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**Recent Construction Site Crane Accidents
Create Increased Focus on Workplace Safety in Colorado**
Pinnacol Assurance Teams with Governor Ritter to Decrease Jobsite Injuries

Denver, June 5, 2008 – Colorado employers have experienced more fatal workplace injuries on average than the rest of the country, spurring Pinnacol Assurance, the largest writer of workers' compensation insurance in Colorado, to work with Governor Bill Ritter to increase workplace safety awareness throughout the state. Governor Ritter put his support behind Pinnacol's efforts today by signing a proclamation declaring the right to a safe workplace for all Colorado employees in honor of National Safety Awareness Month.

Recent statistics show that in 2006, 137 people were fatally injured on the job in Colorado. That same year, Colorado had 5.4 fatalities per 100,000 workers, which is higher than the national average of four fatalities per 100,000 workers.

"Growth and development are vital to Colorado's economy and workplace safety plays a huge role in our state's future," said Pinnacol's President and CEO, Ken Ross. "In the past week alone there have been crane accidents in New York, Kansas City and Iowa, resulting in four fatalities. That has put the spotlight on the importance of ensuring safe workplaces for all workers. We see National Safety Awareness Month as an opportunity to reinforce the critical need for safety programs in all industries, and to ensure that Colorado's economy can continue to thrive by reducing the number of workplace injuries."

Ross noted that the ripple effect of workplace safety and lost-time injuries has major economic implications. The average cost of one employee experiencing an injury on the job is about \$4,600 to Pinnacol policyholders, and on average 57.7 days of work time is lost as a result. Currently there are 30 active construction permits in the city of Denver alone, and 17 of those projects also have large crane permits. That drew the attention of Governor Ritter who spoke about National Safety Awareness Month and the importance of workplace safety to the state of Colorado.

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“It is important to applaud those who work hard to protect Colorado’s most valuable resource, the employees,” said Ritter. “The citizens of this state are the ones who are on the forefront of business and development and should be guaranteed the right to a safe workplace.”

National Safety Awareness Month has been recognized since 1953 when the U.S. Congress chartered the National Safety Council, which to this day continues to be committed to ensuring that this country’s communities, roadways and workplaces are safe.

Many workplace safety accidents can be avoided with due diligence and care to enhance the lives of workers across the state. To reduce fatalities and injuries, workers must be provided with workplace safety awareness and education in all industries.

“Our economy will benefit from workplace safety,” said Donald J. Mares, Executive Director of Colorado’s Department of Labor and Employment, the State agency responsible for administering the Workers’ Compensation Act. “Businesses keep costs down; employee moral is boosted; workers’ compensation claims are lower or non-existent and sometimes businesses are rewarded for safe workplaces through dividends.”

Pinnacol offers a variety of free resources to help ensure safe workplaces for policyholders. Safety consultants and return-to-work specialists are available at no cost to perform worksite inspections and develop customized injury-prevention and transitional work programs. In addition, Pinnacol hosts regular seminars on diverse issues ranging from back-injury prevention to safety for non-English speaking workers. It also works with the safety directors of its insured to reinforce the safety practices on the jobsites.

About Pinnacol Assurance

For more than 90 years, Pinnacol Assurance has been Colorado’s assured and trusted source of workers’ compensation insurance for Colorado employers. Through its affiliated agents, Pinnacol provides comprehensive, competitively priced coverage; immediate attention to claims; a highly qualified network of **SelectNet** medical providers; and proactive safety programs to approximately 60,000 Colorado businesses. Over the past four years, Pinnacol has returned \$227 million in general dividends to its policyholders statewide – a mark of the company’s stability and strong financial health.

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