

# NEWS



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April 20, 2016

## **THPRD ACHIEVES MAJOR SAFETY MILESTONE WITH GRADUATION FROM SHARP**

In an achievement that took 10 years but significantly reduced employee injuries in the process, the Tualatin Hills Park & Recreation District has graduated from a prestigious safety program run by the Oregon division of the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

The Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program, or SHARP, honors employers that operate exemplary injury and illness prevention programs.

According to Oregon OSHA, less than 1% of employers in the U.S. have achieved the SHARP award. In addition, THPRD is the first parks and recreation agency in the nation with multiple sites to graduate from the program.

The park district has historically been a safe and healthy place to work. But 11 years ago, at the urging of Nick Koch, Safety coordinator, the district committed to complete SHARP. Because of the size of THPRD, it was done in three phases, starting with Administration and Maintenance, followed by Recreation and then Aquatics.

The rigorous endeavor entailed numerous consultations, evaluations, questionnaires, detailed analysis and extensive documentation that Nancy Agnesse, claims/loss control specialist, recently facilitated for Aquatics.

"The process usually takes an employer five years to complete, but OSHA had never worked with an organization like ours with multiple facilities," said Mark Hokkanen, Risk & Contract Management manager. "They usually focus on manufacturers with a single site. Also, they had never worked with an organization with recreation and aquatic components."

Happily, the 10-year process paid off with significant improvements in the district's safety measures.

"Since beginning SHARP in 2004-05, we've reduced our overall employee injuries by 50%, which reduces our overall costs and therefore benefits taxpayers," Hokkanen said. "We've developed a solid safety and loss control system, and we're determined to keep improving on it."

### **About THPRD**

Formed in 1955, THPRD is the largest special park district in Oregon, spanning 50 square miles and serving about 240,000 residents in the greater Beaverton area. The district provides year-round recreational opportunities for people of all ages and abilities. Offerings include thousands of widely diverse classes, 95 park sites with active recreational amenities, nearly 70 miles of trails, eight swim centers, six recreation centers, and about 1,500 acres of natural areas. For more information, visit [www.thprd.org](http://www.thprd.org) or call 503-645-6433.

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