

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

Upcoming Webinars

Moving Forward in A Pandemic: Forecasting and The Role of Testing and Other Considerations for Sustainable Fitness Center Operations

On July 8, 3-4 p.m. (EDT) an expert panel will present guidance for sustaining safe medical fitness and other health fitness facility operations beyond the reopening phase. Register here.

COVID-19 Webinar Series: Contact Tracing—How it's done, and how you can help

On July 16, 2-3 pm (EDT) an expert panel will present on ways to prevent the spread of COVID disease on job sites. Join us for updates on resources available and to learn about contact tracing. Register here [↗](#).

New Web Resource

CDC has developed a toolkit for reviewing and recognizing both workplace and workforce characteristics that are recommended for consideration during investigations and public health actions in work settings. This toolkit can help state and local health departments, as well as occupational safety and health professionals, more effectively investigate and respond to COVID-19 cases in non-healthcare work settings.

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From the Director's Desk

John Howard, M.D. Director, NIOSH

Annual NIOSH Awards Recognize Excellence in Science and Service



The dedication of staff to the NIOSH vision of safer, healthier workers can be seen in the current work being done across NIOSH to respond to the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).



NIOSH recently took time to recognize the important work achieved over the last year by holding the annual NIOSH Science and Service Awards. The awards ceremony provides an opportunity to reflect on the achievements of the previous year for NIOSH staff across the Institute, from laboratory science and technology to communication and research to practice.

This year, the awards ceremony, previously known as the NIOSH Science Awards, was expanded to include a new Service Awards category—the Service Excellence Award. This new award recognizes NIOSH staff who provide excellent administrative and managerial support to the Institute’s mission and projects. The award identifies distinction in three categories: Excellence in Administration, Excellence in Human Capital, and Excellence in Leadership.

An additional change has been made to the Director’s Intramural Award for Extraordinary Science Distinguished Career Scientist, now known as the “Lew Wade Distinguished Career Scientist” award. Dr. Wade dedicated his life to safety research and served as the Associate Director for Mine Safety and Health Research, and then as senior science advisor at NIOSH from 2000 until his retirement in 2018. His scientific contributions served to protect the health of workers across many areas, exemplifying the definition of distinguished. This award is given to a NIOSH employee or fellow who has made extraordinary scientific contributions in their field of work.

Another exciting addition to this year’s ceremony is the expansion of the categories presented for the Alice Hamilton Award for Excellence in Occupational Safety and Health. This award recognizes important NIOSH contributions to occupational safety and health published during the previous calendar year. There was a new category this year, Behavioral and Social Science, and the Education and Guidance category has been renamed to Communication and Guidance.

NIOSH presented Dr. Christopher C. Coffey with this year’s James P. Keogh Award. Dr. Coffey is a world-renowned researcher in respiratory protection who retired from NIOSH with more than 41 years of national world leadership in preventing workplace illnesses and injuries.

In addition to these awards, the ceremony celebrated recipients of the Bullard-Sherwood Research to Practice (r2p) award, recognizing outstanding contributions in three categories: Knowledge, Intervention, and Technology. NIOSH also presented Plain Language Awards for communication products that demonstrate excellence in plain language principles, making science accessible to all who need it.


Congratulations to this year’s nominees and winners! The contributions continually made to science, research, and communication do not go unnoticed and create a world that is safer and healthier for workers. Please see the [NIOSH](#)

[Science and Service Awards webpage](#) for more information on all of the awards, the awardees, and our NIOSH accomplishments.

Research Rounds

Inside NIOSH: Expanded Firefighter Cancer Study Finds More Deadly Risks

Compared to the general U.S. population, firefighters face a greater risk of death from non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, or NHL, according to new research published in the journal *Occupational and Environmental Medicine*. Additionally, their risk of death from chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, or COPD, increases with the amount of time spent at fires.

Launched in 2010, the NIOSH [Firefighter Cancer Study](#)  is the largest study of cancer among U.S. firefighters, including nearly 30,000 career firefighters who served in the Chicago, Philadelphia, and San Francisco Fire Departments between 1950 and 2009. Most were white males, and many had worked as firefighters for over 20 years. Previous findings from this study showed that career firefighters had higher rates of respiratory, digestive, and urinary cancers than the general population. They also were more likely to develop mesothelioma, a rare cancer caused by exposure to asbestos.

The investigators extended the study through 2016, for an additional 7 years of follow-up. Patterns of cancer deaths were largely consistent with the previous study, both showing increased deaths from cancers of the esophagus, intestine, rectum, lung, and kidney, and mesothelioma. However, this study yielded stronger evidence of increased risk of dying from NHL, a cancer of white blood cells. The rate of death from NHL in firefighters was increased by about 20% compared to national rates. The study also observed that the risk of dying from COPD increased with increasing time spent at the fire scene. COPD is a group of lung diseases that cause airflow blockage and breathing-related problems. Together, the study findings underscore the importance of continuing efforts to control work-related exposures among firefighters.

More information is available: [NIOSH Firefighter Resources](#).

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Outside NIOSH:

Number of Work-related Asthma Cases Persists

Work-related asthma is triggered by exposure to substances on the job that cause or worsen the respiratory disease. More than 300 known or suspected substances are associated with work-related asthma, and some studies link asthma to the use of cleaning agents or substances.

To understand whether work-related asthma involving cleaning products is increasing or decreasing over time, NIOSH-funded investigators used information from healthcare providers, and workers' compensation and hospital records, to compare cases across five states. Investigators focused on cases related to cleaners and disinfectants in California, Massachusetts, and Michigan (1998–2012); New Jersey (1998–2011); and New York (2009–2012). They then compared the data to previous trends in most of these states for 1993–1997. Researchers from NIOSH-funded state surveillance programs in these areas collaborated on this effort. These programs aim to expand states' ability to monitor and prevent work-related injuries, illnesses, and deaths.

According to the study in the [Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine](#), the percentage of work-related asthma cases associated with cleaning products remained unchanged between both time periods. During 1993–1997, 1,915 cases of work-related asthma cases were reported, with 236 (12.3%) linked to cleaning products. This is compared to 1,199 of 9,667 (12.4%) work-related asthma cases involving cleaning products between 1998–2012. The highest numbers were in healthcare among building cleaners and registered nurses. Products that topped the list during both periods included cleaning materials or household general purpose cleaners and bleach. These findings show the need for continued and more prevention efforts to decrease the unnecessary use of cleaners and makes the case for finding safer products and using safer work processes.

More information is available:

- [NIOSH: Work-related Asthma](#)
- [NIOSH Extramural Research and Training Programs: State Surveillance Program](#)

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
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Highlights

Download or Update Your NIOSH Mobile Pocket Guide App Today!

The new NIOSH Mobile Pocket Guide to Chemical Hazards [video](#) demonstrates the features and use of the NIOSH Mobile Pocket Guide app. Updated in 2019, this redesigned version of the Pocket Guide app is easier to use and has improved functionality on smaller mobile screens. Learn how to search through the full NIOSH library of common workplace chemicals, store chemical records as “favorites” for later use, control which chemical data are displayed, and enable enhanced accessibility features. Learn more about the [NIOSH Mobile Pocket Guide app](#) or download it now from the [Apple App Store](#) [↗](#) or [Google Play Store](#) [↗](#).

New Study: Health Risk Behaviors Among Construction Workers

New research from NIOSH suggests that several behaviors that contribute to higher health risks are more prevalent among construction workers than workers in other industries. Construction workers are in physically demanding jobs and are exposed to many chemical and physical workplace hazards. Falls remain the leading cause of work-related deaths in construction, accounting for about one-third of the total number of fatalities in this industry. Learn more in a recent [NIOSH Update](#).

New NIOSH Resource for Sharing Your Occupational Safety & Health Events

Check out our [updated and enhanced webpage](#) for NIOSH and partners to share external Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) related conferences, meetings, events, and webinars. In addition to expanding the types of events that can be shared, the new page has a search function so the list can be filtered by location or meeting type. This page can be accessed through the link above or from the [NIOSH homepage](#). We encourage you to use this webpage to share announcements about your meetings and encourage your partners to submit items as well.

Learn More Ways to Keep Up to Date on NIOSH Research

Did you know that in addition to NIOSH eNews, you can subscribe to other lists to keep up to date on NIOSH research? You can subscribe to receive email updates anytime a new science blog or FACE report is posted, for example. You can also sign up for weekly updates of “what’s new” on the NIOSH website, which includes new publications. You can also subscribe to topic-specific NIOSH newsletters from *Total Worker Health*®, the Center for Motor Vehicle Safety, and the National Firefighter Registry. To see the full list and subscribe, go to the [CDC Newsletter](#) webpage to browse newsletters and topics. You can enter “NIOSH” or another term into the search box to narrow the results.

NIOSH Lab Recognized for COVID-19 Response

The NIOSH National Personal Protective Technology Laboratory (NPPTL) was recently recognized by Senator Christopher Coons of Delaware in a letter to the CDC Director, Dr. Robert Redfield, for their work on the COVID-19 pandemic response. Senator Coons specifically recognized their work with a Delaware-based manufacturing company to help them scale up production to meet the demand for their products. The company credited their accomplishment to a terrific supply chain and a significant increase in production workers, and also recognized the amazing effort from NPPTL.

In Memoriam: Dr. Eula Bingham

NIOSH is saddened to learn about the passing of Dr. Eula Bingham, former Assistant Secretary of Occupational Safety and Health at the U.S. Department of Labor. During her tenure at OSHA Dr. Bingham adopted many standards including benzene, dibromochloropropane (DBCP), arsenic, cotton rust, lead, roof guarding, and access to medical records—all of which could be directly traced to the work of NIOSH scientists.

Monthly Features

New Communication Products & Reports

FACE Reports

- [Landscape Construction Laborer Compressed Between Compact Excavator and Steel Beam at Residential Site—Massachusetts](#)
- [Municipal Crossing Guard Fatally Injured When Struck By a Car—Massachusetts](#)
- [Municipal Public Works Foreman Dies After Falling From a Dump Truck—Massachusetts](#)

Fact Sheet

- [Fire Fighter Fatality Investigation and Prevention Program \(FFFIPP\)](#)

Health Hazard Evaluation Reports

- [Evaluation of Occupational Exposures to Illicit Drugs at Controlled Substances Laboratories !\[\]\(444b1eae2189e5cd8d096594c07a0a6e_img.jpg\)](#)
- [Evaluation of Low Back Pain and Duty Equipment Wear Configurations in Police Officers !\[\]\(b81fe50bc966474a9bf510149094d8e3_img.jpg\)](#)

Performance One-Pagers Web Pages

- [Traumatic Injury Prevention Program](#)
- [Nanotechnology Research Center](#)
- [Center for Motor Vehicle Safety](#)

NIOSH Science Blog

- [Celebrate National Safety Month](#)
- [The Physiological Burden of Prolonged PPE Use on Healthcare Workers During Long Shifts](#)
- [Collecting Occupation and Industry Data in Public Health Surveillance Systems for COVID-19](#)
- [COVID-19 Stress Among Your Workers? Healthy Work Design and Well-being Solutions Are Critical](#)
- [Cannabis and Work: Implications, Impairment, and the Need for Further Research](#)
- [Considerations for Covering N95s to Extend Use](#)
- [Making Industry and Occupation Information Useful for Public Health: A Guide to Coding Industry and Occupation Text Fields](#)
- [Surgical Smoke Inhalation: Dangerous Consequences for the Surgical Team](#)
- [Economic Security During the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Healthy Work Design and Well-being Perspective](#)
- [Keeping Momentum in NORA Councils: Different Ways to Achieve Partner Engagement](#)

Federal Register Notice

Board of Scientific Counselors, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, National Firefighter Registry Subcommittee Meeting

The [notice](#) was posted on June 8. The meeting will be held on July 14.

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.

Board of Scientific Counselors, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health

The [notice](#) was posted on June 22. Comments must be received by July 27. The meeting will be held on August 4.

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.

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

The [notice](#) was posted on June 19. Comments must be received by July 30.

Proposed Data Collection Submitted for Public Comment and Recommendations: Pulmonary Function Test Course Approval Application.

The [notice](#) was posted on June 2. Comments must be received by August 3.

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 Services Council Member Participates in National Forklift Safety Day

NORA Services Sector Council member Scott Bicksler presented at the 7th annual National Forklift Safety Day, sponsored by the Industrial Truck Association, on June 9. During this presentation, Scott highlighted some of the recommended practices in a draft guidance document currently being developed by the NORA Services Sector on *Protecting Temporary Workers: Guidance for Host Employers*. Read more about [this annual event](#). [↗](#)

News from Our Partners

Newly Released Report on First Prevention through Design Workshop

NIOSH-funded researchers at Arizona State University recently [posted materials](#) from the Prevention through Design Workshop 2020. This workshop, the very first scientific meeting of its kind, focused on state-of-the-art Prevention through Design (PtD) research, practice, and education efforts from engineering, design, contractor, client, and owner organizations, along with insurers, U.S. and international academics and universities, and other agencies. This is the first of five annual PtD workshops planned between 2020 and 2024, funded through a NIOSH grant at Arizona State University. See the [NIOSH Extramural Research and Training Programs](#) webpage for more information on NIOSH grant-funded activities.

Construction Resources on Working Safely in Hot Weather

The [working in hot weather webpage](#) developed by CPWR–The Center for Construction Research and Training offers resources for construction workers on heat-related hazards, including a Hazard Alert, infographics, and a Toolbox Talk. Many resources are available in Spanish. CPWR–The Center for Construction Research and Training is the NIOSH-funded [National Center for Construction Safety and Health Research and Translation](#).

Remembering Stuart C. Schmitz: Iowa State Surveillance Program Director

NIOSH extramural scientist and Iowa state toxicologist, Stuart C. Schmitz, is being remembered by his peers in the occupational safety and health field, and by colleagues at the Iowa Department of Public Health, after his [recent passing](#). Mr. Schmitz worked for the State of Iowa for nearly three decades. He served as the state toxicologist since 2007—a role in which he oversaw public health related to Iowans' exposure to chemicals and toxic substances. He also served as the Program Director/Principal Investigator of the NIOSH-funded Iowa Department of Public Health Occupational Health & Safety Surveillance Program for more than six years.

New Infographics Available for #KeepTeenWorker Safe Campaign

CPWR–The Center for Construction Research and Training is a partner in the [#KeepTeenWorkersSafe campaign](#). The campaign promotes workplace safety and health resources for teen workers, sharing information with teens, parents, teachers, and employers. The center has developed [two new infographics](#) for use in social media, print materials, and presentations.

Recent Publications: Protecting the Logging Workforce Through Innovative Techniques

Three recent publications are available on NIOSH-funded research at Oregon State University on increased safety in the logging industry through innovative techniques:

- [Design of Continuous Bridle Multiple-stump Anchors](#) provides a solution for an anchor system that can increase the safety of cable-assist forest harvesting machines—equipment that can decrease harvesting cost and increase safety when harvesting forests on steep terrain.
- [Insight into the Productivity, Cost, and Soil Impacts of Cable-assisted Harvester-forwarder Thinning in Western Oregon](#) highlights research that examined the effects of cable-assisted, or tethered, mechanized harvesting—a system that is being adopted by the forest industry. The study looks at the effects of cable assistance on soil compaction, system productivity, and cost through a field-based experiment.
- [The Effect on Tether Tension When Using Trees to Redirect Live Machine Tethers During Forest Harvesting on Steep Slopes](#) highlights a study that developed a new model that includes friction and cutting forces to assess cable tension around a rub tree.

Call for Proposals

31st Annual Art & Science of Health Promotion Conference is accepting proposals. The deadline for [submissions](#) is July 31.

Conferences, Meetings, Webinars, & Events

This page provides a list of publicly available occupational safety and health related [conferences, meetings, webinars, and events](#) sponsored by NIOSH as well as other government agencies, and non-government agencies such as universities, professional societies, and organizations.

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