



February 2010

Table Of Contents

Table Of Contents	
1.	Welcoming Our New 2010 NSMS Members
2.	The ISHM "Certified Safety and Health Manager" (CSHM) Accreditation Has Been Achieved!
3.	NSMS' "Certified Safety Supervisor (CSS)" Credential Now Accepted Towards Associate Safety Health Manager (ASHM) Designation
4.	Upcoming Special Professional Development Workshop – Spring 2010
5.	FREE ACCESS: Online Certified Safety and Health Manager (CSHM) Educational and Exam Preparation Reference Materials
6.	Labor Chief Moves On Job Safety, Workers' Rights
7.	Department of Labor FY2011 Budget Request Includes OSHA Increase, Focus on Enforcement
8.	OSHA Seeks Budget Increase
9.	OSHA Pushes New Rules for Recording Common Job (MSD) Injuries
10.	What OSHA Expects: The Electrical Safety Questions OSHA Will Ask During an Investigation
11.	OSHA Updates Workplace Violence Prevention Document
12.	Collaborative Approach Drives US Safety Improvement
13.	ASSE Urges Senator to Support Public Sector Work Coverage in OSHA Reform Legislation
14.	Chemical Safety: More Oversight
15.	Combustible Dust Hearings Set for Atlanta
16.	Builders Go Through the Motions: Some Contractors Say Voluntary Methods Better Than Federal Ergonomics Standards
17.	Simple Solutions for Office Hazards
18.	U.S. Chemical Safety Board Urges Rules Changes in Wake of Fatal ConAgra Plant Explosion
19.	RSI - A Pain in the Neck, Back, Arm and ...
20.	Safety Training Strategies: It's a Dangerous Life
21.	Lessons Learned: OSHA Cites Broan-NuTone
22.	Lessons Learned: Safety Problems At Mereaux Refinery
23.	Lessons Learned: Ontario Power Generation Inc. Fined \$100,000 After Worker Injured

24. [Discuss Heart Attack Symptoms During National Heart Month](#)

25. [Safety Tidbits](#)

Welcoming Our New 2010 NSMS Members

On behalf NSMS President Roosevelt, the NSMS Executive Committee and the NSMS Board of Directors, we like to thank all members who have proactively renewed their 2010 National Safety Management Society memberships. We would also like to acknowledge, recognize and welcome the following new members to our professional organization:

- **Jason E. Campbell**, Manager Environmental Health and Safety – Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology (Terre Haute, Indiana)
- **Kristopher DeMyer**, Graduate Student – Murray State University (Murray, Kentucky)
- **John Duplessis**, Safety Coordinator – Enbridge, Inc. (Edmonton, Alberta Canada)
- **Paul E. Moore**, EHS Specialist – Magna Mirrors Lowell Division, (Alto, Michigan)
- **Melanie Parker**, Graduate Student – Eastern Kentucky University (Richmond, Kentucky)
- **David V. Poma**, Regional Safety Manager – Federal Communications Commission/FCC (Las Vegas, Nevada)
- **Brian C. Shelton**, EH&S Specialist – Street Legal Industries (Oak Ridge, Tennessee)
- **Jeremy J. Stroud**, Graduate Student – Murray State University (Murray, Kentucky)

We appreciate your interest in furthering your skills, knowledge and abilities in the management of safety and risks, as well as your interest to networking and professional development. Welcome again to NSMS!

The ISHM “Certified Safety and Health Manager” (CSHM) Accreditation Has Been Achieved!

The vision of our early NSMS founders to develop a safety management-focused credential to recognize professional competence in safety leadership has culminated in the official accreditation of the NSMS-created Certified Safety and Health Manager credential by the Council on Engineering and Scientific Specialty Boards (CESB). CESB is a self-sustaining, independent body which accredits certification programs organized and operated consistent with sound credentialing practices tailored to the needs of engineering and technology specialties. CESB is the recognized accreditation body for engineering and scientific certification and specialty certification programs for professional credentials such as the Board Certified Environmental Engineer, Certified Industrial Hygienist and Certified Hazardous Materials Manager.

Our sister organization, the Institute for Safety and Health Management (ISHM) and its Board of Directors deserve all the credit for their leadership, diligence, determination and perseverance in marshalling this monumental effort to fruition. Our CSHM credential holders deserve our gratitude for their patience as this initiative effort went through many trials and tribulations over the years. The Institute for Safety and Health Management is the credentialing organization which administers the CSHM to recognize safety and risk management professionals who, through demonstrated professional experience and the passing of a comprehensive exam, have met ISHM's requirements for mastering the safety management body of knowledge.

The CSHM credential recognizes safety and health professionals who demonstrate knowledge of health and safety management skills and techniques through examination and experience. The CSHM certification program promotes the integration and practice of safety management principles throughout all levels and activities of an organization. In addition to technical knowledge of safety and industrial hygiene, a successful safety and health manager must possess working knowledge of a broad range of business and financial principles and an understanding of related issues such as hazard analyses, accident/incident investigations, safety audits/surveys, workers' compensation, risk management, product safety, human factors, environmental laws, quality, and labor relations. The CSHM program is designed to provide recognition of those who can apply such a broad range of health and safety management tools. NSMS offers to be a resource and facilitator to help those interested in pursuing such a certification.

NSMS' "Certified Safety Supervisor (CSS)" Credential Now Accepted Towards Associate Safety Health Manager (ASHM) Designation

Associate Safety and Health Manager (ASHM) designation is intended to recognize those individuals who possess some combination of formal training and experience listed below that prepares them for safety and health management responsibilities. The ASHM serves to let potential employers and current employers know that these individuals have been formally educated to address workplace safety and health issues or are ready to step into entry level positions in safety management.

Individuals who receive the ASHM designation have a period of six years to pass the accredited Certified Safety and Health Manager (CSHM) certification examination. The ASHM designation will permanently expire six years after the date of issue or when replaced by the CSHM designation, whichever comes first. For more information, please visit the ISHM website: <http://www.ishm.org/pages/associate.html>

Upon completion of the application package, approval by the review committee, and payment of the appropriate fees, a candidates who does not have a college degree, but is a holder of a safety certificate recognized by the ISHM Board (<http://www.ishm.org/pdf/certprograms.pdf>), plus nine years of qualifying work experience is eligible for the ASHM designation:

SPECIAL ADVANCED ANNOUNCEMENT:

NATIONAL SAFETY MANAGEMENT SOCIETY

Upcoming Special Professional Development Workshop Now Tentatively – Spring 2010 Houston, Texas Area

Many emails have been coming in recommending to NSMS that we offer an interdisciplinary two-day professional development workshop that will enable safety professionals/managers sharpen their skills, knowledge and abilities in interacting with employees and company leadership. We are considering a pilot workshop beginning in the Houston, Texas area and going forth to other regions where our membership would like to have it presented. If we come to your locale or college campus, we hope this will be a more cost-effective opportunity to learn and expand your skills, knowledge and abilities (SKAs).

The tentative workshop fee (early, pre-registration) for NSMS members is \$125 and \$250 for non-members and an on-site (or late) registration of \$160 for NSMS members and \$275 for non-members (includes lunch and program materials). College students majoring in this field of study are also invited to attend (NSMS Student (Affiliate) Members workshop fee is \$100). We need a minimum of 50 attendees to cover the cost/break even on this 2-day training event. (We currently have 25 respondents – half way there!) Please email us at nsmsinc@yahoo.com if you are interested in possibly attending so we can begin to establish a headcount. Thank you.

“Enhancing Safety Management SKAs: 2-Day Professional Development Workshop”

Instructor: Dr. Jeffrey Chung, CSHM CHFP – NSMS Executive Director

Day One –

- Administrative Business, Introductions and Workshop Overview
- Safety Management Principles and Practices
- Safety Attributes for Best-in-Class Organizations
- Emerging Safety and Health Issues – Aging Workforce, Green Jobs and Special Needs of Foreign Workers
- Psychology of Safety – A Behavior-based Approach; Human Performance Improvement
- Developing Effective Training/Presentation Skills
- Role of Safety Committees; Conducting/Facilitating Effective Meetings

Day Two –

- Understanding Self/Others/Your Organization – SMART Profile
- Strategic Planning Concepts and Process
- Problem Solving and Analytical Tools
- Performance Metrics for Continuous Improvement
- Corporate Communication Strategies for Safety/Risk Management Professionals
- Ethics for the Safety Practitioner and Manager
- Stress and Health Management for the EH&S Professional
- Wrap-up and Workshop Evaluation

FREE ACCESS: Online Certified Safety and Health Manager (CSHM) Educational and Exam Preparation Reference Materials

As a benefit for our current and future dues-paying members, NSMS is **permanently** offering free access to the Certified Safety and Health Manager (CSHM) preparation and educational materials. The online resources, created by NSMS member Steve Geigle, can be found at www.cshmprep.com and the only action an NSMS member needs to take is to email Steve requesting access from that website. You will need to include your current NSMS member number (found on your membership card and certificate). Once the number is verified, you will be granted a username and password to access the online reference materials. This is a great opportunity to brush up on your safety management and technical knowledge and prepare for a successful passing of the CSHM certification examination.

Labor Chief Moves On Job Safety, Workers' Rights

(By Sam Hananel, Associated Press – January 1, 2010)

Soon after she became the nation's labor secretary, Hilda Solis warned corporate America there was "a new sheriff in town."

Less than a year into her tenure, that figurative badge of authority is unmistakable. Her aggressive moves to boost enforcement and crack down on businesses that violate workplace safety rules have sent employers scrambling to make sure they are following the rules.

The changes are a departure from the policies of Solis' predecessor, Elaine Chao. They follow through on President Barack Obama's campaign promise to boost funding for the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, increase enforcement and safeguard workers in dangerous industries.

Solis made a splash in October when OSHA slapped the largest fine in its history on oil giant BP PLC for failing to fix safety problems after a 2005 explosion at its Texas City refinery.

Garnering less attention, she just finished hiring 250 new investigators to protect workers from being cheated out of wage and overtime pay. She also started a new program that scrutinizes business records to make sure worker injury and illness reports are accurate. And she is proposing new standards to protect workers from industrial dust explosions — an effort the Bush administration had long resisted.

Some business groups say they prefer a more cooperative approach between government and businesses — what the Bush administration called "compliance assistance."

"Our members are concerned that the department is shifting its focus from compliance assistance back to more of the 'gotcha' or aggressive enforcement first approach," said Karen Harned, executive director of the National Federation of Independent Business' small business legal center.

Other business leaders point out that the rate of workplace deaths and injuries actually fell to record lows in the previous administration, while the agency also helped employees collect a

record amount of back pay for overtime and minimum wage violations. Chao has claimed that success was the result of cooperating with businesses to help them understand the myriad regulations.

Keith Smith, a spokesman for the National Association of Manufacturers, said his members "want to build upon that progress and recognize what's working."

But a November report from the Government Accountability Office suggested there is widespread underreporting of workplace safety issues. Investigators cited evidence that some employers pressure workers not to report illnesses and injuries and urged OSHA to be more aggressive in verifying business records.

Labor Department spokesman Jaime Zapata said the idea of helping businesses understand the rules remains an important part of the agency's strategy, along with stepped-up enforcement. Solis plans to hire 100 new OSHA inspectors next year.

"Compliance assistance was not a creation of the last administration," Zapata said.

The changes have drawn praise from organized labor leaders who spent millions to help get Obama elected. Solis, a former California congresswoman and daughter of immigrant parents who were both union members, is a favorite of labor unions and a longtime advocate for workers' rights.

"We will not rest until the law is followed by every employer, and each worker is treated and compensated fairly," Solis said last month as she described a new national public awareness campaign to make sure workers know their rights on the job.

The massive fine against BP certainly caught the public's attention, but other businesses are also paying a steep price for violating safety rules.

Two months into the new fiscal year, OSHA has already cited six companies for "egregious" violations that carry the highest penalties. There were only four such egregious cases in all of the previous year.

Solis said her agency this year will tackle 90 new rules and regulations next year. One change would give workers more information about how their pay is computed. Another would make employers disclose whether they sought advice from anti-union labor consultants.

Glenn Spencer, executive director of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce's Workforce Freedom Initiative, said Solis so far has been willing to listen to some of his group's concerns. But he worries most about the possibility that Labor officials will try to revive costly ergonomics rules. Such rules would force businesses to redesign work spaces to protect employees from repetitive stress injuries.

One of the first acts of the Bush administration was to rescind ergonomics rules that were passed in the Clinton administration. Solis supported the rules at the time, and has not spoken about plans to revive them.

Department of Labor FY2011 Budget Request Includes OSHA Increase, Focus on Enforcement

(By Lisa Walter, EHS Today – February 1, 2010)

On Feb. 1, Secretary of Labor Hilda Solis outlined President Obama's FY 2011 budget request for the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), which is built around the vision of "good jobs for everyone" and includes a \$14 million proposed increase for OSHA

In total, the FY 2011 DOL budget requests \$117 billion, with the majority to be used for unemployment insurance benefits for displaced workers and federal workers' compensation. DOL's discretionary request of \$14.0 billion overall includes \$1.7 billion for worker protection programs, a 4 percent increase over the prior year's budget.

The budget asks for \$573 million for OSHA, which is \$14 million more than that agency received in FY 2010. According to Solis, this budget request builds on the 2010 budget policy of returning worker protection programs to FY 2001 staffing levels after years of decline.

"Today's budget affirms this administration's strong commitment to vigorous enforcement," said Solis during a Feb. 1 live Web chat. "With the largest fine in OSHA's history and more egregious cases, we are sending a strong message throughout industry that we will not tolerate the endangerment of workers. We will continue those efforts with a number of new and innovative enforcement initiatives in the coming year."

The FY 2010 budget funded 100 new OSHA inspectors. The FY 2011 proposes to hire more inspectors, as well as shifting current inspectors to enforcement.

"With this budget we will hire 25 additional inspectors, and shift 35 who are presently doing compliance assistance to enforcement activities," said OSHA Administrator David Michaels during the Web chat. "With these additional staff we will be able to conduct more targeted inspections and National and Local Emphasis Programs."

Reduced VPP Funding

Solis also addressed OSHA's Voluntary Protection Programs (VPP) during the live Web chat. Last year, a Government Accountability Office (GAO) [released a report identifying oversight and internal control problems with VPP](#). Solis explained that OSHA proposes to "significantly reduce direct federal funding" of VPP "while working closely with the Agency's stakeholders both to identify and secure alternative forms of funding."

"We think the Voluntary Protection Program is making a valuable contribution to workplace safety," Solis said during the chat. "But we are facing some very difficult budget choices. We need to decide whether we will spend our limited resources on supporting those companies who really 'get it,' who are doing a great job at protecting their employees, or do we spend our scarce resources on companies that disregard workplace safety and allow workers to die in situations that could easily have been prevented."

Michaels stressed during the live chat that OSHA will work with stakeholders "to identify new or alternative funding sources" for VPP.

"In the meantime, we will be shifting field inspection staff from VPP programs to enforcement activities because the need in that area is particularly great," Michaels said. "We recognize that

VPP companies do an excellent job; OSHA resources need to be focused on employers who don't understand the importance of protecting their workers, particularly small employers.”

Good Jobs

According to DOL, this budget launches innovative ways to prepare workers for 21st century jobs and makes new investments in programs that protect workers' rights, safety and health in the new economy. It reaches out to diverse audiences to ensure that all people from all communities are included in the jobs of the future.

“The FY 2011 budget will help to make the vision of good jobs for everyone a reality for America's workers,” said Solis. She defined “good jobs” as those that:

- Can support a family by increasing incomes;
- Offer fair compensation;
- Narrow the wage gap;
- Allow for work-life flexibility;
- Promote safe and healthy workplaces;
- Give workers a voice;
- Foster fair working conditions in the global marketplace;
- Are sustainable and innovative, such as green jobs, providing opportunities to acquire the skills and knowledge for the jobs of the future; and
- Help restore the middle class.

“This budget invests in innovation and reform that will play a critically important role in building long-term economic security for workers,” said Solis. “At the same time, the budget reflects our commitment to fiscal responsibility, investing in what works and carefully evaluating our programs to make sure that we obtain results that produce good jobs.”

OSHA Seeks Budget Increase

(The Daily Reporter – February 1, 2010)

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration on Monday requested \$573 million for fiscal 2011, a \$14.5 million increase over the agency's 2010 budget. The increase would let OSHA add 60 investigators and enforcement staff members in 2011, for a total enforcement staff of 1,752 people.

The budget continues to make construction a targeted industry, with an estimated 23,189 nationwide inspections planned for 2011, compared with 23,935 in 2009. The agency set a goal of reducing by 2 percent the 571 annual construction fatalities caused by falls, electrocutions and workers being struck by or caught between objects.

The OSHA budget also would continue 2010's emphasis on drafting new rules. The agency between 2000 and 2008 cut its budgets for developing new rules, but in 2010 added 20 staff members. The 2011 list of regulatory priorities includes new standards for cranes and derricks and for dealing with combustible dust, such as coal dust, at work sites.

The OSHA budget is part of a \$117 billion budget request released Monday by Department of Labor Secretary Hilda Solis.

OSHA Pushes New Rules for Recording Common Job (MSD) Injuries

(By Ames Alexander – charlotteobserver.com, January 20, 2010)

OSHA is pushing for federal rules that would require companies to count job-related musculoskeletal disorders - a step that could make it easier for safety officials to prevent such injuries.

But the emerging plan may also provoke a battle with business groups. Industry leaders fear it could pave the way for regulation to prevent MSDs, the most common injuries in American factories.

Often caused by repetitive tasks and heavy lifting, MSDs afflict the muscles and nerves in wrists, arms, necks and backs. They include sprains and strains, along with common on-the-job injuries such as carpal tunnel syndrome and tendinitis.

Hundreds of thousands of workers suffer MSDs on the job each year, federal statistics show.

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce views the proposed reporting requirement as a "first salvo in what we see as a very deliberate push" for federal action to curb such injuries, says Marc Freedman, the chamber's director of labor policy. Industry representatives contend any future ergonomics rules would probably prove unwarranted and burdensome to businesses.

But others call OSHA's plan an inexpensive way to improve workplace safety. AFL-CIO safety director Peg Seminario said it would help regulators and company officials understand what is causing MSDs. "In individual workplaces, there is no easy way to make an assessment of the extent of MSD injuries," she said. "By having this information, it will make it readily apparent."

Under the plan, employers would be required to record MSDs in a new column on workplace injury logs - documents that regulators examine to look for trends.

Until seven years ago, companies were required to do just that. But faced with a legal challenge from manufacturers, OSHA removed the column in 2003. Employers still had to report these ailments but could include them with other injuries. That made it harder for regulators to detect patterns - and easier for businesses to hide such disorders.

A 2008 Observer investigation into the poultry industry revealed that was part of a trend: Weak government oversight and enforcement often allowed companies to escape serious consequences when they ignored workplace hazards. Poultry workers routinely make 20,000 cutting motions a shift, and the jobs often leave them with nerve and muscle damage. But it has been more than a decade since OSHA fined a poultry processor for ergonomic hazards likely to cause MSDs, the Observer found.

OSHA is expected to release a detailed regulatory proposal soon. The agency would then field public comments about the plan before taking action. The feedback from industry groups will likely be extensive, as business leaders prepare for a new ergonomics war.

OSHA has already lost one fight over ergonomics. In 1990, then-U.S. Labor Secretary Elizabeth Dole announced "a major initiative" to prevent MSDs in the workplace. After a decade of research and debate, OSHA in 2001 issued a collection of rules - known as the "ergonomics

standard" - that required employers to address hazards likely to cause those injuries. But under lobbying from businesses, the Republican-led Congress and President Bush repealed the regulations two months after they took effect.

OSHA deputy administrator Jordan Barab said last month that the agency's current reporting proposal "is not a prelude for a broader ergonomics standard." But Barab has said that MSDs are a "huge health and safety problem" - and that addressing them remains one of the agency's highest priorities.

Under the Bush Administration, OSHA made it a priority to establish voluntary safety programs and partnerships with companies. Now, under President Obama, the agency has signaled that it will take a tougher approach, with stepped-up enforcement efforts and new rules to improve workplace safety.

Hilda Solis, a former congresswoman viewed as a friend to labor unions, now heads the U.S. Department of Labor. And David Michaels, an epidemiologist who has pushed to protect workers suffering from radiation exposure and other hazards, leads federal OSHA. Both replaced leaders who were seen as more friendly to business.

What OSHA Expects: The Electrical Safety Questions OSHA Will Ask During an Investigation

(By Kenneth Cybart, EHS Today – March 13, 2008)

When it comes to electrical safety, OSHA standards can be technical and confusing. What requirements do safety managers need to know?

Wouldn't it be nice to know exactly what OSHA is training its inspectors to look for during an inspection that includes electrical safety, including surprising new areas of emphasis based on national OSHA directives?

This article covers some of the typical electrical safety questions that OSHA inspectors will ask during a field investigation, what they mean and how to be prepared and in compliance.

A good starting point is to understand OSHA's approach to electrical safety. OSHA's goal is for employers to identify all electrical hazards, both potential and actual. In the past, OSHA focused on process changes, encouraging companies to de-energize circuits before working on them, perform lockout/tagout procedures and develop ongoing safety programs that include worker training and retraining. A more recent area of emphasis is arc flash safety, which means electrical safety professionals must analyze the workplace for shock and arc flash hazards, establish safe protection boundaries and define what personal protective equipment (PPE) must be used within these boundaries.

For electrical safety in the workplace, OSHA relies on expert consensus bodies such as the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and its standards published in NFPA 70E. To ensure that employers are following NFPA and OSHA guidelines, OSHA trains its inspectors and compliance officers to ask specific questions in the event of an electrical safety incident. Some typical questions follow.

Is there a description of the circuit or equipment at the job location?

OSHA expects employers to know their workplaces. If an employer cannot provide a written description or drawing of the circuit or equipment, then the compliance officer may assume that the employer has not assessed the facility for electrical hazards.

Is there a detailed job description of planned work?

In order to know which safety procedures to use, the worker must be provided with a description of the job task. OSHA publication 29 CFR 1910 lays out employer responsibilities for protecting their workers from electrical safety hazards. It states that the employer shall train workers to use safe work practices that are designed to avoid injury.

Can you justify why equipment cannot be de-energized or the job deferred until the next scheduled outage?

Per OSHA 1910.333(a)(1), live parts to which an employee may be exposed must be de-energized before the employee works on or near them, unless the employer can demonstrate that de-energizing introduces additional or increased hazards or is not feasible due to equipment design or operational limitations. (Live parts that operate at less than 50 volts to ground need not be de-energized if there will be no increased exposure to electrical burns or to explosion due to electric arcs.)

The message is clear: never work on live circuits unless it is absolutely necessary. OSHA allows work on live circuits in some cases, but the reason cannot be simply that turning off the power is inconvenient or will interrupt production. Nor can workers use the excuse that they didn't have the authority to shut off power.

When it is necessary to perform work on energized equipment, OSHA 1910.333(a)(2) requires safety-related work practices to be used and NFPA 70E Article 110.8(B)(1) requires an Electrical Hazard Analysis before work is performed on live equipment operating at 50 volts and higher.

Other questions you can expect from an OSHA inspector include:

- What about safe work procedures?
- Has a detailed work procedure been established?
- Are there detailed descriptions of work practices to be employed?
- Was a job briefing checklist performed, and was the job briefing completed for those performing the work?
- Was proper management approval secured?

OSHA wants employers to make electrical safety procedures and practices part of regular work processes. Several annexes to NFPA 70E offer guidelines for lockout/tagout procedures, checklists and approvals. For example, Annex E covers Electrical Safety Programs, Annex F covers Hazard Risk Evaluation Procedures, Annex I covers Job Briefing Checklists and Annex J covers Energized Work Permits.

NFPA 70E annexes are not strictly "enforced" by OSHA, as they are appendices to the NFPA standard. However, OSHA inspectors and investigators will ask if the content and information contained in these annexes was followed and adhered to.

As an EHS professional, would you know the answers to these questions if an OSHA inspector came knocking on your door?

- Were required electrical safety analyses performed?
- Was an arc flash hazard analysis performed?
- Were flash protection boundaries established?
- Were all other potential electrical hazards identified?

OSHA regulations state that every employer shall furnish a place of employment free from recognized hazards that are causing or likely to cause death or serious physical harm, and that the employer must assess the workplace to determine if hazards are present and select PPE to protect employees. When it comes to electrical safety, OSHA refers to NFPA 70E, which requires employers to conduct an electrical hazard assessment consisting of a shock hazard analysis and an arc flash hazard analysis before work is performed on live equipment operating at 50 volts and higher.

These requirements may be fairly complex, as they involve calculating the potential fault current at each piece of equipment, understanding the characteristics of the overcurrent protective devices and how they are coordinated for each circuit and creating or updating one-line electrical drawings. Complex or not, OSHA inspectors are trained to ask if these analyses were performed, because they are essential to reducing the number of arc flash-related deaths and injuries that occur each year, as well as ensuring a safe installation.

When the safety of any job task involves electricity or electrical equipment, ask yourself these questions:

- Were proper tools and equipment used?
- Was the necessary PPE determined?
- Were the proper insulated tools used?
- Were insulated blankets and/or sheeting used to properly cover all of the live parts?

OSHA 1910.132 requires employers to assess hazards, select PPE and make sure that employees are trained how to use it. Electrical PPE, safe work practices such as lockout/tagout and safety training are covered by OSHA 29 CFR 1910.301-.399, also known as Electrical Subpart S.

For example, OSHA 1910.333 (a)(1)(i) states: “Employees working in areas where there are potential electrical hazards shall be provided with and shall use, electrical protective equipment that is appropriate for the specific parts of the body to be protected and for the work to be performed.”

For electrical workers, this standard’s effect is multi-fold. First, employers must facilitate workers’ understanding of the PPE required for each task on each piece of equipment. This may be communicated via a work order, a descriptive label on the equipment or a one-line drawing. Second, employers must select the PPE, which includes insulated tools and protective clothing. Third, the employer is required to train workers in safe work practices – and in particular, how to match the PPE to the level of the electrical hazard. And finally, OSHA 1910.269(a)(2)(iii) requires employers to “determine, through regular supervision and through inspections conducted on at least an annual basis, that each employee is complying with the safety-related work practices ...”

Were the workers performing the tasks qualified to do so?

OSHA defines qualified workers as those specially trained to work on live electrical equipment. Qualified workers must protect themselves against all electrical hazards including shock, arc flash, burns and explosions. Training is key. Even an experienced electrician is not “qualified” in OSHA’s eyes unless the employer can show proof of the appropriate training and certifications.

OSHA 1910.332(b)(2) also requires unqualified workers to be trained in the electrical safe work practices that are necessary for their safety. Unqualified workers, such as painters or cleaners, occasionally come into contact with energized equipment, and therefore they must be trained to recognize and avoid electrical hazards.

OSHA Updates Workplace Violence Prevention Document

(Convenience Store News – February 6, 2010)

OSHA updated its document, [Recommendations for Workplace Violence Prevention Programs in Late-Night Retail Establishments](#), to address issues causing late-night retail workers to be killed on the job, according to Oshaonline.com. **It is also available for free download.**

"The number of retail workers who died as a result of workplace violence has declined over the past 10 years -- from 286 in 1998 to 167 in 2007. This decline is encouraging, but not good enough," said Assistant Secretary of Labor for OSHA David Michaels. "Workers should not go to work fearing they won't live through the day."

The violence prevention information presented in the OSHA document builds on the agency's Recommendations for Workplace Violence Prevention Programs in Late-Night Retail Establishments, published in 1998, according to the association.

The updated recommendations identify risk factors and describe feasible solutions. It also includes policy recommendations and practical corrective methods to help prevent and mitigate the effects of workplace violence in late-night retail establishments.

Collaborative Approach Drives US Safety Improvement

(By Chris Sleight, International Construction – August 26, 2009)

According to the Associated General Contractors of America (AGC) the fatality rate in US construction has fallen -47% in the last ten years. This has been accompanied by a -38% fall in recordable accidents, and the AGC says both improvements are due to a switch by federal authorities to a 'collaborative' approach to safety supervision.

AGC figures show that in 1998 there were 1.7 fatalities for every US\$ 1 million invested in construction. Today the fatality rate is 0.9 per US\$ 1 million - a -47% drop. On a per capita basis, the fatality rate has fallen from 12.9 per 100000 construction workers in 2000 to 9.6 per 100000 in 2008, a -25% decline.

Commenting on the reductions, Chuck Penn, executive director of the AGC's Shreveport chapter said, "There is no doubt that the collaborative approach is working. While even one fatality is too

many, it is hard to think of another government program providing so much improvement in so little time."

Under this collaborative approach, the US Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and contractors alike have committed to providing additional training as well as data analysis and other support to improve safety.

ASSE Urges Senator to Support Public Sector Work Coverage in OSHA Reform Legislation

(By OH&S Magazine – January 31, 2010)

In a letter to Sen. Johnny H. Isakson, a leader in occupational safety and health issues, ASSE has urged support for provisions in OSHA reform legislation that would provide federal-level safety and health protections for the more than 8 million state and municipal workers now without coverage, noting that the only practical solution is a federal solution.

In his letter to Isakson, the ranking minority member of the Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions' Subcommittee on Employment and Workplace Safety, ASSE President C. Christopher Patton, CSP, noted that under the Occupational Safety and Health Act, states without their own state OSH plans are not required to provide such protections. Achieving OSH coverage for public sector workers is important to ASSE members, occupational safety, health and environmental professionals who work in all industries worldwide.

"Millions of workers are not provided federal occupational safety and health protections due to the fact that the OSH Act only requires such coverage in states with their own occupational safety and health plans," Patton wrote. "ASSE supports providing all public sector employees with federal OSH protections and urge you to keep the provision that would provide this coverage in the Protecting America's Workers Act (PAW Act, S. 1580) bill now under consideration. If this provision is dropped from reform legislation, it would be a significant lost opportunity to correct the failure of the OSH Act to treat all workers equally. Giving all workers the minimal protections afforded by federal OSHA standards would be argument enough to support this provision."

ASSE urged Isakson to consider the unmeasured burden that taxpayers are bearing because the states in which they live do not adequately protect workers.

"This nation's best employers are committed to workplace safety and health at levels far above the minimal levels of OSHA," Patton said. "They do so not only because it is the right thing to do for their employees but also because it is a prudent, cost-effective business practice. Most employers in this nation understand that a relatively small investment in workplace safety and health pays off with reduced costs for liability insurance, workers compensation, worker lost-time and overall productivity."

Patton also noted that efforts to achieve this coverage at the state level are difficult.

"As much as we would like to think that states are moving in this direction on their own as private sector employers have, they are not," Patton wrote. "Only one state in recent years, Illinois, has taken steps to establish a federally-approved state plan for public sector workers. Efforts to achieve such coverage at the state level are extremely difficult, as ASSE's members in

Florida know first-hand. Introduction of ASSE-championed bills in Florida that would simply require the state's public sector employers to meet federal standards without an enforcement mechanism took three years to be introduced."

An investigation by the CSB into the 2006 Daytona Beach municipal water treatment facility that took the lives of two workers found Florida's lack of OSH coverage for its public sector workers contributed to those deaths. In response, ASSE Florida members led ASSE to provide the resources needed to help pass legislation in 2008 establishing a task force charged with determining how to best protect Florida's workers that reinforced the need to provide the state's public sector employers to meet federal OSH Act standards – without any enforcement provisions or resources to support the requirement. A bill requiring these protections failed to pass in 2009. The bill passed the House, but not the Senate.

"The only practical solution to this problem is a federal solution. Whether that is Section 101 of the PAW Act, or another approach that incentivizes states to protect their workers, ASSE urges you to use your leadership to help find a way to achieve universal worker occupational safety and health protections," Patton said.

Chemical Safety: More Oversight

(The Charleston Gazette, January 29, 2010)

In recent years, West Virginians have, unfortunately, had reason to be grateful for the U.S. Chemical Safety Board. In 2007, the independent federal agency investigated a mysterious explosion at a Ghent convenience store that killed four people and seriously injured five others. The CSB came back in 2008 after two workers were killed by an explosion at the Bayer CropScience plant in Institute.

The federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration and the Environmental Protection Agency regulate chemical plants under a variety of laws and rules. But as Kanawha Valley residents learned after a phosgene leak killed Carl "Dan" Fish at Belle's DuPont plant last weekend, OSHA hadn't been to that plant for five years.

Even when those agencies are engaged, they tend to look for compliance to a narrow set of rules. When the Chemical Safety Board investigates, it is an independent examiner looking for answers to logical questions, such as "Why did this tragedy happen?" and "What would have prevented loss of life?" In other words, the CSB gets to the heart of the matter.

The Chemical Safety Board has built a decent reputation for itself. At any time, any member of the public can visit csb.gov online and search a list of both current and completed investigations. The agency does not levy fines or other penalties, but makes recommendations to those that do. And when CSB investigators are finished, companies, regulators, employees and concerned citizens have lessons to take home and apply to prevent future tragedies.

That is why it is so important that the CSB actually voted to investigate the phosgene leak at DuPont. We hope the public receives more complete and more forthright communication than it often gets from other agencies. During the Bayer investigation, the CSB fought off demands for secrecy from Bayer.

The CSB's work led to Bayer's announcement that it will reduce its inventory of deadly MIC, something Institute residents have requested for 30 years.

In deciding to open this newest investigation, the CSB warned that it has 17 open probes around the country, including one at Institute, the most in its 11-year history. The public can expect the addition of this investigation to delay others. So long as it doesn't lessen the professional quality of the Chemical Safety Board's work.

Sen. Jay Rockefeller, D-W.Va., is seeking more funds for the CSB. We hope he succeeds. The U.S. Government Accountability Office has criticized the Chemical Safety Board for not doing enough. It does not examine every chemical incident that results in a death. Certainly, West Virginians can appreciate why every community would want deaths thoroughly and professionally investigated.

Combustible Dust Hearings Set for Atlanta

(By Larry Peterson – Savannah Morning News: savannahnow.com, January 31, 2010)

Meetings on ways to reduce hazards like those that helped cause the 2008 Imperial Sugar Co. disaster will take place Feb. 17 in Atlanta. The sessions are among several to consider how to adopt comprehensive national rules on combustible dust. They are open to the public, but participants are required to register by Wednesday.

The effort is intended to prevent the kind of blast that ravaged Imperial's Port Wentworth refinery Feb. 7, 2008, killing 14 people and hurting many others. [To read more about the Imperial Sugar Co. refinery disaster in Port Wentworth, see hundreds of photos and watch video.](#) Investigators have concluded highly explosive sugar dust fueled the inferno.

The rule-making program is being spearheaded by the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

"Fourteen people were killed in a combustible dust explosion that was preventable," said Assistant Secretary of Labor for OSHA David Michaels. "The deaths need to stop.

"Information gathered from these meetings will help OSHA move ahead ... and prevent more deaths."

OSHA says more than 130 workers have been killed and more than 780 injured in combustible dust blasts since 1980.

Existing OSHA rules spell out employers' "general duty" under the law to keep workplaces safe. But they don't protect workers as well as a comprehensive dust standard would, said OSHA spokesman Michael Wald. The meetings will include discussions of possible regulatory approaches, among them some used by private groups. Wald said there will be more meetings, but the dates and places have not been determined. One site, he added, likely will be in the Midwest, where combustible grain dust has been a major hazard.

Local elected officials, among them U.S. Rep. John Barrow, a Savannah Democrat, want at least one meeting in the Savannah area. Barrow acknowledged Atlanta is closer to the site of the disaster. "But the reality," he added, "is that for many of those affected, the most here in

Savannah, Atlanta might as well be Washington in terms of being able to get to the hearing and have their voices heard.

"I think folks in this area, the ones who actually lived through a dust-related tragedy, can make important contributions to those proceedings." Wald said it is unlikely any hearings will take place closer than Atlanta. "That will be the best bet for people in the Savannah area who want to participate," he said.

Side by side with the rule-making process is OSHA's prosecution of Imperial Sugar.

OSHA last year accused the company of 201 safety violations at Port Wentworth and at its refinery in Gramercy, LA. The agency is seeking \$8.8 million in fines. The company is contesting them. Hearings on the appeal are due to begin in May. As things stand now, the rule-making process is expected to take years.

Barrow says that is too long and makes additional combustible dust-related disasters more likely. He and Rep. George Miller, D-Calif., are co-sponsoring a bill that would require OSHA to adopt temporary standards. "However, he hopes that OSHA will enact those standards on its own," spokeswoman Jane Brodsky said.

Builders Go Through the Motions: Some Contractors Say Voluntary Methods Better Than Federal Ergonomics Standards

(By Sean Ryan –The Daily Reporter, January 29, 2010)

The young guys on his carpentry crew pay more attention to stretching exercises after they hear John Niffenegger's back crack when he gets off his knees during a flooring job.

Niffenegger, who worked in a lumberyard carrying concrete bags and timbers before starting a 25-year construction career, is a carpenter foreman with Building Service Inc., Milwaukee. He said he injured his back about 10 years ago after carrying too many heavy materials up stairs.

Niffenegger said he didn't stretch until after the injury.

"But I tend to tell people, the younger guys, the apprentices, I tell them to be careful."

Wisconsin safety directors who promote stretching and exercise to prevent muscle strains, pulls and bad backs say the programs work better than federal safety regulations would. But there is a possibility that the Occupational Safety and Health Administration will revive the effort to enforce ergonomics standards.

Contractors are targeting ergonomics problems caused by repeated motion and moving heavy objects, said Bob Emmerich, president of safety consultant Safe-Con LLC, Madison. Although it is counter to builders' tough-guy image to stretch before each workday, builders' voluntary methods will work better than an OSHA standard that will probably generate a lot of confusion, Emmerich said.

"My belief is, speaking specifically of ergonomics now," Emmerich said, "is the industry will go farther with a proactive approach, working with the insurance companies and the medical profession on this."

On Friday, OSHA proposed new rules that would force companies to tally musculoskeletal disorders — muscle strains and pulls, bad backs — on OSHA 300 safety logs. Comments about the proposed rules are due March 15.

OSHA drafted ergonomics rules in 2001, but never implemented them. Gathering data on ergonomics injuries is necessary before OSHA revives the rule, said Dan Burazin, safety director for the Associated General Contractors of Greater Milwaukee.

But the proposed rule change is not a prelude to a broader ergonomics standard, according to an e-mail attributed to OSHA Public Affairs Director Diana Petterson.

Burazin said dealing with ergonomics rules is difficult because, for instance, a backache could be caused by a work accident or a weekend football game. Also, he said, rules must spell out specific requirements, or contractors may not understand how to satisfy them.

“It’s very difficult to pinpoint as to what is compliance, and am I doing everything I need to do?” Burazin said. “You may think you are, but then, all of the sudden, you get a citation.”

Insurance companies do not set ergonomics rules for builders, but they tell companies to make their workers shape up if they have multiple injuries from moving heavy equipment, said Brad Stehno, account executive and safety consultant for R&R Insurance Services Inc., Waukesha.

The message, which he said younger workers and some companies do not take seriously, is builders should look after their personal health like a professional athlete, with good diets, exercise and on-site stretching.

Stehno said he has mixed feelings about OSHA ergonomics rules. On the plus side, he said, they would force companies to take ergonomics more seriously.

But on the down side, any new rules would represent more regulations to follow, he said.

Stehno said few companies have formal ergonomics programs.

One such company is M.A. Mortenson Co., Brookfield, which requires workers to stretch at the beginning of the workday and after lunch, said Doug Mortenson, Milwaukee operating group safety director. Workers who have done it for a while end up appreciating the program, he said, but workers’ initial reaction is usually more skeptical.

“There’s sometimes some resistance,” he said, “where they don’t see the point in doing it.”

Builders are also using new equipment, such as hydraulic scaffolds, to cut down on worker strain, Emmerich said. And contractors have physical therapists examine their workers and assign them exercise schedules for “work hardening,” so they are fit for their daily tasks, he said.

Niffenegger said he went through a similar physical therapy program after his injury, and now stretches at home before going to work, although not every day.

“I know that it’s important,” he said, “and I think it’s important, but still I don’t do it enough.”

Simple Solutions for Office Hazards

(By Sandy Smith, EHS Today – March 3, 2008)

Office work spaces often have overlooked hazards that threaten the physical well-being of all who enter. Company co-workers or, if work is done from a home office, family members and pets, unknowingly can be in harm's way. While some threats are fairly obvious, others can lurk in the most unexpected places.

In the office, equipment cables and wires can become a trip-and-fall hazard – and an expensive workers' compensation case. Poised and ready to trip all who pass, office cables and wires are far more than an unsightly nuisance. Slips, trips and falls constitute the majority of general industry accidents. In the United States, they cause 15 percent of all work-related deaths and are second only to motor vehicles as a cause of fatalities, according OSHA.

In a home office environment, small children and common household animals like cats, dogs, rabbits and ferrets often see equipment wires as play things – all too often as chew toys. Clearly such a circumstance puts the child or pet at great risk, with electric shock and strangulation at the top of the list.

The experts at <http://CableOrganizer.com> offer these simple office safety solutions:

Cable Control on the Cheap: For just a few dollars, computer cables can be easily shielded with a split wire loom, a flexible and durable polyethylene corrugated tube with a split down the side where you enter your multi-cable bundle. If you have to add another wire later on, you can easily slip it into the split wire loom along with the others without removing the entire bundle.

Achieve Lift-Off: Cables, power adapters, power strips, hubs, modems and other small devices can be readily lifted off the floor and put safely out of harm's way with cable management products that loop, tie and hang “cable clutter” off the floor to reduce work space risks including snags, trips and liquid spills.

Wire Fire Can Be Dire: With a glut of equipment, wiring and electrical outlets conducting heat, often over long periods of time and in compact spaces, fire safety is an important workspace consideration. In addition to the standard fire extinguisher, other fire safety measures also should be employed. Flame spread is one vital safety consideration that easily can be addressed. Flame-retardant wire sleeving that does not support combustion can significantly reduce office fire hazards. You also can establish an effective insulating barrier to prevent the spread of fire and smoke through structural gaps and voids with fire-rated expanding polyurethane foams – a cost-effective way to establish an insulating seal on concrete, brick, wood, metal, aluminum and steel.

An Important Mat-ter: Use traction floor mats in high-traffic and extended-use areas, particularly those prone to moisture or spills. Be sure to use a floor mat with beveled edges to eliminate trip risk. Mats with sponge bases will enhance ergonomic safety for employees who must stand for longer periods of time.

Surface Raceways: Home office wires that run across the floor to a distant outlet are among the most dangerous office situations, with a high risk of injuries or damaged equipment. Fortunately, surface raceways are a readily available and easy way to organize and protect electrical cords

that run along the floor or on the wall. These “cable channels” are made of tough PVC and can be painted to match office décor.

Cord Protectors: These wire cover systems are another great way to keep from tripping on loose cables and cords running across a walkway or behind your desk. Cord protectors cover, hide and protect cords and cables while keeping floors clear and safe. They also lie flat, and stay flat, and are easy to install.

Heavy Metal: Whether you want greater protection for your wires from children, animals, rodents or pests, or have a need to protect outdoor fiber optics, RG-6 coaxial cable or Category 5E cables from wildlife or the elements, metal braided sleeving, made from tin-coated copper, is both flexible and strong, and also offers electromagnetic interference (EMI) protection.

Take the Edge Off: Wrap anything with a sharp edge such as broken/cracked glass, brittle plastic casings or other materials that may break and produce a sharp or rough edge in corrugated cardboard and secure with a heavy-duty duct tape to protect yourself and others from accidental lacerations. This is especially important before placing such items in a trash container.

U.S. Chemical Safety Board Urges Rules Changes in Wake of Fatal ConAgra Plant Explosion

(By Amanda Jones Hoyle, Triangle Business Journal – February 4, 2010)

The [U.S. Chemical Safety Board](#) on Thursday night approved urgent gas-code recommendations designed to prevent another explosion like the blast last June that killed four people at the [ConAgra Foods](#) Slim Jim plant in Garner.

At a meeting in Raleigh, the board voted 2-1 to urge the [National Fire Protection Association](#), the [American Gas Association](#), and the International Code Council to strengthen the national fuel gas code provisions for purging air from gas lines during maintenance or the installation of new piping.

Oftentimes during pipe purging, workers will feed pressurized gas into a pipe in order to ensure that only pure fuel gas remains in the piping when it is reconnected to the appliance. The recommended code changes would require gases to be vented outdoors and require use of combustible gas detectors during the operation.

Investigators determined that the ConAgra plant explosion was caused when a contractor removed a pressure gauge from a natural gas-fired water heater line and released gas into an enclosed room while trying to make a repair.

“Purging flammable gases into building interiors is a recipe for disaster,” said CSB investigations supervisor Donald Holmstrom in a statement. He also noted that since the June 2009 accident, ConAgra has instituted strict policies on pipe purging, requiring it be done to safe outdoor locations.

RSI - A Pain in the Neck, Back, Arm and ...

(Canadian Centre for Occupational Safety and Health: Health and Safety Report – January 2010 - Volume 8, Issue 1)

February 29th. It's the one day on the calendar that does not repeat, which is why it was chosen for International Repetitive Strain Injury (RSI) Awareness Day. In non-leap years, it is observed on February 28th. On this day, workers, health and safety professionals, health care practitioners and others take the opportunity to help raise awareness about RSIs and the need for action aimed at prevention, rehabilitation and compensation.

What are RSIs? Repetitive strain injuries, also known as work-related musculoskeletal disorders (WMSDs), is an umbrella term to describe a family of painful disorders affecting tendons, muscles, nerves and joints in the neck, upper and lower back, chest, shoulders, arms and hands. WMSDs are a serious occupational health concern across the world and are recognized as leading causes of significant human suffering, loss of productivity, and economic burdens on society.

Cause

WMSDs can be caused by work activities that are frequent and repetitive, or activities with awkward postures, including:

- fixed or constrained body positions
- continual repetition of movements
- force concentrated on small parts of the body, such as the hand or wrist
- a pace of work that does not allow enough rest between movements

Heat, cold and vibration may also contribute to the development of WMSDs. These disorders are generally caused by a combination of these factors - rather than one individual factor.

Prevention

The best way to eliminate a hazard is to eliminate the source. With WMSDs, the main source of the hazard is the repetitiveness of work. Prevention efforts should focus on avoiding the repetitiveness patterns of work through proper job design. Where this is not possible, preventive strategies involving workplace layout, tool and equipment design, and work practices should be considered. It is important to recognize these disorders early because medical treatments become less effective the longer these injuries go on.

Preventive and control measures, in order to be truly effective, require involvement of workers, their representatives, and management.

Safety Training Strategies: It's a Dangerous Life

(By Becky Estrella, Texas Department of Transportation, Safety Stuff – June 24, 2009)

To make this month's safety meeting more exciting and to get everyone to participate, I created the board game "It's a Dangerous Life" (see picture to right).

Participants rolled dice to move around the board. Each space on the board had a picture of a common summertime danger. When someone landed on a space, they took a card with the same

picture on it and read about the dangers associated with that particular item (for instance a rattlesnake). Also included were tips for avoiding the danger and what to do if bitten, etc. The player pieces were pictures of safety items like goggles, vests, steel toed boots etc.

Each person was awarded a small prize. Prizes included small tubes of sunscreen, benadryl, and insect repellent, caps, grilling mitts and tissues. We all had fun and learned a lot about summertime dangers.

Lessons Learned: OSHA Cites Broan-NuTone

(By Matt Smith, Cleburne Times-Review, Cleburne, TX – January 1, 2010)

The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration cited Broan-NuTone Storage Solutions on Wednesday with one alleged willful violation and four alleged serious violations.

The violations spring from the July amputation of a worker's hand at the company's Cleburne location.

Proposed penalties from the violations total \$91,000.

A large, metal pressing machine amputated the woman's right hand on the morning of July 29 at the plant, according to reports, leaving portions of her leather work glove pressed and lodged into her injury.

An ambulance transported Leonor Torres, 51, of Cleburne to John Peter Smith Hospital.

Co-workers applied a tourniquet to Torres' arm before rescue workers arrived.

A search for her hand in the machine uncovered only small pieces, according to reports. Most of the hand had been pulverized.

OSHA began its investigation of the Cleburne location on Aug. 27.

They issued the willful citation for the company's failure to provide adequate machine guarding, according to an OSHA release.

OSHA issues willful citations when an employer exhibits plain indifference to or intentional disregard for employee safety and health, according to the release.

"If the employer had ensured the machine was adequately guarded, it is possible this tragic accident could have been avoided," said Zachary Barnett, OSHA's area director in Fort Worth.

Serious violations include failure to perform regular inspections of mechanical power presses, to provide adequate supervision while employees are working on hazardous equipment and to ensure adequate training was given for maintaining mechanical power press equipment, according to OSHA.

A serious violation is one in which a substantial probability exists that death or serious physical

harm could result from a hazard about which the employer knew or should have known about, according to OSHA.

Broan-NuTone has 15 business days from receipt of the citations to comply, request an informal conference with OSHA's area director in Fort Worth or contest the citations and proposed penalties before the independent Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission.

Lessons Learned: Safety Problems At Mereaux Refinery

(The Associated Press ABC26 News – December 30, 2009)

The Murphy Oil Co. refinery in Mereaux, Louisiana has 18 violations that could cause death or serious injury, and many of its current problems remain from two years ago, says an Occupational Safety and Health Administration audit.

The audit, released Tuesday, said the inspection this summer found that Murphy had failed to correct 43 percent of the violations noted in 2007.

Fines for the serious violations totaled more than \$85,000. Most were fire and explosion hazards, an OSHA news release said.

Company spokesman Carl Zornes declined to comment, saying the company had just received the citations and was considering responses.

It has 15 business days to pay the fines and get in compliance, request an informal conference with OSHA's Baton Rouge director, or contest the citations before an independent review commission.

Citations included failure to regularly inspect piping and problems with relief valves designed to prevent fires or explosions. In addition, OSHA inspectors found that the Murphy refinery often did not deal with deficiencies pointed out during internal safety audits.

The Mereaux refinery employs about 315 workers.

The inspection began July 7 as part of a national program to reduce the number of catastrophic accidents at oil refineries. In October, OSHA imposed a record \$87 million fine against oil giant BP PLC for failing to correct safety hazards after a 2005 explosion killed 15 workers at its Texas City refinery.

The state Department of Environmental Quality is investigating a Murphy Oil discharge of storm water laden with oil into a neighborhood canal during heavy rains earlier this month.

Lessons Learned: Ontario Power Generation Inc. Fined \$100,000 After Worker Injured

(Queen's Printer for Ontario- January 19, 2010)

Ontario Power Generation Inc., pleaded guilty and was fined \$100,000 yesterday for a violation under the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) after a worker was injured.

On January 15, 2008, two maintenance workers at the company's Atikokan operating station were called to examine some malfunctioning equipment. The equipment was locked in a chamber to protect workers from its electrically energized, moving apparatus. A lockout system required equipment to be electrically de-energized, grounded and locked out before the chamber could open. An equipment operator used a bypass key to circumvent the lockout system and open a hatch door while the equipment was still energized. One of the workers shone a flashlight into the open door, causing an arc flash of electricity. The arc flash burned the worker's hand, arm and chest.

A Ministry of Labour investigation found that the key used to bypass the lockout system was available to workers.

Ontario Power Generation Inc. pleaded guilty to failing to take the reasonable precaution of preventing ready access to the means of circumventing the lockout system.

The fine was imposed by Justice Peter Bishop. In addition to the fine, the court imposed a 25-per-cent victim fine surcharge, as required by the Provincial Offences Act. The surcharge is credited to a special provincial government fund to assist victims of crime.

Discuss Heart Attack Symptoms During National Heart Month

(Safety Smart Weekly Briefing – February 1, 2010)

Since February is National Heart Month, now is a good time to raise the subject in your workplace as a safety awareness moment, tailgate meeting or training session.

If you're ever going to have to deal with a serious medical emergency, chances are pretty good that it will be a heart attack. Heart attacks are a leading cause of death among North Americans. They can occur anywhere, and that includes the workplace.

7 Possible Signs of a Heart Attack

There are many possible symptoms for a heart attack, which can be confused with other ailments, such as digestive problems or muscle strain. However, these symptoms need to be taken seriously. The patient may dismiss the symptoms, but an alert co-worker may be able to recognize the possibility of a heart attack and therefore save that person's life.

Here are some of the symptoms to watch for:

1. Chest pain is the classic symptom. Pain may occur suddenly. It may even occur when the person is at rest.

2. The pain may radiate to one or both arms, and up to the jaw, neck or back. The pain may be described as a sensation of choking, squeezing, burning, or pressure. The pain may also be described as intense and is usually constant.
3. The person may also experience nausea, vomiting, feelings of gas or other digestive discomfort.
4. The patient may also experience fear and may feel that he or she is going to die.
5. Weakness, especially in the arms, is another symptom. Perspiration and skin pallor may also be present.
6. Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing may occur.
7. Weak and rapid pulse, or possibly a decrease in the pulse rate may also be symptoms.

Many victims have survived cardiac arrest and returned to a normal life because someone recognized the symptoms and called for medical help right away. Many others have survived because someone knew how to perform CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) to keep the victim alive until the ambulance arrived. The more people who receive training in CPR, the better.

Safety Tidbits

(from "Safety Stuff" by Richard Hawk Inc. <http://www.richardhawkin.com>)

- The first rearview mirror was introduced at the Indy 500 in 1911.
- Ulysses S. Grant sometimes smoked as many as 20 cigars a day. He died of throat cancer.
- Men are more likely than women to run stoplights. Women are more likely to switch lanes without signaling.
- Germs are everywhere and some can make us sick. Where do we come in contact with them most in our modern world? The four main germ transmission points are handling pets, coughing, sneezing, and visiting the toilet. However, a study conducted by the University of Arizona revealed that the average American office cubicle is the most germ-infested area most people are likely to visit on a given day.
 - On average, 21,000 germs per square inch are just on your desk--400 times more than on the mispercieved office toilet seat. Telephones have as many as 25,000 microbes per square inch, keyboards more than 3,000, and computer mice over 1,500. Toilet seats: about 50.
 - A toilet handle, however, can have as many as 80,000 bacteria per square inch!
 - A 4-year study conducted by the University of Arizona's Environmental Research Lab (sponsored by Clorox) found shopping carts to be like petri dishes, slobbered with mucus, urine, human saliva, fecal matter and blood from raw meat. New Jersey and Arkansas have pioneered laws to force supermarkets to offer shoppers free sanitary wipes. Swabs from 36 shopping carts from four cities (San Francisco, Chicago, Tucson, and Tampa) showed them to be the third nastiest public item people frequently touch. Playground equipment and public transportation armrests were on the top of the list.

See, now you know why you should wash your hands regularly!
- **Invention of Safety Glass:** One day in 1903, French chemist Edouard Benedictus was working in his lab when he accidentally knocked an empty glass flask off his workbench. When he picked it up, he noticed something strange: The glass had shattered into many pieces, but they remained stuck together in the shape of the bottle. Upon investigation he found that the flask had been filled with collodion, a syrupy chemical solution that, when evaporated, leaves a clear film. The film had

coated the inside of the glass and held the pieces together. (Collodion, though quite toxic, was used in those days to seal cuts after surgery.)

Although Benedictus thought this was interesting, he went back to his regular work. A few days later he read an article about a woman who had been killed by a broken windshield in a car accident. Benedictus rushed to his lab. By the next night he had invented the world's first safety glass, which can be found in virtually every car in the world today.