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# News Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

February 17, 2026

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## **Freeport Public Works Achieves Top Safety Designation**

*The department achieved SHARP status after working with IDOL's On-Site program*

**FREEPORT, Ill.** – The Illinois Department of Labor's (IDOL) On-Site Safety and Health Consultation Program (On-Site) is proud to announce the City of Freeport Public Works Department has successfully achieved Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program (SHARP) status.

“Achieving SHARP recognition demonstrates the City of Freeport’s deep and sustained commitment to protecting its workforce,” **said Illinois Department of Labor Director Jane Flanagan**. “This designation reflects a proactive safety culture, strong leadership, and meaningful collaboration with our On-Site program to identify hazards, provide training, and continuously improve working conditions.”

The City of Freeport Public Works Department serves the community through its street, water, and wastewater operations that involve high-risk activities such as paving, traffic control, trenching and excavation, snow removal, and chemical storage. Beginning in 2022, the city partnered with IDOL’s On-Site program to conduct safety and health visits, correct hazards, and provide training for employees across departments.

“This OSHA SHARP recognition belongs to our Public Works team,” **said Freeport City Manager Rob Boyer**. “It reflects a culture where safety is built into every decision, every task, and every job site. I am proud of the professionalism and care our employees show for one another each day.”

The Freeport Public Works Department is the first of its kind to achieve SHARP status in Illinois and among 15 public works/street departments nationwide.

The SHARP process can be months long and when successfully completed, it puts small businesses or government agencies into an elite national group committed to the safety and health of their workers. Those interested in the process can start by doing the following:

- Request a consultation visit through On-Site.
- Correct identified hazards.
- Implement a safety and health management system that addresses OSHA's Recommended Practices for Safety and Health Programs.

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- Maintain your company's Days Away, Restricted, or Transferred (DART) rate and Total Recordable Case (TRC) rate below the national average for your industry.
- Agree to notify On-Site of any changes in the working conditions or introduction of new hazards into the workplace.

"The City of Freeport went above and beyond the basic requirements of the SHARP program," **said Illinois On-Site Safety and Health Consultation Safety Supervisor Ed LeFevour**. "From extensive hands-on training to significant capital investments in safer infrastructure, their leadership and employees showed a clear commitment to reducing injuries and making safety part of everyday operations."

SHARP recognizes small- and medium-sized employers who operate an exemplary injury and illness prevention program. Acceptance of a worksite into SHARP is an achievement of status that singles out a worksite among its peers as a model for worksite safety and health.

Upon receiving SHARP recognition, federal OSHA exempts a worksite from OSHA-programmed inspections during the period that SHARP certification is valid. Other benefits of SHARP include the following:

- Development of an innovative safety and health management system.
- Boosted employee morale by creating a safe and healthy workplace.
- Increased involvement of employees to continuously improve workplace conditions.
- Improved efficiency by lowering worker compensation costs.

The On-Site program offers free, confidential safety and health consultations for employers with up to 250 employees on site and 500 nationwide. On-Site can help Illinois businesses and government entities meet federal OSHA health and safety regulations and can assist those companies interested in pursuing SHARP status.

If you have questions about On-Site, you can call 800-972- 4216, send an email to [dol.consultation@illinois.gov](mailto:dol.consultation@illinois.gov) or visit the [Worksafe site](#).

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