



The Safety Frontline

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ASSE Publishes Comprehensive Safety Manual

For the past eight years hundreds of the nation's top safety experts have been busily collaborating on a comprehensive safety manual and textbook. The two volume book, The Safety Professionals Handbook, edited by Joel Haight from Penn State University, features a Chapter written by JC Safety President Pam Ferrante, on cost analysis and budgeting for the development of internal emergency response teams.

This two volume set provides the most comprehensive information and reference material available on the practice of safety. You'll want a copy of this for your safety library.

Special introductory pricing is available for a limited time: http://www.asse.org/sphan_dbook/

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It's Still Cold Here in Pittsburgh

The calendar on my desk says that it is mid-May, but the thermostat outside my office window does not agree. Many of us are starting to think about transitions as we move back and forth between the seasons. It's now time to bring out the heat stress training materials and prepare for staff shortages caused by vacations. However, with a recession looming (or already here?), it is easy for those of us in the safety profession to begin to feel nervous that our various programs will be reduced or cut as our organizations deal with declining income.

But this is the time to re-double our efforts to assure that safety stays out in front in our organizations. We at JC Safety have always prided ourselves on being able to help our clients identify those initiatives that provide a clear benefit to the organization based upon expenditures. We remain ready to help you evaluate your safety program and show you how to demonstrate to management just how valuable safety is to the integrity of your organization. Give us a call at 412.414.4769 or email info@jcsafety.com and we'll show you what we can do.

Keeping it Safe!
Pam Ferrante, CSP, CHMM
President

House Passes Safety for Seniors Act

In recent years, the staff at JC Safety staff has been focusing our efforts at helping our clients address workplace safety issues resulting from an increase in the number of older workers in their organizations. We've noted that, while the number of injuries among older workers is lower that what might be expected given their proportion of the workforce, the severity of their injuries and higher fatality rates deserve attention and targeted activities.

In the past six years, falls among those over age 65 have increased by 39% - one out of every three Americans fall, with over 16,000 deaths reported from the initial fall or complications resulting from it. With the steady increase of those over age 65 remaining in the workplace; it is crucial that we begin to direct energy and resources to combating this growing and deadly trend.

Representatives Frank Pallone (D-NJ) and Ralph Hall (R-TX) recently co-sponsored the *Safety for Seniors Act (S. 845)*, which was passed by the House of Representatives in early April. (The bill was previously passed by the Senate in August 2007.) While not geared specifically toward workplace safety, the bill does call for a public education campaign, research, and demonstration projects that target falls.

In late April, president Bush signed the Act into law. You can read more about the current status and implementation activities at this link: <http://mikulski.senate.gov/record.cfm?id=296699>

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What's OSHA Working on These Days?

With the current administration's time remaining being counted in days and not months, it's easy to assume that OSHA is in a holding pattern until after the January 2009 inauguration of our new President. But OSHA's Spring 2008 Regulatory Agenda is still quite full of actions and activities. Here's just a sampling of what might be on the horizon:

- The dangers posed by exposure to Diacetyl and food flavorings containing Diacetyl continues to make news. This issue is in the Pre-Rule stage with a SBREFA Panel being appointed in May.
- A second Notice of Public Rulemaking (NRPM) on the revisions to the 1910 Walking and Working Surfaces standard is targeted for September 2008. This revision will update the regulation and also significantly enhance the fall protection requirements for general industry.
- As we have noted in previous issues of this newsletter, the revisions to the Hazard Communication Standard that will incorporate Global Harmonization concepts is in the Peer Review of Economic Analysis stage and is still listed as being ready for a proposed rule in October 2008.
- The public comment period for the Proposed Confined Space in Construction Rule has ended and a public hearing is scheduled for July 22nd in Washington, DC.

To see the current agenda in full, follow this link:

http://www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owasrch.search_form?p_doc_type=UNIFIED_AGENDA&p_toc_level=1&p_keyvalue=CURRENT

Are Your Office Cubicles Safe?

According to the February 2008 issue of *Safety & Health*, published by the National Safety Council, thousands of office workers are injured every year. Lack of awareness is cited as one of the main causes for the injuries since the hazards we typically deal with on the construction site or shop floor are not readily apparent. File cabinet drawers are left open, leading to bumps, trips, and tip overs; heavy office equipment is dropped when people try to move it causing strains and sprains; and the maze of cubicle walls creates blind spots as workers move about.

The article recommends increased awareness as a key component in reducing the risk to office workers through training and distribution of basic information. Other specific recommendations include improvements in housekeeping to reduce the risk of trips and falls, incorporating simple habits like reaching behind for the seat of a chair before sitting down, and paying attention to not overloading electrical circuits. Also recommended is ongoing assessments and improvements in desk top layouts, paying particular attention to computer set-ups at workstations. Finally, the article reminds us to plan for and train employees on the hazards of fires and how to safely evacuate the building when needed.

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Frontline's Fast Facts

Even though you may think that your chances of being on the receiving end of an OSHA Compliance Inspection are slim, the agency reports that it exceeded its inspection goal for 2007. Here's some of what OSHA is reporting:

- The total number of inspections (39,324) was 4.3% over the stated goal for the year.
- Of the total inspections, 23,035 (59%) were Programmed Inspections targeting specific areas or industries.
- Unprogrammed inspections included 1,043 fatality investigations, 7,055 complaints, and 5,007 referrals.
- Total violations found during the inspections were 88,846, which was an increase of 6% over 2006.
- Citations for serious violations were up sharply from 2006 – an increase of 9% with a total of 67,176.

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New Rules to Protect Children from the Hazards of Lead

The EPA has updated and enhanced their requirements for those contractors who perform lead abatement activities in pre-1978 housing, child care facilities or schools. The Lead: Renovation, Repair and Painting Program Rule, which takes effect in April 2010, requires that contractors and maintenance professionals be certified, that their employees be trained, and that they follow protective lead-safe work practice standards. Trained contractors must post warning signs, restrict occupants from work areas, contain work areas to prevent dust and debris from spreading, conduct a thorough cleanup, and verify that the cleanup was effective.

According to the EPA website: "...analysis indicates that renovation, repair and painting projects in housing and child-occupied facilities that are likely to contain lead-based paint affect 1.4 million children under age six annually. The new requirements are key components of a comprehensive federal effort to eliminate childhood lead poisoning. These include programs to educate parents and caregivers to keep their housing clean and well-maintained, to make sure their young children wash their hands frequently and eat nutritious food, and to talk to their doctor about testing young children for lead poisoning."

The entire text of the new rule can be reviewed at this link:
<http://www.epa.gov/fedrgstr/EPA-TOX/2008/April/Day-22/t8141.pdf>

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. The US Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board (CSB) regularly makes DVDs available on the results of their various investigations. These short recreations make excellent training tools as they help workers understand the chain of events that lead to some of the country's most horrific incidents. The CSB recently released its newest DVD on the BP Refinery explosion at Texas City in March 2005. This DVD runs nearly an hour, but is compelling in its attention to detail and in how it helps understand the tragedy and its lessons learned. Order yours easily at this link: http://www.csb.gov/index.cfm?folder=csb_videos&page=request
2. In the last issue of this newsletter we reported on the recent devastating explosion at the sugar cane refinery in Georgia, most likely due to combustible dust. This event has many companies looking for ways to educate their workers on the dangers of combustible dust. OSHA had made a poster and Fact Sheet available on its website for free downloading at these two links:

http://www.osha.gov/OshDoc/data_General_Facts/OSHAcombustible dust.pdf

<http://www.osha.gov/Publications/combustible dust poster.pdf>

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