



SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES OF THE TECHNICAL INFORMATION BRANCH



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Public Health Service
Centers for Disease Control
National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health
Division of Standards Development and Technology Transfer



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This pamphlet contains a description of information sources, resources, and services currently available from the Technical Information Branch at the Taft Center in Cincinnati. The purpose of the document is to acquaint NIOSH staff with functions of this Branch.

The format and scope of the pamphlet are not fixed. Its ultimate use and continuation depend on support from NIOSH users, who are encouraged to provide comments concerning its contents, omissions, format, and usefulness.

Additional information regarding the material in this publication can be obtained from:

Chief, Technical Information Branch (C-18)
513-533-8326 (FTS 684-8326)

DATABASES

Registry of Toxic Effects of Chemical Substances

The Registry of Toxic Effects of Chemical Substances (RTECS®) is a database of toxicological information compiled, maintained, and updated by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). It is a congressionally mandated activity established by Section 20(a)(6) of the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (PL 91-596). RTECS® now contains over 105,000 chemicals as it strives to fulfill the mandate to list "all known toxic substances . . . and the concentrations at which . . . toxicity is known to occur."

The Registry is a compendium of data extracted from the open scientific literature. The data are recorded in the format developed by the RTECS® staff, and arranged in alphabetical order by prime chemical name. Five types of toxicity data are included: primary irritation, mutagenic effects, reproductive effects, tumorigenic effects, and acute toxicity. Specific numeric toxicity values such as LD₅₀, LC₅₀, TD_{Lo}, TC_{Lo}, etc., are noted as well as species studied and route of administration used. For each citation, the bibliographic source is listed, thereby enabling the user to access the actual studies cited. No attempt has been made to evaluate the studies cited in RTECS®. The user has the responsibility to make such assessments.

In addition to toxicity data, RTECS® contains the following other information when it is available: certain chemical identification data (Chemical Abstracts Service [CAS] Registry Numbers, synonyms, molecular formulas, molecular weights, and Wiswesser Line Notations); regulatory information from the Department of Transportation (DOT), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA), and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA); Threshold Limit Values (TLVs) from the American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists (ACGIH); and recommended exposure limits (RELs) from NIOSH. It also indicates if NIOSH has issued a Criteria Document, Current Intelligence Bulletin, or analytical method for the chemical. Carcinogenic reviews from the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), bioassay results from the National Toxicology Program (NTP), and EPA's status for the substance under the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) are also included.

The 1985-86 edition of RTECS® is the latest printed version. It is a six-volume set. More current versions are available in microfiche and electronic formats.

Information regarding the contents and availability of RTECS® in printed form, computer tape, microfiche, on-line, and CD-ROM can be obtained from:

Editor, RTECS® (C-28)
513-533-8359 (FTS 684-8359)

NIOSHTIC®

NIOSHTIC® is NIOSH's on-line, bibliographic database of literature in the field of occupational safety and health. NIOSHTIC® currently contains 165,000 references. The database is updated quarterly and is available on-line and on compact disc from several vendors. Selected articles from about 150 current, English language technical journals account for approximately 45 percent of the 6,000 annual additions to NIOSHTIC®. The database also contains retrospective information, some dating back to the 19th century.

Because NIOSH examines all aspects of adverse safety and health effects experienced by workers, much of the information contained in NIOSHTIC® has been selected from sources that do not have a primary occupational safety and health orientation.

Types of information selected include:

Behavioral sciences	Epidemiological studies of
Physiology and metabolism	diseases and disorders
Toxicology	Ergonomics
Pathology and histology	Health physics
Chemistry	Occupational medicine
Control technology	Safety
Education and training	Hazardous waste

Information regarding the contents and availability of NIOSHTIC® on-line and on CD-ROM can be obtained from:

NIOSHTIC® Project Manager (C-28)
513-533-8348 (FTS 684-8348)

Document Information Directory System (DIDS)

The Document Information Directory System (DIDS) is a computerized data file containing subject-indexed records of all NIOSH documents.

Types of documents included are:

- NIOSH-numbered publications
- Hazard Evaluation and Technical Assistance (HETA) reports
- Control Technology (CT) reports
- Industrywide Study (IW) reports
- Contract and grant reports
- Training documents
- Testimonies to Congress and other Federal agencies
- Fatal Accident Circumstances and Epidemiology (FACE) reports
- NIOSH-authored journal articles and book chapters
- Miscellaneous reports

Most NIOSH documents are available from either NIOSH, the Government Printing Office (GPO), or the National Technical Information Service (NTIS).

Information regarding the contents and availability of DIDS can be obtained from:

DIDS Project Manager (C-28)
513-533-8350 (FTS 684-8350)

PUBLICATIONS DISSEMINATION

Distribution

Annually NIOSH responds to over 34,000 letter and telephone requests for NIOSH publications, hazard evaluation and technical assistance reports, and audiovisuals. During Fiscal Year 1990, more than 250,000 NIOSH-numbered publications were disseminated.

Information regarding the availability of NIOSH publications can be obtained from:

NIOSH Publications (C-13)
513-533-8287 (FTS 684-8287)

Dissemination Strategies

The transferring of NIOSH research findings and policy determinations to the professional occupational safety and health community is accomplished through strategically developed dissemination plans. These strategies allow for the matching of NIOSH information with the appropriate target audiences, selecting the best methods of reaching those audiences, and evaluating the effectiveness of the information and its dissemination plan. Dissemination staff work closely with NIOSH researchers and authors to develop individual plans for each document which will allow for access to a wide audience. Additional information regarding planning dissemination strategies may be obtained from:

Chief, Information Dissemination Section (C-20)
513-533-8323 (FTS 684-8323)

EXHIBIT PROGRAM

NIOSH exhibits provide a forum for displaying and demonstrating NIOSH products and services at a variety of conferences. Recent NIOSH publications that are of interest to conference attendees are highlighted at each exhibit site. In addition, hand-out material is prepared and printed for specific conference exhibits.

Demonstrations of NIOSHTIC® and RTECS® on CD-ROM are often conducted to show the scope and utility of these databases. As an adjunct to its educational and international activities, NIOSH also has jointly conducted exhibits with NIOSH's Educational Resource Centers, the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety, and the International Labour Organization at several national and international sites.

For more than ten years, NIOSH has conducted exhibits annually at the following four meetings:

- National Safety Congress
- American Public Health Association
- American Occupational Health Conference
- American Industrial Hygiene Conference

NIOSH has also exhibited at many other meetings including:

- Emergency Medical Service
- International Steelworkers
- Ohio AFL-CIO Workers Safety and Health Institute
- International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers
- International Pneumoconiosis Conference
- American Society of Safety Engineers
- Society of Toxicology

NIOSH's presence at these meetings underscores the Institute's commitment to these groups. In addition, the exhibits help disseminate NIOSH research reports and demonstrate the types of services and activities that NIOSH provides.

Information about NIOSH's exhibit program can be obtained from:

Chief, Information Dissemination Section (C-20)
513-533-8323 (FTS 684-8323)

TECHNICAL INQUIRIES

TIB maintains a staff of technical information specialists who perform computerized literature searches for NIOSH staff at both the Taft and Hamilton facilities using a variety of business, scientific, and technical databases. This staff is also available in Cincinnati to NIOSH staff and others in responding to a variety of occupational safety and health questions.

The Technical Information Branch maintains a toll-free number (**1-800-35-NIOSH**) information service whose purpose is to improve the public's access to NIOSH and its information resources. The service is intended to enable the public to easily request technical information, health hazard evaluation forms, and other information regarding NIOSH activities. The operating hours are 8:00 a.m. until 4:30 p.m., eastern time, Monday through Friday. A telephone answering machine records incoming calls during evening, weekend, and holiday hours.

Users of the NIOSH toll-free number include a cross-section of people, including blue and white collar workers and their families, union representatives, occupational safety and health professionals, physicians and other health care personnel, students, government workers, attorneys, and reporters. The subjects for which information has been most frequently requested are:

- Carpal tunnel syndrome
- Indoor air quality
- HHE request forms
- Video display terminals
- Training information
- Information on physical agents, hazardous waste, ergonomics, stress, ventilation, analytical and sampling methods, respirator policy, personal protective equipment, etc.
- Worker notification
- Asbestos
- Chemicals/solvents

In response to technical inquiries, the following three subject bibliographies were recently developed and distributed:

- Carpal Tunnel Syndrome - Selected References
- Indoor Air Quality - Selected References
- Reproductive Hazards in the Workplace - Selected References

Information about technical inquiries from both NIOSH staff and non-NIOSH personnel can be obtained from:

Chief, Information Retrieval and Analysis Section (C-19)
513-533-8328 (FTS 684-8328)

LIBRARY SERVICES

The Cincinnati NIOSH Library supports the in-depth scholarly investigations of occupational safety and health by NIOSH personnel. The library currently contains more than 12,000 books, 750 periodical titles, 8500 NIOSH-acquired translations, and 250,000 microfiche copies of reports and articles. The Taft Library is staffed full-time and the Hamilton Library is staffed on a part-time basis.

Publications from the Government Printing Office and the National Technical Information Service can be obtained for NIOSH staff through the NIOSH Library. In addition, NIOSH library staff members catalog books, check-in periodicals, and provide reference service and interlibrary loan service.

The NIOSH Cincinnati Library also serves as the United States' National Center for CIS. CIS is the International Labour Organization's world-wide clearinghouse for occupational safety and health information. It provides NIOSH with access to occupational safety and health literature from around the world. As a CIS Center, NIOSH also disseminates this information to CIS members throughout the United States.

Information about NIOSH's library services in Cincinnati can be obtained from:

Head Librarian (C-21)
513-533-8321 (FTS 684-8321)

PRINTING SERVICES

The NIOSH Printing Officer handles a variety of printing and publishing services. These services include: printing of documents, reports, forms, and envelopes; typesetting; binding; and acquisition of computer paper.

Information about NIOSH's printing services can be obtained from:

Printing Officer (C-7)
513-533-8381 (FTS 684-8381)



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*of Service to the Workers of America
...and the World*