



The Safety Frontline

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Going to Anaheim, California for the NSC Congress and Expo 2008?

JC Safety President Pam Ferrante is. Her presentation entitled "What are We Going to Do About the Aging Workforce" is scheduled for Tuesday September 23rd from 3:30-5:00 PM.

This presentation will update some of Pam's earlier sessions at other national events, including the NSC Congress and Expo in San Diego in 2006 and the AIHce Expo in Minneapolis in June 2008. Attendees will hear what's new on this issue in addition to some basic concepts useful in analyzing the risk in any organization. And for those EH&S professionals wrestling with this demographic trend, numerous strategies will be highlighted that are both easy to implement and cost effective.

If you are going to be in California, Pam would love to have you sit in on the session. And afterwards, please come up and say hello.

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We're on the Web!
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And They're Off!

It seems like just a few short weeks ago we published our summer issue and waxed poetically about the lazy days of summer and the fun we were having. But now that's over and we are still asking ourselves – "Where did summer go?"

There's nothing new here – summer always flies by and, before you know it, you are back to packing lunches and praying you can get to the bus stop on time. So, if you are looking for some new and fresh ideas to invigorate your safety program, we are here to help. From taking a new look at your safety incentive program to developing a Risk/Crisis Communications Plan; we can help you jump-start your fall. As always, you can reach us at 412.414.4769 or info@jcsafety.com!

Keeping it Safe!
Pam Ferrante, CSP, CHMM
President

ASSE Comments on the Hazards of Combustible Dust

The American Society of Safety Engineers, the nation's premier membership organization for safety professionals, has weighed in on the hazards of combustible dust. (For more information on the recently passed House Bill H.R. 5522 – Combustible Dust Explosion and Fire Prevention Act, go to our website to access the archived July-August 2008 issue of *The Safety Frontline*.) In a prepared statement submitted for the record of the July 29, 2008 Senate Subcommittee on Employment and Workplace Safety hearing ASSE commended Congress for their efforts to protect workers from this hazard, but urged restraint in passing legislation until the issue had been fully evaluated with reference to existing OSHA standards. ASSE also encouraged the Senate Committee to first consider the use of existing national consensus standards to mitigate the hazard.

ASSE did not take issue with the risks of combustible dust that are well documented in the literature, but requested that any legislation passed by the Senate incorporate the previously passed House Bill that provides assurances that any OSHA standards that arise from Congressional actions are no less stringent than the existing National Fire Prevention Association Standards dealing with this issue (NFPA 654 and 484, as well as others). ASSE also expressed concerns with the setting of unrealistic timeframes for implementing any actions that might stem from the high profile nature of recent devastating incidents in Georgia and elsewhere. Finally, ASSE encouraged Congress to provide OSHA with an improved ability to enforce their existing standards that deal at least in part, with combustible dust, which currently number sixteen.

To read the full ASSE statement, go to www.asse.org.

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New Findings on Workplace Violence

According to a new study done by NIOSH and based upon statistics compiled by from a survey done by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), 5% of all workplaces have reported a incident of workplace violence in the past 12 months and about a third of those workplaces indicated the incident had a negative impact on the workplace.

Workplace violence experts often agree that many workplace violence incidents are not random and can be avoided with a comprehensive program that includes prevention strategies, methods for employee reporting, procedures for diffusing incidents, and ongoing efforts at securing the workplace. Yet, the BLS survey found that overall only 30% of employers have a written program and only 21% provide any type of training in violence prevention to their employees.

Further, say the experts, such incidents typically receive high profile media coverage, making it tempting for employers to react and overreact, further reducing their ability to be both proactive and effective.

To read more about the study and hear from numerous experts on workplace violence, follow this link and scroll down to the report - <http://healthrespubs.com:16080/FreeReports/> (Be aware that you will need to complete a brief form to access the report, but you can opt out of any further emails from the site.)

Keeping Germs at Bay This Winter

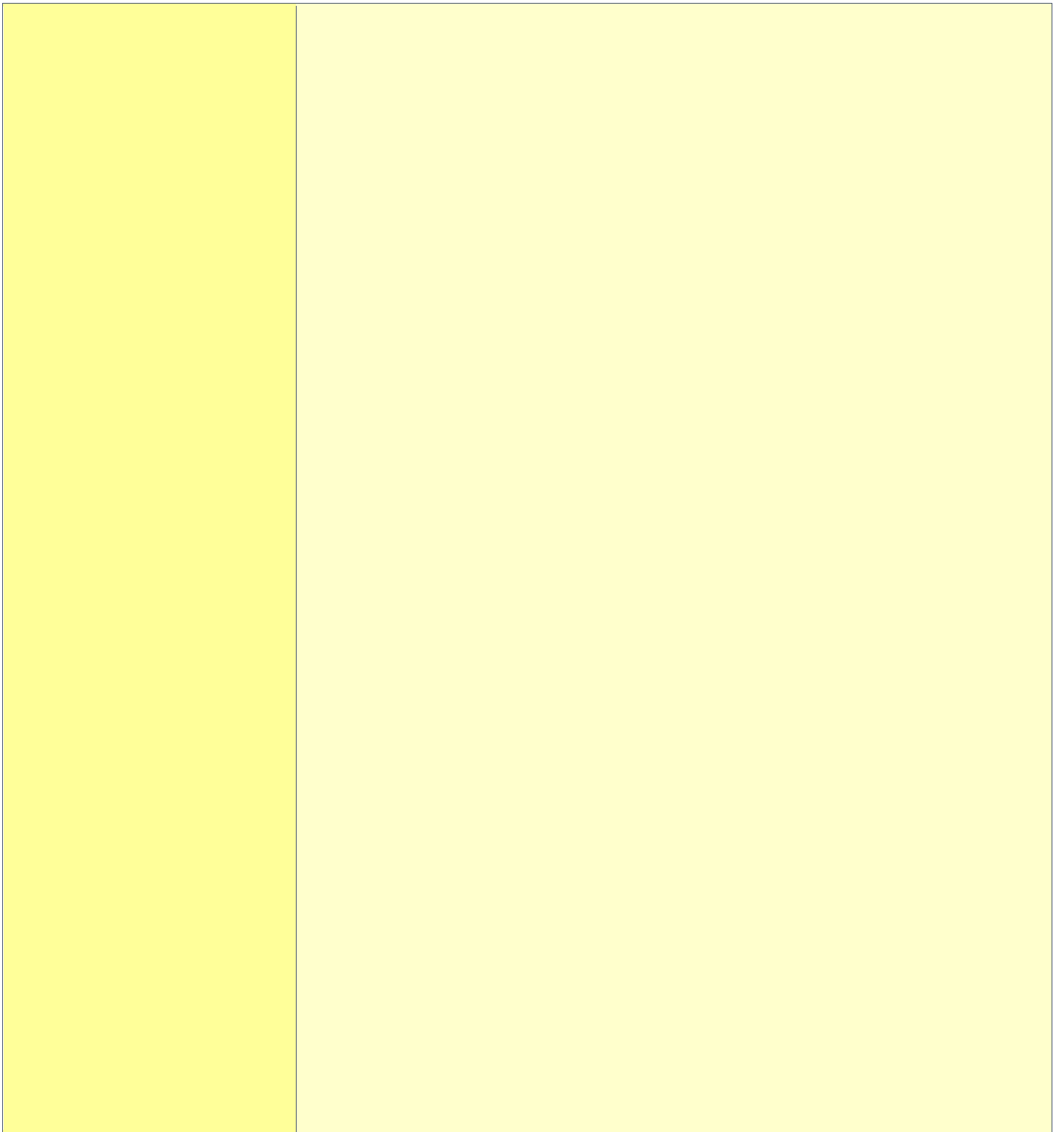
Toolbox talks and safety meetings will soon begin to focus on cold weather safety. Don't forget to remind your workforce of the many ways they can reduce the spread of germs this cold and flu season. The Centers for Disease Control offers the following tips:

- Antimicrobial soap and running water is the key to good decontamination of hands. If that is not available, an alcohol-based hand sanitizer is a good substitute, but when water later becomes available, employees should wash again.
- Use of hot water should be minimized as it increases the risk of dermatitis – try warm instead.
- We teach our kids to sing their ABCs twice in order to instill the value of time and contact as a means of killing germs. You may not score many points with your workplace using this strategy, but your workers should be reminded to rub vigorously for at least 15 seconds, taking care to scrub all hand and finger surfaces.
- Multiple-use towels are more likely to spread germs – single-use only should be the norm, or better yet, install air dryers. Use the towel to turn off the faucet and open the bathroom door handle.

For workers who are part of a first aid team, these additional tips apply:

- Wearing gloves and practicing “Universal Precautions” is a must. Hand washing before and after rendering care is also crucial.
- If moving from a contaminated area to one that is not, remove your gloves and leave them behind in a proper disposal container.

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Frontline's Fast Facts

Here's some information near and dear to our hearts since our office is located in Pennsylvania. A University of Pittsburgh study published in the American Journal of Public Health (Vol. 98, No. 8) reports that motorcyclists suffered large increases in head injuries and deaths following the repeal of the State's mandatory helmet law two years ago.

Also on the rise were motorcycle non-head injury hospitalizations and non-head injury deaths.

Following an analysis of the data, researchers have concluded that the repeal of the helmet law was a factor in the increases.

Currently, Pennsylvania residents over 21 years of age and who have more than 2 years experience riding are not required to wear helmets.

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A Great Loss for All of Us

It is with great sadness that we at JC Safety & Environmental, Inc. mourn the loss of Carolyn Merritt, the former Chairperson of the Chemical Safety and Hazard Information Board (CSB) on August 29th of metastatic breast cancer at the age of 61. Over the years since we started publishing this e-newsletter, we have often wrote with respect of the work of the CSB, led by Ms. Merritt from 2002-2007.

According to a statement released by current CSB Chair John Bresland, "Carolyn believed passionately in the CSB's mission. She worked tirelessly to save the lives of workers and the public through chemical accident prevention, insisting on thorough investigations and meaningful safety recommendations."

Two of the issues Ms. Merritt championed in her tenure included the hazards of combustible dust (see the article on the front page of this issue) as well as corporate investment in chemical process safety, the latter following the catastrophic explosion at the BP Texas City Refinery in 2005.

While Ms. Merritt's death at age 61 is premature, her ability to motivate us all to continue to champion the cause of workplace safety continues. Again, according to the CSB statement, "Carolyn told her family she hoped her death would not be mourned, but that friends and colleagues would celebrate what she sought to accomplish during her life. Consistent with her wishes, no funeral is planned. However, the family encourages friends and colleagues to place remembrances on Carolyn's Caring Bridge webpage <http://www.caringbridge.org/visit/carolynwmerritt>. Information concerning where Carolyn wished donations to be made in her name be found there as well. You may also share remembrances by sending an email to rememberingcarolyn@csb.gov."

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. Emergency responders can be at risk for dangerous levels of exposure according to NIOSH because the traditional OSHA/EPA protection level ensembles of A, B, C, and D do not take into account threats from chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear hazards from terrorist attacks. NIOSH has published a guide that compares the ensembles a provides guidance for selection in CBRN environments. You can download the guide at: <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2008-132/>
2. The Consumer Products Safety Commission has recently released an update to its popular *Handbook for Public Playground Safety*, offering guidance for childcare organizations, schools officials, playground designers, and school groups on how to build safer playgrounds. This manual offers advice for playground for infants as young as 6 months. You can either request a copy via email at info@cpsc.gov or download a copy at this link - <http://www.cpsc.gov/CPSCPUB/PUBS/325.pdf>

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