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OSHA reaches settlement agreement with Nebraska-based ConAgra  
Foods to protect workers from anhydrous ammonia

**WASHINGTON** – ConAgra Foods, Inc. dba Lamb Weston, Inc. has signed a settlement agreement with the U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration to protect workers at five of its facilities from the release of anhydrous ammonia from refrigeration systems.

The agreement protects workers at Idaho, Arkansas, Missouri and Ohio facilities of the Nebraska-based company. It requires ConAgra to implement controls to reduce hazards associated with release of ammonia from low pressures receivers.

"This agreement ensures that ConAgra will protect workers from releases of ammonia by enclosing older LPRs that were not already enclosed, and by providing other controls such as normal and emergency ventilation to prevent exposure," said Assistant Secretary of Labor for Occupational Safety and Health Dr. David Michaels. "OSHA's corporate-wide settlement agreements are highly effective tools for ensuring that companies take a systemic approach to addressing hazards that can injure or kill their workers."

OSHA's Process Safety Management standard requires employers to document that equipment that was designed to meet codes and standards no longer in general use is still safe to operate under OSHA standards. OSHA originally cited ConAgra for failing to determine whether these older LPRs were being operated safely.

Under the agreement, ConAgra will implement administrative and engineering controls at the covered LPRs to control hazards associated with the release of ammonia. This includes building enclosures around equipment that is not already enclosed. Each enclosure must include normal and emergency ventilation that meets specified requirements, automatic switches for both normal and emergency ventilation and ammonia detection alarms. Egress

doors for the enclosures will be required to include panic hardware and to swing in the direction of egress.

The agreement is the result of an inspection conducted at the company's American Falls, Idaho, facility, initiated under OSHA's PSM Covered Chemical Facilities National Emphasis Program, established to reduce or eliminate the workplace hazards associated with the catastrophic release of highly hazardous chemicals.

Under the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, employers are responsible for providing safe and healthful workplaces for their employees. OSHA's role is to ensure these conditions for America's working men and women by setting and enforcing standards, and providing training, education and assistance. For more information, visit <http://www.osha.gov>.

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