



NEWS

JB Pritzker, Governor

Michael D. Kleinik, Director

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Workplace Safety Highlighted at 29th Annual DIOSH Day *Illinois Department of Labor presents Governor's Health and Safety Award*

PEORIA – Employers, employees and professionals in all aspects of health and safety joined together at the 29th Annual Downstate Illinois Occupational Safety and Health Day in Peoria Wednesday, March 4.

Illinois Department of Labor Director Michael Kleinik also announced the winner of the 2020 Governor's Occupational Health and Safety Award – Tarsha Krizka, the regional safety manager for Prairie Material, a major supplier of concrete and other building materials with headquarters in Bridgeview and plants across Illinois and other Midwestern states.

“On behalf of Governor JB Pritzker and the Illinois Department of Labor, I want to congratulate Tarsha Krizka on receiving this prestigious health and safety award,” said Kleinik. “Her dedication and innovation in keeping workers at Prairie Material safe and healthy make her a very worthy recipient.”

Krizka, the first woman to win the Governor's award since its inception nine years ago, joined Prairie Material in 2013 in her health and safety role. Since that time, Prairie Material has seen significant health and safety improvements.

Krizka acknowledges that creating a culture of safety in the workplace is easier said than done. But she says meeting the employees in the middle and acting on the employees' own suggestions for safety improvements have been keys to progress at Prairie Material.

“To see the employees beginning to feel like they are coming to work every day with the goal of working safely is really the self-satisfaction piece for me,” said Krizka.

Under Krizka's tenure as regional safety manager, safety at Prairie Material has become a focus. A recent internal audit showed that Krizka and Prairie Material employees exceeded expectations of the company's senior management on all levels of safety and health.

“Tarsha is an exemplary role model when it comes to all things health and safety,” said David Mashek, the U.S. human relations director for Votorantim Cimentos North America, the international parent company of Prairie Material.

“She is no stranger to rolling up her sleeves while employees are performing their duties and learning how and why certain tasks are performed in a certain manner and if there is a way to do it safer,” said Mashek. “Her approach is to act as an equal and ensure no divide when it comes to labor, management and matters of safety.”

The Illinois Department of Labor’s Illinois OSHA division was one of numerous public and private co-sponsors of DIOSH Day, and representatives of Illinois OSHA presented at the event’s multiple break-out sessions.

The break-out session presentations focused on a wide variety of health and safety issues from ergonomics, to fire safety code, to communication in the workplace to fall protection and wellness in the workplace. Those attending DIOSH Day also had the opportunity to network with hundreds of health and safety professionals and visit more than 40 exhibitors of innovative health and safety products and services.