

## QUARTER 4, 2023

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### SPOTLIGHTS

Have something you would like to submit to our newsletter?

Send submission and spotlight ideas to:

[Michael.Circle@onwardenergy.com](mailto:Michael.Circle@onwardenergy.com)

# ON THE GRID

## 2023 IN REVIEW

The PGVPP group is entering its 5th year in 2024 and we've come a long way since our first meeting in February 2020. This group of power generation industry professionals started right before the Pandemic shutdown and has continued to grow since that first meeting.

Our first meeting hosted ten professionals from five companies. Now, our calls boast 60 participants or more from many organizations across the country! In 2022, we undertook a benchmarking project which has been recognized by OSHA as a best practice. In 2023, the PGVPP signed an Alliance Agreement with Region 8 OSHA. Our networking and outreach is a best practice and we've all taken at least one thing from this group to implement at our own sites.

“To see this group grow as it has is amazing,” Kelli Heflin, co-founder of the PGVPP Workgroup, said. “It really shows the encouraging fact that safety is first in many places across the country and the strength we have when we grow together to protect power-generation workers.”

All of our quarterly meeting notes and presentations can be found on our website, [www.powergenerationvpp.com](http://www.powergenerationvpp.com).

Kelli Heflin,  
Director of Safety, Onward Energy

# VPPPA SAFETY+ 2023

In September, several in our workgroup were privileged to meet in person at the annual VPPPA Safety+ conference at the Marriott World Center in Orlando, Florida.

Along with an exhibition of vendors and products, the conference featured speakers from all across the country with topics

including work at heights, industrial hygiene, process safety management and Voluntary Protection Program benefits.

The conference boasted breakout sessions that educated attendees on OSHA requirements, program-writing tips and products to make safety initiatives more engaging and efficient. Other breakout sessions invited our peers in hundreds of industries to speak on industry-specific best practices and open-discussion forums.

Add to the list a toe-tapping LeBlast class led by PGVPP co-founder Kelli Heflin, and you've got a conference for the ages.

If you did not have the opportunity to join us this year, we hope you take the chance next year, and meet us in Denver, Colorado!





# ERGONOMICS RISK FACTORS

## FROM OSHA.GOV

The risk of MSD injury depends on work positions and postures, how often the task is performed, the level of required effort and how long the task lasts. Risk factors that may lead to the development of MSDs include:

- Exerting excessive force. Examples include lifting heavy objects or people, pushing or pulling heavy loads, manually pouring materials, or maintaining control of equipment or tools.
- Performing the same or similar tasks repetitively. Performing the same motion or series of motions continually or frequently for an extended period of time.
- Working in awkward postures or being in the same posture for long periods of time. Using positions that place stress on the body, such as prolonged or repetitive reaching above shoulder height, kneeling, squatting, leaning over a counter, using a knife with wrists bent, or twisting the torso while lifting.
- Localized pressure into the body part. Pressing the body or part of the body (such as the hand) against hard or sharp edges, or using the hand as a hammer.
- Cold temperatures. In combination with any one of the above risk factors may also increase the potential for MSDs to develop. For example, many of the operations in meatpacking and poultry processing occur with a chilled product or in a cold environment.
- Vibration, both whole body and hand-arm, can cause a number of health effects. Hand-arm vibration can damage small capillaries that supply nutrients and can make hand tools more difficult to control. Hand-arm vibration may cause a worker to lose feeling in the hands and arms resulting in increased force exertion to control hand-powered tools (e.g. hammer drills, portable grinders, chainsaws) in much the same way gloves limit feeling in the hands. The effects of vibration can damage the body and greatly increase the force which must be exerted for a task.

- Combined exposure to several risk factors. May place workers at a higher risk for MSDs than does exposure to any one risk factor.

In addition, observe whether workers are:

- Modifying their tools, equipment or work area
- Shaking their arms and hands
- Rolling their shoulders
- Bringing products such as back belts or wrist braces into the workplace

These behaviors can mean that workers are experiencing ergonomic issues. Talk with them and review their work to see if any risk factors for MSDs are present. Workers can identify and provide important information about hazards in their workplaces. Their opinions and suggestions for change also are valuable.



Once problem jobs are identified, conducting an in-depth ergonomic job analysis can help identify solutions to prevent MSDs. An ergonomic job hazard analysis is a technique that focuses on job tasks as a way to identify hazards before they occur. It focuses on the relationship between the worker, the task, the tools, and the work environment.

# ERGONOMICS AND THE OFFICE



In the hit television phenomenon known as The Office, Michael Scott listened inattentively as warehouse manager Darryl Philbin spoke on the dangers of warehouse equipment. In many scenarios brought up by Darryl, Michael continued to act like he was entitled to using things like the baler and the forklift. While the warehouse, and subsequently our power generation sites do impose the most dangerous work our employees can face, hidden and underlying hazards affect all of our employees both on site and off.



In the second segment of the safety training episode, Michael invited the warehouse workers upstairs to see that office life is just as dangerous as warehouse employment. In a hilarious exchange with Toby Flenderson, HR representative for the Scranton, PA branch of Dunder Mifflin, Michael was embarrassed by the relatively moderate workplace hazards present in the office by comparison.

NOW, the acute hazards of power generation, meaning those that have swift and sometimes irreversible effects, are some of the most dangerous in the world if not for the safe work practices of our very skilled operators, technicians, engineers and more. But the long-term, chronic hazards of every job in our portfolio must be taken just as seriously.

Ergonomics, the science of designing and arranging tools and environments for people to use them safely and efficiently, is of vital importance to quality of life later on. Whether turning a wrench, writing an article for our amazing newsletter (seriously, let me know if you have one for us! ;) ) or crunching the numbers in our accounts payable department, doing things inefficiently or unsafe can have major repercussions on how you walk, ride bikes, throw a ball with the grandkids or play senior-level sports when the golden years arrive.

If something feels uncomfortable, or if you are having muscle pains when working, talk to your supervisor or the safety team to see if there is a more comfortable tool or process available to complete your task. Musculoskeletal Disorders such as carpal tunnel syndrome should be taken very seriously now, so they don't have to be later.

Ergo, ergo is the best.

- Michael Circle, Assistant To The Regional Manager



As the Weather changes in some locations, wildlife behaviors change with it.

Be sure to keep an eye out for spiders, snakes, hogs and other dangerous animals while out in the site.

# SGE OPPORTUNITIES

## REGION 2

**SPECIAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES:** Listed below are upcoming SGE opportunities that are currently open in *OSHA REGION 2*. If you are available to participate on any of these VPP evaluation teams, please reply directly to Richard Brown at [Wbrown.richard@dol.gov](mailto:Wbrown.richard@dol.gov). Please obtain permission to participate from your supervisor before volunteering for a SGE assignment.

- 1) McWane Ductile, Phillipsburg, NJ – Need three SGEs – Dates: January 22-26, 2024
- 2) COGEN Technologies, Linden, NJ – Need two SGEs – Dates: February 12-16, 2024
- 3) Nucor Steel Auburn Inc., Auburn, NY – Need three SGEs - Dates: February 26 - March 1, 2024
- 4) L’Oreal USA, Franklin Manufacturing, Somerset, NJ – Need two SGEs – Dates: March 11 – 15, 2024
- 5) Pratt & Whitney - HMI Metal Powders, Clayville, NY - Need three SGEs – Dates: March 18 – 22, 2024
- 6) Parsons NJMVIS Winslow, Ancora, NJ – Need two SGEs – Dates: April 3 – 5, 2024
- 7) Veolia ES Technical Solutions LLC, Schenectady, NY – Need two SGEs – Dates: April 15 - 19, 2024
- 8) Johns Manville Roofing Systems, Plattsburgh, NY – Need two SGEs – Dates: May 13 - 17, 2024
- 9) Mollenberg-Betz Inc., Buffalo, NY – Need one SGE – Dates: May 20 – 24, 2024
- 10) Covanta Niagara, Niagara Falls, NY – Need two SGEs – Dates: June 3-7, 2024
- 11) Valtris Specialty Chemicals, Bridgeport, NJ – Need three SGEs - Dates: June 10 – 14, 2024
- 12) Covanta Onondaga L.P., Jamesville, NY – Need two SGE – Dates: August 12 - 16, 2024

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For information about VPP, visit us at: [www.osha.gov/dcsp/vpp/](http://www.osha.gov/dcsp/vpp/)

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# SGE OPPORTUNITIES

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## REGION 8

**S**PECIAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES: Listed below are upcoming SGE opportunities that are currently open in [OSHA REGION 8](#). Please reach out to Brad Baptiste, Regional VPP Manager, Region VIII if you are interested!

1. *OSHA Region VIII is seeking SGEs who wish to evaluate VPP annual Self-evaluation Reports. The process will begin in early March 2024 and can be conducted entirely remotely (no travel required!). Five annual report reviews is equivalent to one full point of SGE service credit!*

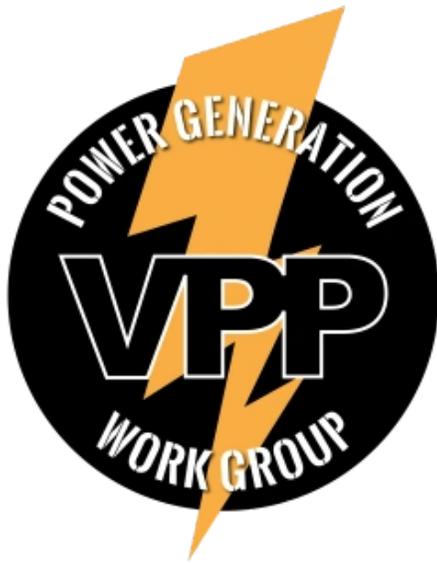
2. *Here is a basic list of upcoming VPP onsite recertification evaluations in OSHA Region VIII for 2024. The date listed is the date of the opening conference. Most evaluations will be three days (Tuesday thru Thursday). For more details on any individual item listed, please contact [baptiste.brad@dol.gov](mailto:baptiste.brad@dol.gov) or call 303-915-0996:*

|                                       |                  |
|---------------------------------------|------------------|
| <i>Hunter Douglas-- Broomfield CO</i> | <i>3/18/2024</i> |
| <i>Raytheon-- Aurora CO</i>           | <i>4/16/2024</i> |
| <i>Molson Coors-- Golden CO</i>       | <i>4/23/2024</i> |
| <i>NuStar Energy-- Jamestown ND</i>   | <i>5/14/2024</i> |
| <i>Cargill-- Wahpeton ND</i>          | <i>6/25/2024</i> |
| <i>NuStar Energy-- Sioux Falls SD</i> | <i>7/9/2024</i>  |
| <i>NWE - Hauser-- Helena MT</i>       | <i>7/16/2024</i> |
| <i>Sturgeon CIT-- Denver CO</i>       | <i>7/16/2024</i> |
| <i>Sturgeon TD-- Denver CO</i>        | <i>7/16/2024</i> |
| <i>Marvin Composites-- Fargo ND</i>   | <i>7/23/2024</i> |
| <i>Bayer-- Harrisburg SD</i>          | <i>7/29/2024</i> |
| <i>Johns Manville-- Belgrade MT</i>   | <i>8/19/2024</i> |

*If you would like to volunteer to serve as an SGE on any of these evaluations, then please contact Brad Baptiste at [baptiste.brad@dol.gov](mailto:baptiste.brad@dol.gov)*

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# VPP ELEMENTS

## MEETINGS 2023

2:30 to 4:00 pm (EST)

### Q1 Meeting – February 16th

Note Taker – Chris Magnuson  
Safety Minute – Dustin Johnson  
VPP Element – Hud Griffith

### Q2 Meeting – May 18th

Note Taker – Jason Shaw  
Safety Minute – Justin Maynard  
VPP Element – Michael Circle

### Q3 Meeting – August 17th

Note Taker – Michael Circle  
Safety Minute – Mark Miranda  
VPP Element – Bradley Kelley

### Q4 Meeting – November 16th

Safety Minute – Daryl Bauman  
VPP Element – Ray Delfing

### Planning Meeting -- Dec. 7th

Join us to help plan our 2024 presentation schedule!

## **M** ANAGEMENT LEADERSHIP AND EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT.

The applicant must describe top-level management leadership in the applicant or participant's SHMS. (Note: Management must clearly describe its commitment to meeting and maintaining the requirements of VPP. The applicant must also describe how employees are involved in safety and health.)

## **W** orksite Analysis

You must describe methods used to recognize, identify, and analyze hazards. Effective worksite analysis provides the information managers and employees need for a thorough understanding of all hazards to which they may be exposed.

## **H** azard Prevention and Control

You must describe and give examples of how hazards are addressed, including preventative maintenance, occupational health care program, emergency preparedness, and hazard elimination employing the hierarchy of controls.

## **S** afety and Health Training

You must describe its formal and informal safety and health training program for managers, supervisors, and employees. The information must include training protocols and schedules of training.

