b>
DART (NAICS 4244)	5.4	4.1				
DART (NAICS 493)	5.4	3.7				

<b>Grocery</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2026</b>	<b>2027</b>	<b>2028</b>	<b>Total</b>
Inspections	47					47
Goals	24					24
Consultation	45					45
Goals	3					3
Trained	401					401
Goals	40					40

**2.2 Reduce the DART Rate in Long-Term Care (LTC) by 5% by the end of FY 2028**

While progress has been made in this industry group during previous planning cycles, the baseline rate of 4.4 was still more than twice the overall DART rate. For this reason, the LTC (NAICS 623) emphasis area has been carried over from the previous strategic plan. The most recent DART rate is below the baseline.



### Strategies for Achieving Specific Outcome Goal

- Conduct OSH compliance, consultation, and training interventions
- Develop and maintain alliances in LTC including the public sector
- Advance ergonomics guidelines during OSH interventions
- Address elements of long-term care intervention contained in OPN 132 including bloodborne pathogens, tuberculosis, ergonomics, slips, trips, falls, and workplace violence
- Develop materials and training presentations specific to the industry
- Distribute outreach material through direct contact with affected employers
- Properly code inspections for accurate tracking of activity at specific work sites
- Develop procedures to reduce workplace violence in LTC facilities

Outcome	Baseline	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
DART	5.4	3.8	TBD			

Long Term Care	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Total
Inspections	26					26
Goals	24					24
Consultation	38					38
Goals	30					30
Trained	59					59
Goals	40					40

### 2.3 Conduct Emphasis Inspections, Training, and Consultation Activity in Establishments Where Employees Might be Exposed to Health Hazards Such as Lead, Silica, Beryllium, Hexavalent Chromium and Isocyanates

The State has established a special emphasis program to address health hazards in the workplace. The current health hazards include lead, silica, beryllium, hexavalent chromium, and isocyanates. Tracking mechanisms have not been developed to allow for the establishment of specific outcome measures in this area of emphasis. The State will continue to monitor the progress of Federal OSHA in developing reliable outcome measures for health issues. A reduction in illnesses relating to the emphasis health hazards identified could influence the primary outcome goal of reducing the overall injury and illness rate by 10% during the five- year cycle of the strategic plan.

### Strategies for Affecting Overall Outcome Goals through Elimination of Health Hazards

- Pursue OSH compliance, consultation and training interventions
- Conduct follow-up inspections where overexposure was initially detected
- Develop hazard alerts, training materials and industry guides for specific health hazards

- Provide consultative support on chemicals identified in health hazards SEPs
- Research and review site specific data sources that could be used to identify employers having or potentially having health hazard exposures
- During interventions, identify workplace activities where health hazards may be present
- Secure information from other agencies concerning possible employee overexposure
- Utilize specific inspection procedures described in OPN 135

Health Hazards	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Total
Inspections	97					97
Goals	100					100
Consultation	162					162
Goals	125					125
Trained	450					450
Goals	300					300

#### Inspections with Detectable Results

Hazard	Inspections	Samples	Overexposures (Inspections)	Overexposures (Samples)
Silica	15	33	3	4
Lead	5	10	1	2
Beryllium	1	3	0	0
Cr (VI)	1	2	0	0
Isocyanates	2	4	0	0
<b>Totals</b>	24	52	4	6

#### 2.4 Reduce the DART Rate in Establishments in Food Manufacturing (NAICS 311) by 5% by the end of FY 2028

The strategic planning process is intended to allocate resources in those areas of emphasis with above average injury and illness rates in an attempt to impact the overall State injury and illness rate. The Food Manufacturing (NAICS 311) DART rate was 1.9 in FY 2023 which was more than the overall DART rate of 1.2. For this reason, food manufacturing was carried over to the current five-year Strategic Management Plan. The baseline rate for this industry is 2.6, which is the five-year average DART rate for the period 2023-2027. Operational Procedure Notice 140 was updated for food manufacturing and to provide specific inspection guidelines. The most recent DART rate is below the baseline.

#### Strategies for Achieving Specific Outcome Goal

- Give special attention to the OSHA recordkeeping process at each site visited
- Interview a sufficient number of employees to confirm accuracy of OSHA 300 log entries
- Develop educational materials and training presentations specific to this industry
- Provide consultation and technical assistance at sites covered by this area of emphasis

- Conduct inspections addressing industry hazards identified in OPN 140
- Utilize ergonomics inspection procedures to determine the appropriate response when ergonomic hazards may exist
- Consider inspection of additional company sites on targeting schedules when three or more serious violations are identified
- Ensure that all CSHOs are sufficiently trained to recognize hazards associated within the food manufacturing industry

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Baseline</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2026</b>	<b>2027</b>
DART	2.6	1.9	TBD			

<b>Food</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2026</b>	<b>2027</b>	<b>2028</b>	<b>Total</b>
Inspections	24					24
Goals	24					24
Consultation	12					12
Goals	12					12
Trained	59					59
Goals	40					40

**2.5 Reduce the number of Amputations in support of the overall outcome goals of reducing the rate of workplace injuries and illnesses by 5% by the end of FY 2028**

The first year of any new addition to the SP is designated as a planning year. FY 2019 was a planning year for Amputations. A strategic management plan committee was established to manage the planning process. This includes developing strategies to achieve established goals and determining the appropriate activity level for department intervention including compliance activity, consultation, and training. In FY 2019, Operational Procedure Notice (OPN) 149 was developed to provide guidance for conducting amputation SEP inspections

**Strategies for Achieving Specific Outcome Goal**

- 2.5.1 Meet quarterly to monitor and review the reported results related to Amputations by OSH bureaus
- 2.5.2 The SEP Committee Chair will prepare and distribute biannually to the Compliance Bureau supervisors a summary of the reported Compliance inspections of any trends or hazard trends identified
- 2.5.3 Evaluate information and procedures in the FOM, OPNs, and other department reference materials and make recommendations for revisions to these documents as it relates to Amputations.
- 2.5.4 Develop an OPN for Amputations during the planning period

<b>Amputation</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2026</b>	<b>2027</b>	<b>2028</b>	<b>Total</b>
Inspections	184					184
Goals	180					180
Consultation	191					191
Goals	100					100
Trained	1,913					1,913
Goals	400					400

### **PART III – SPECIAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS: FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR 2024**

- North Carolina’s injury and illness rates for Calendar Year (CY) 2023 have stayed at historic low levels. The private sector Total Recordable Case (TRC) rate was 2.2 and the Days Away, Restricted, or Transferred (DART) rate was 1.4. These rates are 19% lower and 18% lower, respectively, than the national average. When the public sector numbers are included, the overall TRC rate was 2.4 and the DART rate was 1.4. These rates are 20% lower and 22% lower, respectively, than the national rates.
- Effective October 1, 2022, North Carolina minimum and maximum civil penalties associated with occupational safety and health standard violations were increased. Going forward penalties increase annually on July 1, in accordance with the United States Consumer Price Index published by the United States Department of Labor. These changes are reflected in North Carolina General Statute §95-138(a) in accordance with 13 North Carolina Administrative Code 07A.0301 and 29 CFR 1903.
- The OSH Complaint Desk processed 3,946 complaints and 708 referrals and received an additional 3,770 unprocessed complaints. The average number of complaints received by the Complaint Desk has averaged 1,000 more each year than in years prior to COVID-19 and the number of unprocessed complaints continued to steadily climb as well. To alleviate the number of complaints not under OSH jurisdiction, an online web form was developed in question-and-answer format and directs online complaints toward the appropriate agency. This strategy has assisted in lowering some of the non-agency calls. In addition, a third staff member (Safety Compliance Officer) was added to the Complaint Desk staff.
- North Carolina will elect a new Labor Commissioner on Nov 5, 2024. The newly elected Commissioner will be in office, January 2025.

## Heat Stress

- The Complaint Desk received and entered 248 heat-related complaints in FFY2024 including 240 in general industry, six in construction and two in agriculture. Many others were received but were not entered due to the lack of specific information or hazards no longer current and others being under the jurisdiction of federal OSHA (USPS facilities).
- Many safety and health topics on the NCDOL website were updated, including pages on logging, arboriculture, heat stress, recordkeeping and the OSH Division's special emphasis programs.
- The Agricultural Safety and Health (ASH) Bureau educated farmers, farm labor contractors, and other stakeholders about heat stress prevention through in person training events and by distributing bilingual publications about heat stress during preoccupancy inspections of migrant housing throughout the state.
- In October 2023, ASH participated in three farm labor contractor (FLC) workshops hosted by N.C. Cooperative Extension and trained 27 FLCs on the following topics: migrant housing regulations, field sanitation requirements and heat stress prevention.
- During field inspections, ASH inspectors ensured that employees, farm workers and supervisors are provided with cool drinking water, individual serve cups to drink from, and detailed emergency plans to address heat stress emergencies. They also ensured that employers and employees are aware of the importance of acclimatization methods, rest breaks, adequate shade and the hazards associated with working in the heat.
- Internal newsletters (OSH Update and Labor NC) for OSH staff highlighted the importance of hydrating before completing onsite visits during the summer months and ensuring they are mindful of and act to prevent heat-related illness. In addition, employees were encouraged to share useful tools with employers to highlight onsite monitoring of employees, including the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) 'Heat Tool.' The 'phone app' allows workers and supervisors to calculate the heat index for their worksite, and based on the heat index, displays a risk level to outdoor workers. This provides an on-hand reminder about the protective measures that should be taken at that risk level to protect workers from heat-related illness. In addition, the National Weather Service and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association Heat Risk Resource was described and how it identifies potential heat risks in the seven-day forecast
- During the summer months, heat stress prevention was promoted on all NCDOL social media platforms (e.g., X, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram) and on the NCDOL webpage for Special Events.
- The Special Events webpage highlights upcoming training and outreach events including the 'Heat Illness Prevention Campaign.' The webpage for Heat Illness Prevention provides

information regarding webinars on heat stress prevention and a direct link to the Safety and Health Topics webpage for heat stress. The Safety and Health Topics webpage on heat stress provides a tab for Hazard Overview, Solutions (resources available), Regulations and Learn More (i.e., compliance documents, industry guides, hazard alerts, and technical assistance).

- Heat stress prevention resources that are available on the NCDOL website include speaker's bureau requests for heat stress prevention training, a pre-recorded webinar on heat stress, a PowerPoint presentation on heat stress, a heat stress podcast, heat stress example programs for agriculture (English and Spanish), general industry and construction, free streaming videos, heat stress webinars during the summer months, a heat stress fatality fact sheet, a heat stress quick card, and a heat stress hazard alert.
- The NCDOL website utilized "banners" to promote awareness of training, outreach, and special events including heat stress awareness during the summer months. The banners were located on the NCDOL Home Page, Occupational Safety and Health Home Page and on the Agricultural Safety and Health Home page and linked to the Special Events webpage for Heat Illness Prevention Campaign.
- NCDOL posted heat stress prevention billboards around the state during the summer months in collaboration with our alliance with Lamar Advertising.
- During the FFY, ten public webinars and speaker's bureau events were conducted on heat stress during the summer with 228 employees trained. Training included information on heat stress prevention and free resources available.
- OSH Division's Operational Procedure Notice (OPN) 141 – Enforcement Guidance for Heat-Related Illness Inspections and Citations, provides staff with enforcement guidance for conducting heat related illness inspections, how to document issues in case files and supplying guidance in issuing citations. It states, "During inspection activity, CSHOs should address heat-related illnesses at both indoor and outdoor worksites where potential heat-related hazards may exist, and inspections should include a review of the employers' plans to prevent heat-related illness."
- In FFY 2024, Compliance conducted 190 heat-related inspections. Two inspections currently have General Duty Clause citations pending, including one associated with a heat-related fatality.
- Two ETTA Health Standards Officers serve on the Department of Health and Human Services Heat Committee and on the Carolinas Heat Coalition Committee.
- The 5<sup>th</sup> annual NCDOL Construction Forum was held in Statesville on September 24 with the theme "Underground Construction." It was widely attended by employers and employees across the state with 56 attendees. Topics included excavation and trenching, heat stress, struck by/caught between, and safe digging by the 811 System.

## **Recruitment & Retention**

- The OSH Division continues to experience difficulties attracting and retaining safety and health professionals, primarily due to noncompetitive salaries. NCDOL submitted a State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2024 expansion budget request to support implementing a graduated salary scale, based on tenure, which would be used to raise the salaries of the safety and health compliance officers to a level more consistent with the market rate. These funds would also be used to increase the hiring rate. Unfortunately, the SFY 2024 revised budget did not include any of these funds, however, the Division continues to review internal budget options to increase salaries of existing staff using existing resources. The Division continues to work with the General Assembly to educate members on staffing challenges due to inadequate salaries and benefits and the Labor Commissioner has made this a priority in the new administration.
- As part of the SFY 2023 biennial budget, the N.C. General Assembly and the Governor provided a 3.0% across-the-board salary increase for SFY 2024, which became effective July 1, 2024.
- In addition to the salary increase for all state employees, compliance CSHO's were given a 3% increase to help reduce the gap between their salaries and those for similar safety and health professionals in the private sector.
- To further enhance CSHO recruiting efforts, in December of 2022, the Office of State Human Resources approved changes to the pay grade and posting language for the safety and industrial hygienist trainee positions. Candidates with an applicable bachelor's degree, but no safety or health experience, can now be hired at the base salary for the applicable pay grade. The trainees must complete a two-year training program prior to being fully qualified and released to conduct independent inspections. This trainee program allows OSH to offer a competitive salary for candidates with a related college degree, excellent communication skills, and a strong desire to learn the field of occupational safety and health. The initiative has been very successful to date, with sixteen industrial hygienist trainees and seven safety officer trainees on board as of September 30, 2024. Of the initial group of eight industrial hygiene trainees hired during FY2023, seven are still with OSHNC and all are expected to be released during Q2 or Q3 of FY 2025.
- The OSH Division has taken other actions to increase safety and health professional pay to be more competitive with the private sector. The Division continued to adjust and revise an internal policy that allows salary adjustments for various professional certifications and designations. The staff certifications and designations strengthen the ratios associated with professionalism in the Division and associated pay increases appear to be impacting the Division's overall strategy to retain experienced safety and health professionals.

## **Staff Accomplishments**

- The OSH Division continues to promote continuing education of staff and offers occupational safety and health training courses along with Certified Safety Professional (CSP), Associate Safety Professional (ASP), and Certified Industrial Hygienist (CIH) professional certification courses. In addition, certification software and study materials for CSP, CIH, Certified Hazardous Materials Manager (CHMM), Occupational Hygiene and Safety Technician (OHST), Construction Health and Safety Technician (CHST), and Certified Environmental, Safety and Health Trainer (CET) are available in the NCDOL library to assist employees in obtaining certifications. The OSH Division firmly believes that providing staff members with quality training and access to certification software allows them an opportunity for self-improvement and to better serve our customers.
- During FFY 2024, Administrative Procedure Notice 9APN)3 – Professional Certification, was updated to include a new certification, Certified Tree care Safety Professional, which will support our Logging and Arboriculture SEP. In addition, Remote Pilot was also added to the APN for salary adjustments.
- Two OSH Division personnel obtained the ASP certification, three obtained the CSP, one obtained the CCMM, two obtained the CHST and one obtained the OHST.
- Four OSH Division personnel attained the Manager of Environmental Safety and Health (MESH) certificate, two received the Construction MESH certificate, one received the Industrial Hygiene MESH certificate, and one received the Emergency Preparedness MESH certificate. Each MESH certificate requires 100 hours of safety and health training. These certificates are offered in collaboration through alliances with N.C. State Industry Expansion Solutions and the Safety and Health Council of North Carolina.
- Five OSH Division staff attained the Federal OSHA Technical Institute (OTI) 500/501, 502/503, and 510/511 courses for authorized trainers. There are seven OSH Division staff members that are authorized trainers for the Train-the-Trainer status for OTI 500-Trainer Course for Construction and eleven that are authorized trainers for the OTI 501 – Trainer Course General Industry. To be eligible for this program, the employee must be recommended by their supervisor and/or bureau chief. This authorization allows an employee to teach state and federal 10- and 30- hour courses. Staff members are not required to have these two OTI courses to conduct outreach and training activities, however, trainers within the ETTA bureau complete these courses as part of their internal training curriculum.
- At the end of FFY2024, OSH Division staff held a combined total of 367 certifications and designations that included twenty nine Certified Safety Professionals, eleven Associate Safety Professionals (ASP), nine Certified Industrial Hygienists (CIH), one Safety Management Specialist (SMS), two Graduate Safety Professionals (GSP), five Certified Hazardous Material Managers, seven Construction Health and Safety Technicians, 63 OSHA Construction Safety Specialists, Three Occupational Hygiene and Safety Technicians, 65 Managers of Environmental Health, , Fourteen Virtual Observers (Drones), ten Remote Pilots (Drones) ,44 Construction MESH, 52 Industrial Hygiene MESH, 18 Public Sector



MESH, one Environmental MESH, one Emergency Preparedness MESH, one Advanced MESH and 20 Star Team members

### **External Engagements**

- During the FFY, the OSH Assistant Director continued to serve as a Member Candidate of the American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists (ACGIH) Industrial Ventilation Committee.
- Since August of 2022, a Health Compliance Officer has served as a Member of the ACGIH Bioaerosols Committee.
- One Compliance District Supervisor and one Consultative Services District Supervisor served on the board of the American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA) Carolinas Section.
- The OSH Assistant Director presented at the AIHA Carolinas Section Spring 2024 conference.
- An OSH Compliance District Supervisor served on the board of directors for the Charlotte Regional Safety and Health Conference.
- Two OSH Compliance Officers and one Compliance District Supervisor presented a roundtable session and a breakout significant case session at the Charlotte Regional Safety and Health Conference.
- The OSH Assistant Director served on the faculty and as co-chair of the North Carolina Industrial Ventilation Conference. Additionally, the OSH Division sent ten Health Compliance Officers to the week-long conference in May 2024.
- More than ten OSH outreach presentations were provided by OSH Compliance and Consultative Services to groups such as the American Society of Safety Professionals, Carolinas Irrigation Association, the Gaston HR Association, Coastal Carolina Community College, the Wilmington Safety School, and two commercial construction companies.
- The West Compliance Bureau Chief continued to attend and provide OSH updates at the Carolinas Association of General Contractors (CAGC) quarterly safety committee meetings through our alliance with them. At the meetings, there are usually 15-30 attendees, most of which are safety directors for large construction companies or risk management personnel for insurance companies. Additionally, the West Compliance Bureau Chief presented at the CAGC conference in Myrtle Beach, S.C. in March 2024.
- Staff from OSH Compliance or ETTA present an OSH Division update at the National Utility Contractors Association (NUCA) of the Carolinas quarterly safety meetings through our joint alliance.

- The OSH Division met with the OSH Advisory Council on November 1, 2023, and May 8, 2024. The OSH Advisory Council provides guidance to the OSH Division on matters related to the OSH Act during meetings that are conducted twice per year, once in the Spring and once in the Fall.
- The OSH Division Director, Assistant Director and NCDOL Chief of Staff continued to attend the Occupational Safety and Health State Plan Association (OSHSPA) meetings in person during the FFY. The primary purpose of OSHSPA meetings is to share information and ensure consistency among OSHA state programs nationwide.
- The Chief of Staff was reappointed to Federal OSHA's Advisory Council on Construction Safety and Health (ACCSH) for another two-year term in 2024. The meetings are held in Washington D.C. and are attended by the Chief of Staff in person whenever possible. ACCSH is a continuing advisory body established to advise the Assistant Secretary for Occupational Safety and Health with respect to setting construction standards and policy matters.
- ETTA Standards Officers continued to attend the quarterly Federal Safety and Health Council meetings.
- During the FFY, ASH continued to strengthen partnerships and associations with other groups including USDOL Wage and Hour, N.C. Department of Commerce, NCSU Cooperative Extension, N.C. Agromedicine Institute, N.C. Community Health Care Association, NC Farmworker Health Program, N.C. Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS), N.C. Farmworker Health Program, N.C. Agribusiness Council, N.C. Farm Bureau, Legal Aid of NC and the NC Justice Center and the North Carolina Growers Association.
- Throughout the year, ASH staff educated farmers, farm workers, farm labor contractors, and other stakeholders about Heat Stress prevention through in-person training events and by distributing bilingual publications about Health Stress during preoccupancy inspections throughout the state.
- In August 2024, ASH's CSHO II attended the 2024 Latino Farmworkers Safety and Health Symposium and participated in a panel presentation about best practices for engaging with migrant farmworkers in NC. There were over 100 attendees that consisted of safety and health professionals, migrant farmworker advocacy groups, migrant health outreach workers, and representatives from various local and state government agencies who interact with the migrant and seasonal farm workers.
- A Consultative Services Supervisor and three ETTA employees serve on the State Emergency Response Committee and the State Emergency Response Commission. Additionally, an ETTA Standards Officer serves in the role of Homeland Security and Emergency Response Coordinator and is responsible for scheduling an emergency response exercise annually.

- OSH Division Health Consultants were invited to provide onsite safety training to Apprenticeship N.C. students at the State Fair, while they participated in a week-long competition run by the North Carolina Community College System.
- A Consultative Services Health Consultant serves on the N.C. Radiation Protection Commission and on the N.C. Non-Ionizing Radiation Advisory Committee.
- The Consultative Bureau Chief was elected, Secretary for The National Association of Occupational Safety and Health Consultation Programs (OSHCON).
- The OSH Director presented the OSH Update at the April 2024 Eastern Carolina Safety and Health School and at the September 2024 Carolina Star Conference. She was scheduled to represent the OSH Division at the National Association of Government Labor Officials (NAGLO) Annual Conference in July 2024 but was unable to complete the trip due to the global IT outage that significantly impacted airline travel.
- North Carolina attended the regional on-site consultation meeting for the eight programs in Region IV.
- Consultative Services management met with NC Natural Resources as part of the outreach connected the American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA) outreach to museum and cultural heritage sites nationwide.
- North Carolina Consultation met with South Carolina Consultation supervisors to assist them and share information in developing procedures to going paperless in their office.
- The OSH Director has represented the NCDOL on the N.C. Human Trafficking Commission since 2013 and served as Commission Chair from January 2020 thru early 2023. The Commission is the legislatively mandated leader of anti-human trafficking efforts in North Carolina and works to combat labor and sex trafficking through educating the public and suggesting new policies, procedures and legislation. The OSH Division and the Commission have partnered to increase awareness around labor trafficking in certain industries and occupations.
- The OSH Director, along with OSHA Area Director Kim Morton, attended the USSW's Heat Stress Town Hall on September 5, 2024, in Durhan. The event featured speakers who shared personal experiences with working in hot environments and was intended to draw public attention to OSHA's proposed heat injury and illness prevention rules.
- The Commissioner of Labor and other Department personnel and Federal OSHA Area Director joined with the N.C. AFL-CIO to recognize Workers' Memorial Day in April 2024. The Department and the organization released a joint statement making a commitment to work together to achieve certain safety and health goals.
- In December of 2022, the Commissioner received two petitions for rulemaking on infectious diseases: one covering General Industry and Construction employers and one covering

Agricultural Employers and Migrant Housing Operators. The submitting organizations included the N.C. Justice Center, Episcopal Farmworker Ministry, N.C. State AFL-CIO, Union of Southern Service Workers, Western N.C. Workers' Center, The Hispanic Liaison of Chatham County and the N.C. Conference of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). In January 2023, the Commissioner formally accepted the petitions. In accordance with rulemaking policy, the Legal Affairs Division held a public hearing and accepted public comments through March 2024. On March 13, 2024, Commissioner Dobson released a statement in which he declined to move forward with rulemaking on the petitioned infection disease rules.

- The OSH Division periodically receives external requests for Statements of Interest (SOI) in support of deferred immigration action relative to workers involved in open Compliance inspections. The Division continues to work on a formal policy for receipt and processing of SOI requests and submitted its first letter to the Department of Homeland Security in October 2023.
- A Senior Health Compliance Officer (HCO) developed PowerPoint teaching modules from the 'Fundamentals of Industrial Hygiene' textbook and presents them weekly in hour long sessions to the OSH Division's HCO trainees statewide. The course is in-person in Charlotte and by videoconference for those in other offices. Each session is recorded for future viewing.
- The NCDOL Communications Division reached North Carolina employers and employees with safety messages by posting them on numerous social media platforms including Facebook, Instagram, X, YouTube, LinkedIn, and broadcasting Podcasts on the NCDOL website, YouTube, Spotify, iTunes, Google Podcasts, and Anchor. At the end of the FFY, the NCDOL had 2,564 Facebook followers, 952 Instagram followers and 2,370 X followers.
- The OSH Division participated in five OSH-related podcasts. Topics included the importance of the compliance bureau, the history of collecting Toys for Tots by the agency, and the importance of the annual Carolina Star Conference. Since the inception of "Inside NC Department of Labor Podcast" in 2018, there have been 72 podcast episodes covering various Department activities.
- The agency has two external newsletters that promote upcoming NCDOL and OSH Division events: the Labor Ledger and the Training Newsletter. The bi-monthly Labor Ledger has over 13,500 subscribers and the monthly Training Newsletter has over 7,00 subscribers.
- The OSH Division has nine active alliances including the CAGC, Lamar Advertising Company, Mexican Consulate, N.C. State Industry Expansion Solutions, NUCA of the Carolinas, the Safety and Health Council of North Carolina (SHCNC), the Tree Care Industry Association (TCIA), the Plumbing-Heating-Cooling Contractors Association (PHCC), and new this FFY, an alliance agreement with the North Carolina Masonry Contractors Association was signed in November 2023. All alliances are directed towards the SEPs in North Carolina to promote more outreach and education in those industries.

- The OSH Division was engaged in four high visibility construction projects in support of the construction strategic plan goal through the partnership program. These included:
  - Whiting – Turner Contracting Company  
Siler City – Semi Conductor Facility – Wolfspeed (2023-2025)
  - Holder – Edison Foard – Leeper, A Joint Venture  
Charlotte - Charlotte Douglas International Airport – Terminal Lobby Expansion (2021 – 2026; recently extended for Phase 6)
  - Jacobs Engineering Group  
Holly Springs - Biotech Manufacturing Facility and Campus (2022 – 2026): recently extended for Phase 2.
  - Barnhill – Balfour Beatty – Metcon, a Joint Venture  
Raleigh – North Carolina Education Campus
- ASH Bureau Chief participates in the monthly Project Management Team Advisory Group which includes representatives from NCSU Cooperative Extension, NC Agromedicine Institute, and the NC Farmworker Health Program, a group that was originally established during the COVID-19 pandemic to coordinate outreach and response efforts to the agricultural community. The group continues to work together to discuss challenges faced by the agricultural community, potential solutions, available resources and information dissemination. Recent topics included hurricane response, emergency preparedness, migrant farm workers access to healthcare, internet connectivity at migrant housing and Heat Stress prevention.

### **Compliance Bureau**

- Compliance conducted 1,675 inspections during the FFY. They identified over 3,600 hazardous conditions on these inspections, including over 2,450 (68%) that were classified as serious, willful, or repeat (SWR) violations.
- Over 50% of Compliance inspections conducted identified SWR violations, with a total initial penalty assessment of \$8.7 million. Additionally, only 3.4% of inspections were legally contested by employers.
- Inspections with citations were written and processed in a timely manner which expedited abatement of the hazardous conditions. Compliance had an average lapse time of 55.1 days for safety inspections and 58.4 days for health inspections, both of which were lower than the respective national averages of 56.2 and 68.2 days.
- Compliance inspected 55 fatalities and catastrophe inspections and identified SWR violations on 58% of those inspections.

- The OSH Division’s Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) Program was utilized as a resource during compliance inspections that require aerial photographs and videos. In FFY 2024, drones were successfully deployed on five inspections which aided in evidence collection where staff would otherwise not been able to reach the site due to unsafe conditions. These inspections included multiple high-profile fatality and accident investigations such as an employee falling 16 feet through a roof during reroofing activities, an employee struck-by a bulldozer during the construction of a golf course and an employee falling approximately 228 feet while working from a communications tower.
- As required by the Federal Aviation Administration, several pilots successfully completed the biannual Part 107 Small UAS Recurrent Training Course to maintain their flight currency and proficiency in operating the drones.
- In October, five compliance officers were added to the drone team to fill vacant remote pilot positions. The five remote pilots completed a 2 ½ day part 107 ground course which resulted in three successfully obtaining the FAA UAS Remote Pilot certification and NCDOT UAS state permit. In addition to the ground course, the entire drone team completed a robust one-day hands-on flight training course where they were required to operate the drones through six challenging skill stations to build upon flight proficiency. This training also included regulatory updates, SOP review, equipment firmware updates and flight operation hot wash/after action meetings.
- To further aid with the pilot’s flight competency, the division is further developing the UAS training program to align with national standards, such as the ASTM Standard Test Methods for Small Unmanned Aircraft Systems. The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) has designed a skills course as part of a national standard for drone pilots which the division will be using as part of the pilot flight skills training. Over the next year, pilots will receive additional flight training in the use of this enhanced training system.
- Each SEP Committee continued to meet quarterly to cover injury and illness trends, inspection and outreach activities, related alliances outreach activities, related compliance documents such as OPNs, along with other initiatives, all in support of the Strategic Management Plan goals. Meetings are attended by members from each OSH Division bureau including supervisors and bureau chiefs. Minutes are maintained on the One Stop Shop.
- The OSH Amputations SEP began in FFY 2019 with a planning year that included the development of a targeting program using North Carolina-specific data to identify industries [North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) codes] with a high rate of amputations per 1,000 employees. Inspections under this SEP began in FFY 2020. Since then, OSH Compliance has conducted 328 programmed planned Amputations SEP inspections including 102 in FFY 2024. This targeting program has proven to be very successful as Serious, Willful or Repeat (SWR) violations have been identified on nearly 70% of those proactive inspections. Nine of the top ten standards cited under this SEP in FFY 2024 were for machine guarding or lockout/tagout violations, the exact amputation hazards this program is targeting.

- The Health Hazards SEP uses the General Schedule targeting metrics (Class I and II safety and health assignments) and overlays NAICS codes likely to have one of the SEP chemicals – silica, lead, isocyanates, asbestos, or hexavalent chromium. Since FFY 2020, OSH Compliance has conducted 220 programmed planned Health Hazards SEP inspections, including 58 in FFY 2024. This targeting program has also proven to be very successful as SWR violations have been identified on nearly 76% of those inspections over the past five years. Ten of the top twelve standards cited under this SEP in FFY 2024 were for silica in construction, respiratory protection, and hazard communication, which are all types of health hazards this program is targeting.
- The Health Hazards SEP requested a special webpage on the One Stop Shop that would provide compliance resources for each health hazard in the SEP which includes, lead, silica, isocyanates, beryllium or hexavalent chromium. These webpages were developed and published to the One Stop Shop. Effective FFY 2024, the SEP committee will remove asbestos and add beryllium as part of the SEP focus.
- Two change requests were submitted for the OSHA Express (OE) Data Management System in FFY 2024.
- In FFY 2024, OSH transmitted data from OE to OSHA’s Information System (OIS) via an interface. OSH and the OE vendor continue to work together to ensure that the OE and OIS, State Activity Mandated Measures (SAMM) and State Information Report (SIR) reports are providing accurate data.
- OSH continues to provide administrative support for the OSHA Legacy Data (OLD) system. The OLD system was rolled out in late FFY 2016 and additional features were subsequently added to allow OSHA and State Plans to access and modify pre-OIS inspection files, as necessary. Progress continues to be made in closing open legacy case files. At the end of FFY 2023, OSH had one case remaining in the OLD system.
- The Director’s Office conducted a thorough review of all fatality and other high-profile inspection files in accordance with Administrative Procedure Notice (APN) 16. The purpose of the Director’s Office review is to ensure that CSHOs have conducted inspections in accordance with Division policies and procedures, properly documented inspection files and that the inspection findings will be legally defensible. In addition to the Director’s Office staff, the case file review process typically includes the compliance officer, district supervisor, bureau chief and Attorney General’s Office representatives. In addition to reviewing fatality and other high-profile cases before citations are issued, the Director’s Office also must review and approve certain informal and formal settlement agreements as set forth by APN 16.
- The beginning of a two-year internal audit was started in 2023 to assess and document the positions and activities in the PSIM bureau in advance of multiple retirements. The purpose of the audit is to provide an outline of tasks and administrative needs for the department and to assess if job duties could be streamlined or combined in the future. The audit was completed, and recommendations were made.

- Four action requests were received by Compliance. This Quality Program provides opportunities for program improvement identified by customers, OSH Division employees or as a result of internal audits and Federal OSHA audits. Ongoing revisions are made to the Field Operations Manual (FOM) and Operational Procedure Notices (OPN) as a result of the quality program action items.
- The OSH Laboratory completed 311 in-house equipment calibrations. As part of their quality program, an additional 65 pieces of equipment were sent to the manufacturer for calibration or repair. Several pieces of equipment were delayed in being sent out due to an issue with vendors. The issue has been resolved.

### **Consultative Services Bureau**

- The Consultative Services Bureau (CSB) identified and addressed 17 overexposures including noise and manganese fumes.
- 92 private sector companies participated in the Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program (SHARP) with two additional private sector employers in Pre-SHARP.
- Four North Carolina SHARP participants reached their ten consecutive year milestones during 2024. These companies are offered extra recognition through CSB, which supports their great accomplishment.
- CSB mailed 639 letters to employers with an Experience Modifier Rate (EMR) of 1.5 or higher informing them of the state-mandated requirement to implement a safety and health program.
- In an increased marketing effort, CSB mailed 696 letters to car wash establishments in NC. Emails were sent to 491 employers using the Injury Tracking Application (ITA) list obtained from OSHA. NC has seen an increase in car washes accidents across the state.
- Consultative Services sent 2,344 letters out to smaller employees in the newly added NAICS for Warehousing SEP/NEP.
- During FFY 2024, CSB conducted 1,474 visits which eliminated over 6,683 serious hazards.
- During the summer of 2024, the consultation program hosted an intern who assessed and updated consultation marketing materials and strategies including editing and streamlining the website.
- North Carolina completed and released a customer testimonial marketing commercial in FY2024 to promote the NC consultative program and the work that they do.



## **ETTA Bureau**

- The ETTA Training Section conducted seven 10-hour and two 30-hour general industry awareness courses and five 10-hour construction awareness courses.
- ETTA participated in 216 events to include speaker's bureau requests, 10- and 30- hour courses, individual topic workshops, webinars and public outreach fairs and conferences.
- ETTA offered 170 hours of formal training, 180 hours of continuing education, and 37 hours of other job-related training to internal personnel. This included Core course NC 100 – Initial Compliance, NC 105 - Safety Standards, NC 125 – Health Standards, OTI 1310 – Investigative Interviewing Techniques, NC 245 – Safety and Health Management Systems (On – Demand) and technical writing with 89 staff members trained. Core Courses are taught by senior OSH Division staff members from ETTA, Compliance and Consultative Services. All core courses (PPTs) were reviewed and updated prior to each course. In addition, two OCSS modules were offered on excavation and trenching and confirmed space entry to staff with a total of 28 staff members trained. As part of this process, OPN 64 – Mandatory Training Program for OSH Compliance Personnel was updated.
- Annually, ETTA mails an outreach letter to construction employers with five or more serious violations. The letter provides employers with information regarding OSH outreach services and publications and is an outreach strategy used by the Construction SEP committee to lower injury and illness rates in construction. This year's letter was sent to 36 employers in January 2024.
- The NCDOL website continued to promote new OSH Division initiatives using banners on the home pages. The banners were updated to notify the public regarding new rules going into effect (i.e., penalties), upcoming special events including the construction forum, safety stand downs (e.g., heat, falls prevention, trench safety), safety awards season, and other OSH Division activities.
- The NCDOL website Special Events page continued to provide all upcoming 2024 training and outreach related to the construction forum, heat illness prevention webinars, stand-downs, and special emphasis program training events.
- The OSH Division participated with Federal OSHA in the National Safety Stand Down to Prevent Falls in Construction. ETTA hosted five webinars: two on fall protection and one on scaffolds, steel erection and stairways and ladders. They also participated in three Labor One events. The Stand Down was promoted on all NCDOL social media platforms, on the NCDOL Special Events webpage and through an alliance with Lamar Advertising Company, on a billboard poster. A total of 779 employees were trained during these webinars and events.
- ETTA participated in Labor Rights Week (August 26 – August 30) through an alliance with the Mexican Consulate. During the week, ETTA hosted a booth and distributed Spanish publications.

- During Safe + Sound Week, ETTA hosted a webinar on Safety and Health Management Systems that provided training for 46 employees. It was promoted on all NCDOL social media platforms and on the NCDOL Special Events webpage. The Governor's Proclamation also recognized the Safe + Sound week.
- The OSH Division participated in Trench Safety Stand Down Week. This included advertising the Stand Down on NCDOL social media platforms and on billboard posters. During the Stand Down week, NCDOL hosted two webinars on Excavation and Trenching, one webinar on record keeping and reporting with training provided for 46 employees. The Governor's Proclamation also recognized the Stand Down Week.
- Grain Safety Stand Up week was promoted on the Special Events page on the NCDOL website and on a billboard posted in the southern part of the state.
- ETTA contributed to the designs of six billboards located on prominent highways in North Carolina. The billboards addressed the following topics: Construction Forum, Fall Prevention Stand Down (2) Trench safety, Grain stand down, Heat Stress Prevention, and the Safe + Sound Initiative.
- The NCDOL (Charles H. Livengood Jr. Memorial) Library loaned out 174 items (e.g., consensus standards, safety videos, certification exam preparation books) to NCDOL employees and registered public patrons.
- The library responded to 543 information requests and 248 reference questions, provided streaming video access (via The Training Network NOW) to 78 patrons, served 253 visitors, acquired 110 items for the collection and cataloged 49 items.
- The ETTA Standards Section responded to 2,608 inquiries regarding interpretations of the standard.
- ETTA's Standards Section added 18 documents to the Field Information System (FIS), including updates to the FOM, revised OSH Division policies (i.e., OPNs, Administrative Procedure Notices), and adoption of multiple Federal OSHA Instructions and Final Rules. PSIM, Compliance, and/or Legal Affairs work jointly to update and revise FIS documents.
- ETTA's Standards Section made several revisions between existing publications. This included brochures on the following: Manager of Environmental Safety and Health Program (MESH). Spanish Toolbox Reviews, ETTA, and the Top Serious Standards Cited in FFY 2022 as well as updates to a Quick Card on Tree Trimming and an Industry Guide on Migrant Housing Inspections in NC.
- Through ETTA's Standards section, final rules adopted in North Carolina included the 29 CFR 1903 Federal Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustments Act, Annual Adjustments for 2024 and the revised 29 CFR 1903 rule of Employee Walkaround Representatives.

- Seven pre-recorded webinars were updated during the FFY including Bloodborne pathogens, ergonomic awareness, fall protection, hazard communication, health hazards SEP, lockout /tagout and scaffolds.
- Specially developed training documents were uploaded to the NCDOL website that include all the standards that require training, all the standards that require programs and all the standards that require inspections for recordkeeping, general industry construction and NC state specific.
- ETTA manages the NCDOL OSH content on the NCDOL website. All the safety and health topics on the NCDOL website were updated and 28 new topics were added. In addition, a webpage was developed for small employers to build their own safety and health program for general industry.
- ETTA mailed an outreach letter to 36 construction employees with five or more serious violations. The letter provided employers with information regarding OSH outreach services and publications. This letter is an outreach strategy used by the Construction Sep Committee to lower injury and illness rates in construction.
- The Carolina Star Program had 30 Star re-certifications and approved five new Star work sites. At the end of FFY 2024, there were 147 Star Sites: 101 Carolina Star sites, 23 Building Star sites, 18 Public Sector Star sites and five Rising Star sites.
- The 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Carolina Star Safety Conference was held September 18-20, 2024, with a total attendance of 761. The theme of the conference was “Keep Safety Rolling.”
- During the 2024 Carolina Star Conference, one Star site was recognized for achieving 25 years in the Star Program. There are a total of seven Star worksites that have achieved the status of 25 years as a Star Program participant.
- Through a Special Star Team Member (SSTM) Program, OSH continued to leverage its limited resources by using specially trained Star site employees and independent private sector safety and health professionals for on-site Star evaluations. During the FFY, two initial courses for SSTMs were conducted. This included the initial training of 23 personnel. A total of 153 SSTMs are trained across the state.
- The Safety Awards Program celebrated its 78<sup>th</sup> year and awarded 1,737 Gold Awards, 321 Silver Awards, and 58 million-Hour Awards. For this Safety Awards season, 25 Safety Awards Banquets were conducted with a total banquet attendance of 1,819 attendees.
- In FFY 2024, the Safety Awards Program developed and implemented a new online registration process for receiving and reviewing applications for approval. The new procedure has reduced the overall cost and will increase efficiency in the mailing and application review process.
- To increase the ability of staff to converse in Spanish with employers and employees while in

the performance of their job duties, an online Spanish Training Software Platform was purchased for a second year as part of a pilot program.

### **PSIM Bureau**

- The PSIM Bureau Chief continued to perform duties associated with the responsibility of being the Medical Records Coordinator for the OSH Division.
- PSIM continued to provide notifications of workplace accidents and fatalities to the N.C. Industrial Commission, Fraud Investigation Section of the Criminal Investigations and Employee Classification Division.
- The PSIM Bureau Chief assisted ETTA with reviewing photos and graphics within various Powepoint presentations to verify adherence to copyright, privacy, ownership, and brand name restrictions.
- PSIM compiled OSH data initiated for the NCDOL Annual Report, the OSH Annual Program Statistics Report, and various other annual reporting requirements.
- PSIM analyzed construction inspection activities for FFY 2023.
- PSIM worked in conjunction with ETTA, Compliance East and West Bureaus and Legal Affairs Division staff to update and revise several Field Operation Manual chapters and Operational Procedure Notices. PSIM staff updated Operational Notice 128 and Administrative Procedure Notices 19 for FFY 2024.
- PSIM continued refinement of the OSH private and public-sector databases to supplement the bureau's exclusive use of the Division of Employment Security database.
- PSIM received, researched, and processed 484 requests for revisions/changes to the private and public-sector establishment databases, which helps to enhance the accuracy of these site databases and the OSH Division Targeting System.
- PSIM worked on various targeting schedules that were updated and assignments released for:
  - Public Sector Schedule
  - General Industry Schedules (Safety and Health)
  - ASH Schedule
  - Health Hazards Schedules (Lead, and Isocyanates)
  - Communication Tower Schedule
  - Amputations SEP Schedule
- PSIM received a total of 754 closed inspection files (those still in paper copy format) from the field offices for archiving.

- PSIM received 871 disclosure requests during FFY 2024 and processed 781 requests (432 from FFY 2024 and 349 from previous years) during the fiscal year. PSIM has continued to receive an unprecedented number of disclosure file requests. PSIM continues to see a substantial increase in the number of requests for contentment's, fatalities, and an increase in court orders, and subpoenas etc This has required an extensive amount of time for disclosure staff and the PSIM bureau chief working with the Attorney General Office and NCDOL Legal Affairs.
- PSIM coordinated discussions about the strategic plan process for all bureaus in the OSH Division to prepare the FFY 2025 Annual Performance Plan in relation to the 5-year Strategic Management Plan (SMP) for FFY 2024 - 2028.
- PSIM completed an analysis of data collected from the 2020, 2021, and 2022 Public Sector Surveys, resulting in updated, established target rates for employer specific categories.
- PSIM received and processed 2,143 requests from the public sector for revisions/changes to the Public-Sector Injury and Illness Survey database.
- PSIM mailed a total of 3,310 surveys to public sector employers (collection of calendar year 2023 injury and illness data). At the end of FFY 2024, 3,189 survey responses were received with a 96.4% response rate and a 100% clean rate. Efforts continue to collect the remaining outstanding surveys prior to the end of the calendar year.

### **ASH Bureau**

- The Agriculture Safety and Health Bureau completed 2,121 preoccupancy housing inspections of migrant farmworker housing and conducted 36 compliance inspections. Housing certificates were issued to 2,069 sites with a total occupancy (beds) of 26,591.
- During annual preoccupancy inspections, ASH distributed 3,389 safety and health publications to farmers and farm workers.
- The 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Gold Star Growers' meeting was held on February 1, 2024. 115 Double Gold Star growers and 65 Single Gold Star growers were recognized for accomplishments during the 2023 season.
- The ASH staff participated in three farm labor contractor (FLC) workshops hosted by NC Cooperative Extension and trained 27 FLCs (7 Wayne, 10 in Henderson and 10 in Nash) on the following topics: migrant housing regulations, field sanitation requirements, and heat stress prevention.
- The ASH Bureaus new preoccupancy inspection program went live in October 2023. Throughout the 2024 season ASH staff assisted growers and FLC in registering migrant housing and uploading supporting documents. The new inspection program has improved the

bureaus efficiency and reduced the amount of time it takes to certify migrant housing in the state.

- In February of 2024, the ASH bureau chief presented at the annual Christmas Tree meeting and discussed Migrant Housing registration, inspection, and certification requirements as well as ASH's new online registration system. Approximately 20 farmers attended the event.
- In FFY 2024 ASH staff met with USDOL Wage and Hour staff to learn about their Government Agency Training Academy which offers online courses to help improve investigation outcomes and maximize compliance. Several ASH CSHOs took the following courses: Interview Strategies and Best Practices and Investigation Best Practices.