



Injury Trends Tumble to 15-Year Low

The downward trend in two key safety performance indicators – recordable injuries and the Total Case Incident Rate (TCIR)* – continues 15 years after the company adopted the STOP and STAR observation programs. The TCIR rate, for example, topped out around 40 in the 1980s, dropped to the teens in the 1990s, and dipped to 4.9 last year.

“We’ve just been getting better and better every year,” John Robinson, safety coordinator, said. “The number one reason for the steady improvement is using a strong metric to track injuries. Our metric used to be TCIR exclusively. Now we measure STOP observations. Soon we will be doing joint STOP/STAR observations.”

“Twenty-five to 33 percent of the STOP observations turned in every week are of people making safe choices,” John said. “Our challenge now is to do more observations during startups, shutdowns, and changeovers to catch more near misses and correct them before an injury occurs.”

Layoffs and reduced hours also played a role in Bright Wood’s improved safety performance last year. Staff reductions removed less experienced people, the ones more likely to be hurt on the job. “We learned that the flip side of that is the remaining more experienced people can also make unsafe choices if they are complacent,” John said.

No more than two recordable injuries have occurred every month since August 2008, with only one in October, December, and January (the last time the company achieved this performance level was June 1998). “The goal of zero recordables is well within reach,” John said. “It is starting to be a rare occurrence to have more than two injuries a month. If people can avoid complacency and prevent



If the downward trend in recordable injuries and the Total Case Incident Rate continues, 2009 could be one of the best years ever for safety performance. **Ventura Gamboa** keeps Redmond’s rip saw humming.

injuries by observing and fixing near misses, 2009 will be the year with the fewest injuries in recent history.”

*The Total Case Incident Rate (TCIR) is a calculation of recordable injuries factoring in hours worked so that one year can be compared to another despite fluctuations in crew size. A TCIR of 40, for example, means that four people out of 10 have a chance of suffering a recordable injury.