

## **Coeur D'Alene, Idaho, assisted living facility cited for safety, health violations**

### ***US Labor Department's OSHA finds ergonomic and other hazards***

**COEUR D'ALENE, Idaho** – The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration has cited Good Neighbor Care Centers LLC, doing business as Four Seasons Assisted Living in Coeur D'Alene, with three serious and two other-than-serious safety and health violations. OSHA conducted an inspection under the agency's National Emphasis Program for Nursing and Residential Care Facilities.

Four Seasons was cited for three serious violations: failing to protect workers from musculoskeletal injuries to the back, shoulders and extremities while performing manual lifting and repositioning; failing to provide employees Hepatitis B vaccinations; and failing to use sharps without a built-in safety mechanism to prevent needlestick injuries. A serious violation occurs when there is substantial probability that death or serious physical harm could result from a hazard about which the employer knew or should have known. Proposed penalties total \$19,000.

"We want those caring for our family members and neighbors to be properly protected at work," said Dean Ikeda, OSHA's regional administrator in Seattle. "Ensuring proper patient handling not only protects employees who lift and reposition patients from serious injuries, but helps keep the patients safe as well."

Other-than-serious violations were cited for overfilled sharps containers and lack of appropriate footwear to prevent slips and falls. An other-than-serious violation is one that has a direct relationship to job safety and health, but probably would not cause death or serious physical harm. OSHA offers on-site consultation assistance, providing free and confidential advice to small and medium-sized businesses, with a priority on high-hazard work sites.

OSHA initiated its National Emphasis Program for Nursing and Residential Care Facilities in 2012 to protect workers from serious safety and health hazards common in this industry. OSHA develops national emphasis programs to focus outreach efforts and inspections on specific hazards in an industry. Through this program, OSHA is targeting nursing homes and residential care facilities to reduce occupational illnesses and injuries from exposure to blood and other potentially infectious materials; exposure to communicable diseases, such as tuberculosis; ergonomic stressors related to lifting patients; workplace violence; and slips, trips and falls. Workers also may be exposed to hazardous chemicals and drugs in these environments.

According to the department's Bureau of Labor Statistics, nursing and residential care facilities experienced one of the highest rates of lost workdays due to injuries and illnesses of all major American industries in 2011, the latest data available.

The company has 15 business days from receipt of its citations and penalties to comply, request an informal conference with OSHA's area director or contest the findings before the independent Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission.

To ask questions, obtain compliance assistance, file a complaint, or report workplace hospitalizations, fatalities or situations posing imminent danger to workers, the public should call OSHA's toll-free hotline at 800-321-OSHA (6742) or the agency's Boise Area Office at 208-321-2960. Under the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, employers are responsible for providing safe and healthful workplaces for their employees. OSHA's role is to ensure these conditions for America's working men and women by setting and enforcing standards, and providing training, education and assistance. For more information, visit <http://www.osha.gov>.