

# 2023 Stand-Down Success Story: Abbott and AbbVie



Abbott and AbbVie collaborated in 2023 to host a successful joint Stand-Down to Prevent Falls in Construction. Abbott is a medical devices and health care company, and AbbVie is a pharmaceutical research and development company. The companies have been hosting stand-downs since the National Stand-Down event began in 2014 (this was their tenth event); this event was hosted as part of the Great Lakes Construction Association Ambassador Alliance.

Over 500 workers attended the Abbott and AbbVie Stand-Down, which was one of the largest stand-downs in Illinois. The companies invited participation from internal groups that work at heights such as the maintenance division, construction division, environmental, health and safety staff, project managers, and site engineers; contractors that perform work at both companies' sites were also invited to participate. The Abbott Grassroots Safety Team and AbbVie Construction Services team also attended.

The event lasted for two hours and took place outside on a beautiful day. Vendors attended the event to display equipment and services, and workers spent time circulating between different vendors. Vendors also hosted fall protection demonstrations. Fire departments for both companies attended to talk about rescue and confined space. Gary Weil, the head construction inspector for the OSHA Chicago Area Office, addressed the crowd and gave a short speech on workplace safety. In addition to OSHA, external attendees included The Great Lakes Construction Association (GLCA), Honeywell, Rolston Hogstrom/Werner Ladder, JLG – National Lift Truck, One Way Safety, Grainger, and SwitchRail.

Event organizers provided a large catered lunch with hamburgers, hot dogs, soda pop, and ice cream. A DJ played music and provided a speaker equipment system. Hardhat stickers and CPWR - The Center for Construction Research and Training hazard alert cards were distributed to attendees.

In addition to this collaborative Stand-Down, Abbott and AbbVie engaged in other fall prevention activities throughout the week. Abbott hosted additional smaller Stand-Down events at other locations. AbbVie sent out a daily fall protection toolbox talk and infographics to employees throughout the week, along with hosting a live online toolbox talks on MEWPs/aerial lifts that demonstrated real-time inspection of the equipment.

Both companies emphasized that the key to a successful Stand-Down is support from upper management and expressed gratitude for the support they have received from their upper management to host stand-downs. They also said that, if possible, providing food is an important way to promote attendance and engagement at the event.

