

# The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)

Promoting productive workplaces  
through safety and health research 

## NIOSH eNews



Director's Desk



Research  
Rounds



Highlights



Monthly  
Features

### Update on Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Response

This week CDC published new guidance for all agriculture workers and their employers that provides information on preparation, prevention, and management measures that can help reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19. For more information, please visit the [COVID-19 webpage](#).

Volume 18, Number 2 (June 2020)

## From the Director's Desk


John Howard, M.D. Director, NIOSH

### National Safety Month: Reopening Our Country and Keeping Workers Safe and Healthy

This month, NIOSH joins our partners at the National Safety Council and elsewhere in observing [National Safety Month](#). NIOSH is taking a different approach in how we are recognizing safety month this year, given the recent changes to our workplaces and how and where we may be conducting our work. Whatever your usual workplace looks like—a cubicle, a coalmine, a retail store, or a construction site—it will look differently as our country opens back up. NIOSH is actively working within the CDC response to the COVID-19 pandemic to help provide guidance and tools for essential workers and industries as they look to reopen. In recognition of National Safety Month, we wanted to share new information to help ease the transition for workers and to continue to ensure their safety and health.



Photo by ©GettyImages

In general, employers should follow the [White House Guidelines for Opening Up America Again](#) . However, certain sectors, such as small businesses, face unique challenges. CDC has developed [guidance for small businesses](#) to help them prepare for disruptions in their business and for protecting their employees' health and safety in the workplace. CDC also developed [guidance](#) for other sectors, such as airline workers, retail workers, food and delivery drivers, and many others.

As cities and states reopen, more people may start using public transit options to commute for work, school, or other activities. CDC has guidance for [bus](#) and [rail](#) transit operators to help keep these essential workers safe while working. People may also take advantage of ride share and taxi services as more places reopen. CDC has guidance for [rideshare](#), [taxi](#), [limo](#), and [other passenger drivers](#) as they go back to work.


Recent changes have taken a mental toll on workers and employers. How you cope with these emotions and stress can affect your well-being, as well as the well-being of your loved ones, your workplace, and your community. CDC has developed [guidance to help workers deal with stress and build resilience](#) during this transition. To manage workplace fatigue, there is additional guidance for [workers and employers](#) and for essential workers, such as [emergency responders](#) and [healthcare workers](#).

Many other resources are available to help [workers and employers](#) as we reopen our country. Remember that you are not alone—we are all in this together.

## Research Rounds

### Inside NIOSH: Occupational Exposure Banding Tool Assesses Chemical Hazards

The gold standard for assessing and controlling work-related chemical exposure is the occupational exposure limit, or OEL. While more than 85,000 chemicals are commercially available, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, only about 1,000 chemicals have an authoritative OEL. As new chemicals are developed and introduced into commerce, the number of chemicals without OELs increases.

Consequently, NIOSH developed an approach called occupational exposure banding, described in a 2019 [technical report](#) , and an accompanying [electronic assessment tool](#) (e-Tool). Occupational exposure banding is an innovative, voluntary approach that uses information about a chemical's toxicity and health effects to classify it into an appropriate occupational exposure band. The process is divided into three tiers, with each tier dependent upon available information for the chemical and user expertise. Users can enter information about a chemical into the e-Tool,

## In This Issue:

### Director's Desk

- [National Safety Month: Reopening Our Country and Keeping Workers Safe and Healthy](#)

### Research Rounds

- [Occupational Exposure Banding Tool Assesses Chemical Hazards](#)
- [Older Nurses Cite Joy and Connection to Patients as Motivation to Work](#)

### Highlights

- [Now Extended: Comment on Workplace-Supported Recovery Programs to Help Workers and Employers](#)
- [Working in Heat Safely, #BeatTheHeat](#)
- [Software Trains Every Worker to be a Workplace EXAMiner](#)
- [NIOSH Leadership Update](#)


### Monthly Features

- [New Communication Products & Reports](#)
- [NIOSH Science Blog](#)
- [Federal Register Notice](#)
- [NORA](#)
- [News From Our Partners](#)
- [Webinars, Meetings & Conferences](#)

which then classifies the chemical into one of five concentrations expected to protect worker health. The bands range from Band A, the highest exposure concentration range recommendation and associated with less serious health effects, to Band E, the lowest exposure concentration range recommendation and associated with more serious health effects.

Scientists tested the process and e-Tool on chemicals with OELs and found that the results were accurate, reproducible, and indicated recommended levels of airborne exposures that were at least as protective as the established OELs. Accordingly, NIOSH and other users can have confidence in the process as a reliable alternative for assessing chemical hazards. The process and e-Tool are not intended to replace OELs but can provide a starting point to inform risk management decisions when an OEL is not available. In the year following the release of the NIOSH occupational exposure banding process and e-Tool, the occupational safety and health community and partners like the American Industrial Hygiene Association have acknowledged its value and promoted its utility for assessing chemical hazards.

More information is available:

- [The NIOSH Occupational Exposure Banding Process for Chemical Risk Management](#) 
- [NIOSH Pocket Guide to Chemical Hazards](#)

*\*This updated article originally appeared in the August 2019 issue of NIOSH Research Rounds.*

## NIOSH eNews is Brought to You By:

John Howard, M.D., Director  
Christina Spring, Editor in Chief

### Managing Editor

Tanya Headley

### Section Editors

Anne Blank, Research Rounds  
Kiana Harper, Highlights & Monthly Features

### Contributing Editors

Sarah Mitchell  
Emily Norton  
Donjanea Williams

### Copy Editor

Cheryl Hamilton

### Technical Support

Steve Leonard, Technical Lead  
Tonya White, Web Developer

## Sign up for NIOSH eNews


To receive the NIOSH eNews email newsletter, enter your email address:

[What's this?](#)

## Outside NIOSH:

### Older Nurses Cite Joy and Connection to Patients as Motivation to Work


As the U.S. workforce continues to age, many older nurses continue to work in direct care. This role can pose safety and health hazards, yet research is limited on older nurses' ability to safely perform direct care. To address this issue, the NIOSH-funded New York and New Jersey Education and Research Center recently looked at factors that influence aging nurses' work ability.

Researchers interviewed 17 female registered nurses by phone or in person between August 2017 and March 2018 at one large academic medical center. Most participants were white, their average age was 59, and they had spent about 34 years on the job. Guided by a [NIOSH Organization of Work framework](#) , the questions focused on the framework's principles that include work context, or characteristics of the job like work tasks and roles, and organizational context, such as workplace practices and policies.

Overall, the participants' main motivations were internal factors like experiencing joy from nursing and feeling connected to patients at their bedside, according to the study published in the [Western Journal of Nursing Research](#). Other aspects of the job that increased their ability to work included having a preferred work schedule that supported work-life balance, a work environment filled with camaraderie and teamwork, and organizational leaders who valued workers' input. Participants identified health issues, such as knee replacement surgery, as one barrier to work performance—especially when it came to their desire to continue working in the future. Most said they expected to continue working for 5–10 more years.

Because of the limited number of participants, future research needs to reflect a wider population and range of healthcare systems, according to the researchers. Nevertheless, these findings support the need for managers of aging nurses to focus on their schedules, workload, and enhancement of overall health.


More information is available:

- [New York-New Jersey Occupational Safety & Health Center](#) 
- [NIOSH Education and Research Centers](#)

---

# Highlights

## Now Extended: Comment on Workplace-Supported Recovery Programs to Help Workers and Employers

In February, NIOSH posed a series of questions on *Workplace-Supported Recovery Programs* (WSRPs) to prevent and offer treatment for workers with substance use disorders through a Request for Information in the Federal Register. The [comment period has been extended](#)  until **July 27**. Learn more about WSRPs and submit your feedback.

## Working in Heat Safely, #BeatTheHeat

Summer is almost here! That means it's time to take precautions to stay safe while working outside in the heat. Workers who are exposed to extreme heat or who work in hot environments may be at risk of [heat stress](#). Follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#) (#HeatSafety #BeatTheHeat) for the latest information. Don't forget to download the free [OSHA-NIOSH Heat Safety Tool App](#)!

## Software Trains Every Worker to be a Workplace EXAMiner

The NIOSH Mining Program recently released the full version of its EXAMiner software—a training tool that can be used to assess and improve workers' abilities to find and mitigate hazards at their worksites. The software is preloaded with 31 panoramic mine site scenes, but also allows users to customize the training by uploading their own worksite images. These customized scenarios can be saved and shared with other users. Although designed with the mining workforce in mind, the software has also found appeal with other industries, including construction. Download [EXAMiner](#) from the NIOSH Mining website.

## NIOSH Leadership Update


Dr. Gary Scott Earnest has been appointed Associate Director of the NIOSH Office of Construction Safety and Health, effective May 10. After serving in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Scott started his career at NIOSH in 1992 and has held several different roles including Section and Branch Chief. In 2015, Scott was appointed Deputy Director of the NIOSH Office of Construction Safety and Health, and then appointed Acting Director in 2018.

---

# Monthly Features

## New Communication Products & Reports

### FACE Reports

- [Business Owner Killed When Pulled Into Woodchipper—Michigan](#) 
- [Maintenance Mechanic Crushed Working Inside of a Vertical Storage Machine—Oregon](#) 
- [A Stationary Engineer Died When the Multi-Piece Tire and Wheel He Was Disassembling Exploded—California](#) 
- [Gutter Installer Dies After Falling From Roof—Kentucky](#) 
- [Dump Truck Driver Dies on Kentucky Interstate in Single Vehicle Collision—Kentucky](#)
- [Commercial Driver Dies After Overturning on Two-Lane State Highway—Kentucky](#)
- [Construction Worker Dies on Kentucky Interstate in Single Vehicle Collision—Kentucky](#)
- [Farm Laborer Run Over by Tractor With Broken Parking Brake—Michigan](#)
- [Marina Owner Drowned in Six-foot Deep Water in Marina Slip—Michigan](#)
- [Tow Truck Driver Securing Vehicle to Tow Bed Struck by SUV Driver—Michigan](#)

- [Farmer Pinned Between Skid Steer Loader Bucket and Frame—Michigan](#)
- [Tow Truck Driver Died When School Bus Was Struck by SUV—Michigan](#)
- [Farm Owner Drowned in Ditch When Tractor Overturned to Side and Pinned Him—Michigan](#)
- [Farm Laborer Pinned by Tree Branch Against His Tractor Seat—Michigan](#)
- [Racetrack Safety Crewmember Struck by Racecar—Michigan](#)
- [County Road Division Worker Crushed Between Asphalt Truck and Shadow Truck During Rolling Cold Patch Operation—Michigan](#)
- [Plasterer/Drywall Installer Dies From 30-Foot Fall Through Skylight—, Michigan](#)
- [Sole Proprietor Falls Eight Feet From Flat Roof while Installing Siding—Michigan](#)
- [Hispanic Farm Laborer Struck by 550-Gallon Water Tank When Wood Support Structure Collapsed—Michigan](#)
- [Caretaker of a Farm Held in Trust Died Due to a Tractor Overturn to the Rear while Moving Downed Tree—Michigan](#)
- [Construction Laborer Working in Highway Work Zone Struck by Van—Michigan](#)
- [Ironworker Fell 25 Feet while Working From/Relocating a Ladder in a Shaft Way—Michigan](#)
- [Construction Foreman/Carpenter Dies From Complications From Fall From Roof—Michigan](#)
- [Gig Economy Bicycle Food Delivery Worker Dies When Struck by a Dump Truck—Massachusetts](#)

### Health Hazard Evaluation Reports

- [Evaluation of Push and Pull Forces and Musculoskeletal Symptoms Among Employees at an Automobile Manufacturer](#) 
- [Evaluation of Silica Exposures During Drywall Sanding](#) 

### Publication

- [NIOSH Bibliography of Communication and Research Products 2019](#)

---


## NIOSH Science Blog

- [Nurses' and Other Health Professionals' Wellness and Safety Resource Update](#)
- [Heat Stress in Construction](#)

---

## Federal Register Notice

### Advisory Board on Radiation and Worker Health Meeting

The [notice](#)  was posted on May 6. The meeting will be held on June 24. Comments must be received by June 18.

### Proposed Data Collection Submitted for Public Comment and Recommendations—The National Firefighter Registry (NFR).

The [notice](#)  was posted on April 27. Comments must be received by June 26.

## **Hazardous Drugs: Draft NIOSH List of Hazardous Drugs in Healthcare Settings, 2020; Procedures; and Risk Management Information**

The [notice](#) was posted on May 1. Comments must be received by June 30.

## **Developing a Workplace Supported Recovery Program: A Strategy for Assisting Workers and Employers with the Nation's Opioid and Substance Use Disorder Epidemics; Request for Information**

The [notice](#) was posted on April 13. Comments must be received by July 27.

## **Advisory Board on Radiation and Worker Health, Subcommittee on Dose Reconstruction Review (SDRR) Meeting**

The [notice](#) was posted on May 20. The meeting will be held on July 29.

## **Approval Tests and Standards for Air-Purifying Particulate Respirators**

The [notice](#) was posted on April 14. Comments must be received by August 12.

## **Research Project to Evaluate and Control Hazards to Landscaping and Grounds Management Workers; Request for Participants**

The [notice](#) was posted on January 10. Letters of interest must be received by October 16.

---

# National Occupational Research Agenda (NORA)

## **NORA Councils Evaluation Report Now Available**

A process evaluation was conducted in 2019 to help the NORA councils function as effectively as possible and maximize their contributions towards improved occupational safety and health. This evaluation offered solutions to increasing engagement and fully achieving their goals. Learn more in the report, [National Occupational Research Agenda Councils: 2019 Evaluation Findings](#).

---

# News from Our Partners

## **Endowment Established to Support Center for Health, Work & Environment**

Drs Lee Newman and Lori Szczukowski, recently committed \$1.4 million to establish an [Endowed Fund for Worker Health](#) at the Colorado School of Public Health. These funds will be used for the sustainability of the [Center for Health, Work & Environment](#), which is currently one of six NIOSH-funded [Centers of Excellence for Total Worker Health®](#) and also houses the NIOSH-funded Mountain and Plains [Education and Research Center](#). Dr. Newman is the founder and director of the Center for Health, Work & Environment.

## **OSHA Releases Resources on Properly Wearing a Respirator**

OSHA recently released a [video](#) and [poster](#) showing seven steps to correctly put on and remove a respirator. The guidance highlights making sure to wash your hands before and after touching the respirator, as well as proper disposal.

### **New Dashboard Highlights Health Conditions and Behaviors of Workers by Industry**

The Montana Occupational Health and Safety Surveillance (MOHSS) program published an [interactive dashboard](#) using Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System data to highlight health conditions and behaviors by industry. The dashboard allows the user to look at data for a specific industry or compare data across all industries. It also includes information about residents who are not currently in the workforce. More reports and information about the MOHSS program can be found on their [website](#). MOHSS is a NIOSH-funded [state surveillance program](#).

### **New COVID-19 Industry Guidance for Workers**

OSHA recently released new publications with tips for employers and employees on reduce risk of exposure to the COVID-19. Guidance for several industries including nursing homes, restaurants, construction, and rideshare workers are on their [website](#) in English and Spanish.

### **Registration Opens for 2020 Occupational Health Psychology Summer Institute**

The Oregon Heathy Workforce Center and the Oregon Institute of Occupational Health Sciences have announced the 2020 Occupational Health Psychology Summer Institute. This event will occur July 14–16, 2020, and is being held online this year. The theme for the Summer Institute is *Building a Culture of Health, Safety, and Well-Being*. Interactive sessions will be geared toward a two-pronged approach: 1) *Think* Culture of Health, Safety, and Well-Being and 2) *Do* Culture of Health, Safety, and Well-Being. Learn more and register on the [event webpage](#). The Oregon Heathy Workforce Center is a NIOSH-funded [Centers of Excellence for Total Worker Health®](#).

---

## Webinars, Meetings & Conferences

### **Upcoming Webinars**

[Guidance for Re-opening and Maintaining Safe Salon Operations Amid the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)

June 8, 3:30-4:30 p.m. (EDT). Contact [Leslie MacDonald](#) for more information.

[NIOSH Education and Research Centers Industrial Hygiene Webinar Series 2020—Exposure Assessment for Epidemiology Research: Use of Routine Industrial Monitoring Data](#)

June 9, 3–4 p.m. (EDT). Contact [Donjanea Williams](#) for more information.

[NIOSH Expanding Research Partnerships Webinar—Future of Work and Implications for Aging Workers](#)

June 10, 12:00–1:30 p.m. (EDT). Contact [Donjanea Williams](#) for more information.

[NIOSH Education and Research Centers Ergonomics Webinar Series 2020—Considerations in Exoskeleton Human Factors](#)

[June 17, 3–4 p.m. \(EDT\). Contact \[Donjanea Williams\]\(#\) for more information.](#)

### **Upcoming Meetings**

NORA Public Safety Sector Council Meeting

July 29, 11 a.m.–2 p.m. (EDT). Contact [Tyler Quinn](#) for more information.

### **Upcoming Conferences**

[Institute of Work Psychology International Conference](#)

June 22–26, virtual event



[Safety 2020 Professional Development Conference and Exposition](#) 

June 23–25, virtual event

[The Oregon Healthy Workforce Center Occupational Health Psychology Summer Institute](#) 

July 14–16, virtual event

[BHC Summer Forum](#) 

July 29, virtual event

[Clarity International Conference](#) 

September 30–October 2, Washington, DC

[International Media Festival for Prevention](#) 

October 4–7, Toronto, Canada

[American Public Health Association Conference](#) 

October 24–28, San Francisco, California

[31st Art & Science of Health Promotion Conference](#) 

March 31–April 2, 2021, Colorado Springs, Colorado

[XXII World Congress on Safety and Health at Work](#) 

Postponed to September 19–22, 2021, Toronto, Canada

## Follow NIOSH

---

 Facebook  Instagram  Pinterest  Twitter  YouTube  more sites

Page last reviewed: May 4, 2020

Content source: [National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health \(NIOSH\)](#)