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Commissioner

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## Press Release

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### Fairbanks Memorial Hospital Approved for Voluntary Protection Program

JUNEAU, Alaska—Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development Commissioner Heidi Drygas re-approved Fairbanks Memorial Hospital for the Alaska Occupational Safety and Health (AKOSH) Voluntary Protection Program at the “Star” level to signify a tremendous achievement in occupational safety and health. The Voluntary Protection Program recognizes and promotes effective workplace safety and health management through a cooperative program between a company’s management and employees and the AKOSH program.

As a Voluntary Protection Program Star recipient, Fairbanks Memorial Hospital won’t be subject to random enforcement inspections for five years. Enforcement regulations remain in effect, however, and cases of employee complaints, accident investigations or other significant incidents will result in an enforcement inspection. Participation in the program is voluntary.

“There is nothing more important at a workplace than worker safety,” said Commissioner Drygas. “We believe there is value in recognizing employers that are committed to occupational safety and health, and I applaud Fairbanks Memorial Hospital for achieving this honor.”

“Safety is a top priority for everyone at the hospital — safety for patients, staff, and visitors,” said Doug Fleming, senior manager of safety, security and emergency management for Fairbanks Memorial Hospital. “Our decision to participate in the Voluntary Protection Program is rooted in our ‘People First’ culture.”

On average, Voluntary Protection Program participants experience 52% fewer workplace accidents than their competitors. Fewer accidents results in less downtime as well as lower costs associated with accidents, which in turn leads to increased productivity. There are currently nine Voluntary Protection Program sites in Alaska. For a complete listing of the sites and more information about the program, go to <http://www.labor.state.ak.us/lss/vpp-participants.html>.

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