

# OREGON INDEPENDENT AGGREGATE ASSOCIATION

– Industry News – Updates – Events –

## May 2026 Newsletter

### Board of Directors:

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### Summer Safety in Oregon Quarries

As summer arrives across Oregon, aggregate operations face a new set of safety challenges that come with rising temperatures and dry conditions. While the busy season often brings increased production and longer workdays, it also increases the risks associated with heat exposure, dust, equipment fires, and wildfires. Preparing early and staying proactive can help quarry operators protect workers, maintain equipment reliability, and reduce environmental hazards throughout the summer months.

Worker safety should remain the highest priority during hot weather operations. Quarry employees often spend long hours outdoors operating heavy equipment, working around crushers, or performing maintenance in direct sunlight. These conditions can quickly lead to dehydration, heat exhaustion, or heat stroke if proper precautions are not taken.

Recognizing the warning signs of heat-related illness is critical. Symptoms such as dizziness, fatigue, headaches, muscle cramps, nausea, and confusion can develop quickly during extreme heat. Supervisors and crews should monitor one another throughout the workday and respond immediately when symptoms appear.

Hydration is one of the simplest and most effective ways to prevent heat illness. Workers should drink water consistently throughout the day, even before feeling thirsty. Scheduled water breaks, shaded rest areas, and cooling stations can help employees recover from heat exposure and reduce fatigue. Many operations also adjust workloads or rotate physically demanding tasks during the hottest parts of the afternoon to reduce overexertion.

In addition to heat, summer weather creates significant dust hazards across quarry sites. Dry roads, crushing operations, and heavy truck traffic can produce large amounts of airborne dust that reduce visibility and

impact respiratory health. Long-term exposure to dust can create serious health concerns for workers and increase operational safety risks.

Dust control measures become especially important during the summer season. Water trucks, sprinklers, and misting systems help reduce airborne particles on haul roads and processing areas. Operators must also ensure employees use proper respiratory protection when conditions require it and continue following Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) standards for dust control and worker protection.

Summer heat also places additional stress on quarry equipment. Engines, cooling systems, and hydraulic components work harder in high temperatures, increasing the risk of overheating and mechanical failure. Without regular maintenance, equipment fires can become a serious hazard during dry summer conditions. Dust buildup, grease, leaking fluids, and debris near hot engines can ignite quickly if equipment is not cleaned and inspected regularly. Daily inspections should include checking for hydraulic leaks, monitoring engine temperatures, and removing combustible material from machinery. Fire extinguishers should remain accessible, properly charged, and inspected frequently throughout the season.

Wildfire prevention is another major concern for Oregon aggregate operations. Many quarries are located near forests, grasslands, or other dry vegetation where a single spark from equipment could ignite a wildfire. Oregon's increasingly severe fire seasons have made prevention and preparedness more important than ever. Operations located within one-eighth of a mile, or 660 feet, of Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) protected land or designated forestland must follow additional fire season regulations and restrictions. Quarry operators should monitor local fire danger levels daily and ensure fire tools, extinguishers, and emergency water supplies are available on service trucks and equipment. Strong communication and teamwork are essential during periods of elevated fire danger. Employees should understand site-specific fire prevention procedures and know how to respond quickly if a fire starts. Regular safety meetings and emergency response reviews can help crews stay prepared throughout the summer months.

Summer safety in the aggregate industry depends on preparation, awareness, and consistency. Protecting workers from heat illness, controlling dust, maintaining equipment, and reducing wildfire risks all require daily attention from both management and field crews. By focusing on proactive safety practices and following MSHA and ODF requirements, Oregon quarries can continue operating safely and efficiently during the demanding summer season.

As temperatures rise across the state, now is the time for aggregate operations to review safety plans, reinforce best practices, and ensure employees are prepared for the challenges summer conditions can bring.

**Erwin Hackett**  
**OIAA Chair**

## OIAA Annual Scholarship Opportunity

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The Oregon Independent Aggregate Association (OIAA) is pleased to offer an annual \$2,500 scholarship for students pursuing careers related to the construction, aggregate, and forestry industries. Eligible applicants include current OIAA members, employees of member companies, and their family members enrolled in or planning to attend a university, community college, private college, or trade school. Eligible fields of study include construction management, engineering, geology, forestry, heavy equipment repair, welding, architecture, and land use planning.

Members are encouraged to share this opportunity with employees and families who have eligible students who may benefit. The application emphasizes a personal statement outlining career goals, interest in the industry, and financial need. Scholarship recipients are recognized by OIAA and invited to accept the award in person at a Board Meeting. The application deadline is **September 1, 2026**. Application materials are included at the end of this Newsletter.

Let's get the word out!



## MSHA Part 46 Training:

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### Albany:

- 📍 **Location:** Linn County Fair & Expo
- 🕒 **Date & Time:** Monday, March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2027 7:00 AM – 5:00 PM

### Roseburg:

- 📍 **Location:** Douglas County Fairgrounds
- 🕒 **Date & Time:** Tuesday, March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2027 7:00 AM – 5:00 PM



Please feel free to share this opportunity with anyone who may be interested in attending—members and non-members alike. The MSHA Part 46 Training form will be sent out in the fall of 2026. Not unlike this year, it can be completed electronically using Adobe Acrobat or printed/fill it out by hand. Questions? Email Melissa at [melissa.bronson@kniferiver.com](mailto:melissa.bronson@kniferiver.com)

## General Information:

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We truly value and encourage active participation from all our members. You're invited to attend our meetings anytime. If you'd like to get more involved, share ideas for improving our association, or learn about upcoming meetings, please feel free to reach out to any of our board members.

### Join the Board!

With two of our founding directors retiring, we're opening the door for fresh energy and new voices—and we'd love to have you be part of it. We're actively looking to add members to our Board of Directors, and this is a great time to get involved. If you're curious, interested, or even just thinking about it, reach out to any board member or join us at our next meeting to explore the opportunity. We'd be excited to welcome you to the conversation.

### Next Meeting:

📍 **Location:** IMA (KPD) Office – Conference Room, Springfield, OR

🕒 **Date & Time:** TBD

### Article Content:

We're always looking for great content to feature in our newsletter. If you have an article, safety tip, or any information you believe would benefit or interest our members, we'd love to include it. Please submit your materials to: [melissa.bronson@kniferiver.com](mailto:melissa.bronson@kniferiver.com) or [erwinh@rfpco.com](mailto:erwinh@rfpco.com)

### Newsletter Changes:

We're excited to continue building community within the Oregon Independent Aggregate Association, and one great way to do that is through our Member Spotlight feature. We invite current members to submit a short spotlight showcasing their business—whether that's a quick Q&A, a fun fact about your operation, highlights of unique projects, or non-sensitive photos of your quarry, equipment, or crew. Including a brief blurb about your company helps us share your story while giving you a little extra marketing visibility. If you'd like to be featured in an upcoming edition, we'd love to hear from you.

Visit our website at [www.oraggregate.com](http://www.oraggregate.com)

# Member Spotlight:

## YOUR COMPANY HERE!

This month we don't have a Member Spotlight—apparently everyone is too humble to brag. So, here's your friendly reminder: send us a short company bio and a photo. We'd love to introduce you to the rest of the group and, yes, give you a completely shameless plug.

The logo for the Oregon Independent Aggregate Association features a stylized globe with a blue and white color scheme. The text "Oregon Independent Aggregate Association" is overlaid on the globe in a bold, sans-serif font. The word "Oregon" is on the top line, "Independent" is on the second line, and "Aggregate Association" is on the third line.

Oregon Independent  
Aggregate Association