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**Pepper Construction's Virtual Reality Safety Training Wins**

**Prestigious AGC Innovation Award**

*Unique program creates a "real life" safety learning environment.*

***C*HIGAGO, Il – March 25, 2021** The Association of General Contractors (AGC) recently honored Pepper's Virtual Reality Training software as the First Place Award Winner in their annual Innovation competition. The software uses virtual reality to turn the general safety training monologue into a dialogue and an immersive experience that team members will remember and apply throughout their careers.

An in-house collaboration between Pepper's Safety and Virtual Construction teams, this unique program creates a "real life" safety learning environment using the company's own statistics.

"Construction training needs to be as realistic as possible, if we want people to really retain the information," says Jennifer Suerth, Pepper's Vice President of Technical Services. "We searched the market for a product that delivered high end, realistic graphics along with the option to customize the training based on our company's statistics and trends – and came up short. So, we decided to build our own. This will also allow us to evolve the program to future needs."

The result is the ability to immerse people into a replicated jobsite with real hazards, in a completely authentic yet safe way.

The award-winning program has had a tremendous impact. " The reality that this can make tradespeople safer on Pepper projects is exciting," said Dan Ruane, Vice President of Safety in Pepper's Illinois and Wisconsin locations. "Not only does it improve outcomes on the project they are building now – it provides applicable knowledge that workers will carry to other projects throughout their career. We see this as a tremendous opportunity to impact safety across the construction industry."

The first session of the training program focuses on concrete work, which tends to have higher incident rates. A drywall-specific experience has also been added. To build it, the team combined Building Information Models (BIM) and existing project laser scan point-clouds using Unreal Engine – a creation engine used to build video games that is available to anyone. You can see a video of the application in action [here.](https://pepperconstruction.wistia.com/medias/cfbjrnziuj)

The AGC Innovation Awards will be officially announced at the opening session of the AGC's Annual Convention on September 21st in Orlando, Florida.

Pepper Construction represents some of the most advanced thought leadership in our industry. By integrating their high-performance, lean and technological expertise into the company’s operational processes, Pepper is transforming the future. Ranked as one of the top builders of sustainable projects in the nation, Pepper serves clients in a variety of markets such as healthcare, education, commercial interiors, manufacturing and industrial, civic and cultural, data centers, entertainment, hospitality and gaming, among others. Some of the firm's recent and current work includes the transformation of the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden into the world's first Net Zero zoo; Starbuck's Roastery, the [BMO Harris Office and Retail Bank](https://www.pepperconstruction.com/project/bmo-harris-office-and-retail-bank), Titletown Flats, the Community Hospital East Campus Redevelopment, Perdue University's Veterinary Medicine Teaching Hospitals, and Rolls-Royce's Reinvestment and Modernization of Manufacturing Operations. For more information, please visit [www.pepperconstruction.com](http://www.pepperconstruction.com).

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