



The Safety Frontline

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Cost and Benefits of Developing Internal Emergency Response Teams

Webinars continue to be a cost-effective method of training large numbers of staff. Even without the constraints of a troubled economy, they represent an excellent bang for your training dollar. On July 29th from 11:00-12:00 Central Time, Pam Ferrante will be presenting on "Best Practices in Employer-Based Emergency Response Teams".

This presentation is part of a series of webinars that feature authors from the well regarded Safety Professionals Handbook, published by ASSE in the summer of 2008. The textbook has outsold all expectations and continues to offer safety professionals with best practices in all areas.

Follow this link for more information on costs and to register.

<http://eo2.commpartners.com/users/asse/session.php?id=2812>

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The Economic News is Good – We Think

The “green shoots of recovery” seem to be continuing to grow and perhaps have even taken hold. Many economists are now predicting that not only have we hit bottom of this recession, but that recovery may begin as early as the 4th quarter of this year. That’s good news all around and we welcome it, although it may be small comfort to someone without a job and limited prospects.

We continue to hope that our readers have been able to keep their safety programs in front of management and keep moving forward. We have some ideas on how to continue to advance the agenda in tough times – give us a call or email and we’ll share our thoughts with you. (412.414.4769 or info@jcsafety.com) Till next time.....

Keeping it Safe!
Pam Ferrante, CSP, CHMM
President

The New Face of OSHA

As we’ve noted in previous issues, the appointment of Hilda Solis to Secretary of Labor and of Jordan Barab to Acting Assistant Administrator marks a major turn in the focus of workplace safety at the Federal level. At the recent ASSE PDC in San Antonio, we were treated to speeches by both Solis and Barab in the same day. Here’s a really brief recap of what they had to say:

- A 10% budget increase for FY 2009-2010 will largely be spent on hiring 200 new staff, most of who will be in the enforcement division. Therefore, inspections will be up. Severe violators of OSHA regulations will be placed in a new enforcement program.
- Pandemic planning will be pushed as an important part of an organization’s overall Emergency Action Plan.
- Not surprisingly, rulemaking activities will be on the upswing. Expect to see activity in the areas of Hazard Communication, combustible dust, cranes, confined spaces in construction, diacteyl, and ergonomics, which Barab called “the elephant in the room”.
- Safety incentive programs will be under greater scrutiny to assure that they do not discourage employees from reporting incidents.
- The penalty structure, which has not been changed in many years, will be reviewed for increases, particularly in the serious and willful violation categories. The average penalty for a serious violation is currently <\$1,000.

So much to do, so little time, huh? For his part, Barab asked that we, as a profession, get more involved too. He says he wants to hear from us by attending public hearings, writing letters and getting our employers and professional organizations to do so as well. We’ll keep you posted on developments and opportunities to become part of the solution in future newsletters and special mailings.

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WHO Declares a Pandemic with H1N1 Virus

In case you missed it, on June 6th, WHO raised the Pandemic Alert Scale to Level 6 which means a new virus causing sustained community level outbreaks in more than one WHO region. While every indication is that this pandemic will be of moderate severity, there are lessons to be learned from the run-up that began in April. As a follow-up to the initial recommendations that we sent out in May, we now suggest the following:

- Emergency response planning is never time wasted. Consider yourselves warned that a severe pandemic will be significantly disruptive. Take the time now to update and revise your Pandemic Plan. And if you don't have one, there are plenty of resources out there to help. Start with the CDC's Pandemic Planning Checklist, which is a quick way to assess your organization's readiness. <http://www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/tab4.html/>
- We all did a great job educating employees about simple ways to minimize the spread of viruses through hand washing and social distancing. These short-term habits need to be converted to long-term ones. Remind employees that even during seasonal cold and flu season, these activities will not only help them stay healthier, but also keep their co-workers healthy as well.
- Continue to educate about pandemics, virus transmission and virulence. It would be very easy to scoff about the heavy media attention that was paid to the outbreak in the early stages and say it was simply a "chicken little" reaction. But, just because the media oversaturated us with information (As they always do - as I write this, Michael Jackson's memorial service is tomorrow.), it doesn't mean we shouldn't be prepared. Those who chose to stay in New Orleans during Hurricane Katrina and survived weren't smarter than those that left, just lucky.

Is Your Respiratory Protection Program Flawed?

Our clients have sometimes asked us to help write and/or review the written Respiratory Protection Programs that are part of the OSHA regulations and are required if your organization has any mandatory respirator usage. There are some typical flaws in these programs that often lead to citations during an OSHA inspection. In an article in the June 2009 issue of *Professional Safety*, a study of these programs was led by NIOSH in Morgantown, WVA. The following is a summary of their results:

- Lack of written change-out scheduled for air purifying gas/vapor filters - Schedules must be based upon calculations that reflect actual usage and protect workers from substances with poor warning properties. Both OSHA and NIOSH provide tools for developing these schedules.
- Lack of annual evaluations by employer of effectiveness of the program - At least once a year, employers must solicit input from employees on the effectiveness of the program and make adjustments as necessary.
- Lack of clarity on how to adjust air flow on airline respirators - Numerous organizations simply don't know how to adjust the flow which protects the wearer from the inflow of dusts and chemicals.

How do you measure up? Give us a call if you think you need help. A quick review of your program by our staff will put you back on track and in compliance.

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Frontline's Fast Facts

Some good news to report on the traffic safety front - seat belt use is up and highway fatalities are down. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration:

- An estimated 37,313 people were killed in motor vehicles crashes in 2008;
- This number represents the lowest number killed on the nation's highways since 1961;
- Also low was the fatality rate, coming in at 1.28 fatalities per million vehicle miles travelled, down from 1.36 in 2007;
- Michigan claims the highest rates of seatbelt use at 97.3%;
- The distinction of being the lowest state goes to Massachusetts at just 66.8%.

The full text of the reports can be found at www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/Pubs/81106.pdf

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Don't Know Much About AEDs

In an article in the June 2009 issue of *Safety + Health*, the myth busters took aim automatic external defibrillators (AEDs), which have become commonplace in most major public arenas and are increasingly being purchased by employers for use in workplaces. These devices save countless lives each year - people who would otherwise succumb to sudden cardiac arrest.

One of the most common and frustrating myths about AEDs is that they are difficult for the layperson to use and require training. But, rescuers with minimal training can use AEDs since they operate with voice commands that can determine whether a lifesaving shock is warranted and instruct the rescuer on what to do.

Another common myth is the assumption of a legal risk of either owning or using an AED. According to *Safety + Health*, no known lawsuits have been brought against lay rescuers who have provided care. In November 2000 the Federal Cardiac Arrest Survival Act was passed which gives "Good Samaritan" protection for lay rescuers. This exemption also extends to the owner of the device.

Finally, fears of the need to perform mouth-to-mouth breathing in conjunction with the use of an AED are no longer warranted. Recently, the American Heart Association revised its recommendations and created a "hands only" variation of CPR that does not require mouth-to-mouth breathing. The traditional method of CPR, which uses mouth-to-mouth breathing, is still part of the AHA's protocol, but is not necessary.

We have always recommended the purchase of AEDs to our clients and have several resources we can connect you to if you need help in purchasing one, training staff, and developing internal protocol for its use.

FRONTLINE'S FAST FREEBIES



Who says you can't get something for nothing? In every issue we will bring you two freebies. Go get 'em!

1. In a recent issue of this E-newsletter we talked about various green initiatives that safety professionals should begin to educate themselves about. A recent White Paper shows how to apply LEED Criteria when planning for a new facility. The White Paper comes from Environmental Health & Engineering and is free to download at www.eheinc.com/bwh_leed.htm
2. Increasingly, we are sending you to freebies that are video-based and this month we recommend you take a look at two videos available for download at You Tube. Published by The Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials, the PSAs describe problems encountered at 911 call centers when non-emergency calls come in. They would be great starters for a Tool Box Talk. www.youtube.com/watch?v=6LVKOM_hUiQ and www.youtube.com/watch?v=OTIG4xQUM or just search under the name of the Association.

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