



# ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

**JB PRITZKER**  
GOVERNOR

**JANE R. FLANAGAN**  
DIRECTOR

## Warehouse Safety Standards Task Force MINUTES

**Date:** July 18, 2023  
**Time:** 10:00 a.m.  
**Location:** Southern Illinois University Edwardsville (SIUE)  
Birger Hall and Via Video Conference

**Call to Order:** 10:06 a.m.  
Jane Flanagan, Director of IDOL

### Roll Call of Board Members:

*Present:* Director Jane Flanagan, Anna Brown, Sen. Erica Harriss, Scott Kunkel (video), Sen. Seth Lewis, Rep. Kevin Olickal (video), Mayor Art Risavy, Rep. Katie Stuart, Marcos Cenicerros (video)

*Others Present:* Cope family members: Alexandra Cope, Carla Pope, Lynn Pope. Greg Bryant, Lynn Vasquez, Gabriela Garza, Alec Laird, Staff from Rep. Katie Stuart's office  
Staff from IDOL: Anna Koeppel, Erik Kambarian, Elizabeth Guerrero, Paul Cicchini, Andrew Fox  
Staff from SIUE  
Alec Laird, Illinois Retail Merchants Association  
Gabriela Garza, Illinois Manufacturers Association  
Lynn Vasquez, Masonry Institute of Southern Illinois

### Quorum established

### New Business:

#### Introduction by Chancellor of SIUE

Welcoming remarks and appreciation of advocacy of victim's families.  
James T. Minor, Chancellor

#### Comments by Mayor of Edwardsville, Art Risavy

Acknowledgment of honor and responsibility to serve on the task force. We are here to listen and learn. Welcome to the City of Edwardsville.

#### Comments by Rep. Katie Stuart

History of establishment and formation of the Task Force

Lincoln Tower Plaza  
524 South 2nd Street, Suite 400  
Springfield, Illinois 62701  
(217) 782-6206  
Fax: (217) 782-0596

Michael A Bilandic Building  
160 North LaSalle, Suite C-1300  
Chicago, Illinois 60601-3150  
(312) 793-2800  
Fax: (312) 793-5257

Regional Office Building  
2309 West Main Street, Suite 115  
Marion, Illinois 62959  
(618) 993-7090  
Fax: (618) 993-7258

Toured the devastation with the Governor and other local elected officials.

Looked at building codes

Took this as a charge that we had to do something

Procedures and policies of warehouses

Task Force is a means to gather information and help to change

### **Introduction of Members, Guests, and IDOL Staff**

In-person and virtual

### **Presentation by the Cope family: Carla Cope, mother of Clayton Cope (deceased)**

Clayton was one of six who died after a tornado struck Amazon in Edwardsville on

December 10, 2021

Look forward to seeing how this this task force will be used to better protect workers

### **Presentation by Chief of Edwardsville Fire Department, James Whiteford**

**See attachment.**

Audio and video presentation of the path of tornado and emergency response, and Chief's three recommendations (attached.)

1. Support the Illinois Mutual Aid Box Alarm System
2. Lobby building code bodies to expand storm shelter requirements
3. Support smaller communities in hiring of code enforcement staff (including grant funding.)

Questions from attendees:

- Tilt up construction
- MABAS described post 9/11, enables responders to look at state holistically, funding discussed as state and federal
- Recommendations of Chief Whiteford were discussed, and IDOL committed to forwarding those to Members
- Comments regarding storm shelters within warehouses
- Discussion of building codes in various counties

### **Comments by Director Jane Flanagan**

Let's discuss how the Task Force could best focus our efforts. Perhaps we could divide our focus into three boxes:

1. Structural safety and building codes
2. Warehouses' internal policies and procedures, protocols for emergencies, shelters, multiple employers on site.
3. Emergency response agencies, procedures, responses

### **Comment by Lynn Vasquez**

Our organization would love to present on storm shelters in future

### **Comment by Alec Laird**

Chief touches on the subject of large distribution centers which are in different municipalities with different building codes. It would be helpful to have a consistent path forward, and consistent structural codes.

**Comment by Chief Whiteford**

The owner of the facility may lease it to a tenant that uses the building for something other than what it was built for. It's built as a spec warehouse and then is leased out for manufacturing, so it was not intended for manufacturing.

**Comment by Rep. Katie Stuart**

Cities should not compete against each other and have more consistency across the state. Would be helpful to our mayors, and show that Illinois cares about cities across the state.

**Comment by Architect Scott Kunkel**

Would like to focus on the second set of recommendation by the Chief, and concur with the Chief, very challenging to design buildings for worst-case wind situations like this. Lot of merit in the consideration of comprehensive use of supplement shelters within structures, standardization of design so that they can be more practicable and predictable.

**Public observer comment**

Placement of storm shelters within facility so that it is easily accessible to workers, and structural standards so that someone doesn't have to traverse a building to get to a shelter

**Comment by Director Jane Flanagan**

Warehouse vs manufacturing – structure could be same size but manufacturing traditionally involves more people and zoned differently.

**Response from Scott Kunkel**

Most structural codes don't rely on occupant loads for structural requirements. Occupant loads usually affect egress requirements and similar.

**Question by Director Jane Flanagan**

Can we agree on following areas of focus?

1. Structural safety
2. Policies and procedures, recommendations
3. Emergency responses

**Votes Taken:**

1. Vote taken to agree that Task Force would focus on three aforementioned areas  
Motion by Scott Kunkel  
Seconded  
Motion passed
2. Motion to issue quarterly reports due to Governor and General Assembly  
IDOL will circulate Minutes  
Motion made

Seconded  
Motion passed

3. Motion to host quarterly meeting, different areas of the state

Seconded  
Motion passed

**Question about where to host next meeting was raised:**

Member Marcos Cenicerros offered to host next meeting in hybrid format in Joliet

**Vote on Bylaws was discussed:**

Motion made to adopt Bylaws  
Seconded  
Draft Bylaws were adopted by unanimous vote

**Public Comment:**

Director Jane Flanagan opened the floor to public comment  
No public comments were received

**Adjournment:**

**Meeting adjourned** at 11:35 a.m.