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From the Director's Desk

As the new Acting Director of NIOSH, I wanted to take this opportunity to introduce myself. My professional background and career path have been in the areas of occupational, injury, and environmental epidemiology, and I had the privilege of joining NIOSH in July 2007 as Principle Associate Director. Before that, I served as Director of the Unintentional Injury Prevention Division in CDC's National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, and had a short temporary assignment as the CDC Goal Team Leader in the agency's Office of Strategy and Innovation.

I have been with NIOSH for just over a year now and I have been greatly impressed during this time with the dedication and hard work of the NIOSH staff and that of our partners and stakeholders. This impressive body of work was no more apparent than during the 2008 NORA Symposium, held July 29 in Denver, Colorado.

The Symposium was an opportunity to highlight the important and significant work we are all doing to address worker safety and health across all industries. This year we had the honor of awarding three projects for their innovative research and partnerships. I would like to again congratulate those who worked on the following projects:

- The 2008 NORA Innovative Research Award Winner – “Optimizing Supervisor Response to Workplace Injury”
- The 2008 NORA Innovative Research Award Honorable Mention – “Lab Testing of Adjustable Safety Rail-Roof Bracket Assembly”
- The 2008 NORA Partnering Award Winner – “Safe Patient Handling and Movement Training Program for Schools of Nursing”

I am looking forward to hearing about the continued success from this year's winners at the 2010 NORA Symposium.

We also had the opportunity to hear about the continued success of the 2006 awardees. It was wonderful to hear of new partnerships that have come about, the adaption of lessons learned from the initial projects to other industries, and the significant changes achieved by these researchers in improving the communication of occupational safety and health risks to workers.

A new feature of this Symposium was its accessibility online for those who were not able to attend in person. This “Virtual Symposium” can still be viewed online and I would encourage all of you to visit, view and comment on the submitted posters, and watch a video of Dr. John Howard's excellent key note speech. The “Virtual Symposium” is accessible at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/nora/symp08/virtualsymposium.html>.

It was encouraging to meet and in many cases to renew my association with so many of NIOSH's dedicated stakeholders and partners who have made a commitment to working with us in addressing the current and future occupational safety and health issues. This idea of working together through NORA and other partnerships is a legacy given to us by the long line of distinguished NIOSH Directors. I hope to continue to foster this legacy as Acting Director with the same hope of fostering partnerships that result in a safer workplace for all workers.

It is my honor and privilege to serve as the Acting Director of NIOSH in this time of transition. And I look forward to working with all of you as we move forward together.

Christine M. Branche, Ph.D.

NIOSH joins in highlighting National Firefighter Health Week

In conjunction with their Heart-Healthy Firefighter Program, the National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC) has announced that the second annual National Firefighter Health Week will be held August 18 – 22, 2008. NIOSH is partnering with the NVFC to promote this week-long initiative that is designed to educate the fire and emergency services community, and the public, about heart-health as well as a variety of other health and wellness issues. Each day of National Firefighter Health Week is dedicated to a different health issue of particular concern to the fire and emergency services. The issues that will be highlighted are behavioral health, nutrition, heart-health, respiratory/lung health, and diabetes. Please go to the following link for more information on this very important initiative <http://www.healthy-firefighter.org> or contact Tim Merinar at TMerinar@cdc.gov.



ILO names Dr. John Howard to head ILO Encyclopedia Steering Committee

Former NIOSH Director John Howard, M.D., will chair the Steering Committee of the International Labour Organization's (ILO) Steering Committee for the 5th Edition of the ILO Encyclopedia of Occupational Health and Safety, the ILO announced July 24, 2008. Dr. Howard's longstanding experience in leading a national approach to occupational safety and health will help the ILO "apply the lessons learned from his nation to many of our ILO country programmes, thus improving the lives of our constituents throughout the world," said Dr. Sameera Al-Tuwaijri, the director of the ILO's Safework Programme. The ILO Encyclopedia is an international resource of information for preventing work-related injuries and illnesses. Further information about the ILO Encyclopedia is available through the ILO by emailing ENCYCLOPAEDIA@ilo.org.

2008 NORA Innovative Research and Partnering Awards Announced

Congratulations to the recipients of the 2008 NORA Innovative Research and 2008 NORA Partnering Awards, presented on July 29. The 2008 NORA Innovative Research Award honored a collaboration that developed and tested a successful strategy for strengthening the key role of supervisors in reducing workers' risk for painful and costly work-related musculoskeletal injuries. The 2008 NORA Partnering Award recognized two partnerships, one that developed, applied and evaluated a curriculum for schools of nursing in techniques and mechanical aids for lifting and moving patients safely, and the other for study design, data gathering, data analysis, manuscript preparation and the design of research-to-practice efforts relating to a new model for working safely with beryllium and beryllium materials. Learn more about these awards and the awardees at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/nora/symp08/award08.html>.

NIOSH engineer receives first ASTM leadership award

Angie Shepherd, General Engineer with the NIOSH National Personal Protective Technology Laboratory, is the inaugural recipient of the ASTM International President's Leadership Award. The award was presented during the ASTM Annual Members Meeting on June 25, 2008 by Jim Thomas, President of ASTM International. This new award was created "to recognize the accomplishments of individuals early in their ASTM career." Originally known as the American Society for Testing and Materials, ASTM International is a long-established voluntary standards development organization.

NIOSH study estimates burden of silicosis mortality

A study by NIOSH scientists in the July 18 issue of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report estimates the "years of potential life lost" before age 65 due to death from silicosis. This is a measure of the severity and prevalence of silicosis, underscoring the need to prevent this occupational disease. The full article is available online at <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5728a3.htm>.

NIOSH FERV Showcased as Premier Exhibit at AIHce 2008

The NIOSH Field Evaluations and Response Vehicle (FERV) traveled to Minneapolis, Minnesota, June 2-4, 2008, for the American Industrial Hygiene Conference and Expo 2008. The exhibit included an open-house of the vehicle and a series of posters that highlighted health hazard evaluations (HHEs) and emergency response activities. There was also a photo slide show, examples of sampling equipment and personal protective equipment, and a variety of NIOSH and HHE program-specific handouts. Since being placed into service in 2006, the FERV has transported hearing booths to New Orleans to provide audiometric testing at animal shelters; supported a large-scale heat stress evaluation at an aluminum smelter in Texas; and has also been used for several local HHEs in the Cincinnati, Ohio area. NIOSH investigators foresee an ever-increasing use of the FERV to support HHEs and emergency response efforts.

Update from the NIOSH National Personal Protective Technology Laboratory (NPPTL)

From January 1 through June 30, 2008, the NPPTL Technology Evaluation Branch closed a total of 331 projects: 236 products were granted approvals, 28 were denied and 15 applications were withdrawn from the manufacturer. Of the approvals, 42 pertained to new products, and 130 pertained to modifications of previously approved products; there were 18 certified product investigations. Also during this time, 284 applications were received: 125 were extensions and 49 were new approvals. The NPPTL Engineering Evaluation Team conducted 46 quality assurance manual audits to evaluate the quality assurance process and manufacturing practices. There were 22 new approvals or modifications of approval for chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) respirators.

REMINDER: Two Documents for Public Review and Comment

NIOSH has posted two documents for public comment.

- The revised draft strategic research document, "Asbestos Fibers and Other Elongated Mineral Particles: State of the Science and Roadmap for Research," incorporating public comments and peer review comments on the initial version. All comments are requested by September 30, 2008 <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/review/public/099-A>
- NIOSH is seeking input from stakeholders and manufacturers on the draft document, "The Potential Modification of the NIOSH Statement of Standard for a Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear (CBRN) Full Facepiece Air-Purifying Respirator." Comments will be accepted until October 16, 2008. <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/review/public/139>

NIOSH Science Blog

- The July 28, 2008 posting by Dr. Sidney Soderholm, NIOSH NORA Coordinator, features details of the NORA Symposium 2008. http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/blog/nsb072808_nora.html
- The “No Fit Test” Respirator Research Workshop by Ed Fries and Ron Shaffer at the NIOSH National Personal Protective Technology Laboratory provides details and draft workshop topics for the upcoming workshop scheduled for November 6, 2008. The blog is currently posted at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/blog>.

r2p Corner

NIOSH Inventors Win Technology Transfer Award



The work of Kevin Ashley, Eric Esswein, and Mark Boeniger on “Development of a Handwipe Removal Method for Toxic Metals” has been selected as a winner of the 2008 Federal Laboratory Consortium (FLC) Midwest Region Excellence in Technology Transfer Award. The award is presented annually and recognizes federal laboratory employees who have been successful in transferring a technology developed in a federal laboratory to the commercial marketplace. This accomplishment will be recognized at the FLC Midwest Region Meeting in St. Louis, Missouri later this month. <http://www.federallabs.org>

NORA

NORA 2008 Virtual Symposium Open



The “NORA 2008: Public Market for Ideas and Partnerships Virtual Symposium” is currently open through August 29, 2008. The virtual symposium, <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/nora/symp08/virtualsympodium.html>, showcases the keynote presentation by former NIOSH Director John Howard, M.D., and the NORA 2008 awardees. It also features a virtual poster session with a blog-like capability where viewers can make a public comment on the poster presentations and interact with the authors.

NORA Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities Draft Agenda

The NORA Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities Sector Council requests comments on its draft Agenda posted at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/nora/comment/public/WholRetTradeDraftJune2008>. This preliminary draft national strategy consists of four strategic goals. The goals focus on traumatic injury, work-related musculoskeletal disorders, health and wellness, and exposures. The Council seeks comments on the draft strategic goals as well as the intermediate goals, and the activities and outputs needed to achieve those goals. The Council also seeks organizations to join partnership efforts to advance the draft priorities.

State-based Occupational Health updates

Protecting Working Teens in Massachusetts

NIOSH partners in the Teens at Work Project (TAW) at the Massachusetts Department of Public Health track work-related injuries to teens less than 18 years of age and conduct interviews with injured teens to learn about contributing factors. The restaurant industry accounts for the greatest number of injured teens. Over half of all injured teens interviewed report receiving no health and safety training. At this year's June meeting of the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists (<http://www.CSTE.org>), TAW reported on a new restaurant safety training initiative. TAW adapted the NIOSH *Youth@Work: Talking Safety* curriculum for young workers for use with teens employed in food services. Nearly 90 culinary arts teachers in Massachusetts' vocational educational programs were trained as trainers last year, and this spring, nearly 600 students were trained using the revised curriculum. Additional teacher trainings will be held next fall. This work is being extended to teachers and students in the health care services programs. TAW also will be working on health and safety guidelines for those who place youth in work-based learning programs. Injury surveillance findings from the TAW project can be found at <http://www.mass.gov/dph/teensatwork>. For additional information contact: Beatriz.Pazos@state.ma.us. The original Talking Safety curriculum is available at <http://www.cdc.gov/NIOSH/talkingsafety>.

News From Our Partners

Tractor Safety Initiative

The National Agricultural Tractor Safety Initiative is now online! Read personal accounts from farmers, find out about some local campaigns that are helping to keep farmers safer on their tractors, and learn about the most recent tractor safety research. You can also access resources to help you or your organization become a partner in tractor safety. Please visit: <http://depts.washington.edu/trsafety>.

Communication Products

"First Responders: Protect Your Employees with an Exposure Control Plan" DHHS (NIOSH) Publication Number 2008-115. <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2008-115>



"First Responders: Encourage Your Workers to Report Bloodborne Pathogen Exposures" DHHS (NIOSH) Publication Number 2008-118. <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2008-118>

"Faces of Black Lung" Video DHHS (NIOSH) Publication Number 2008-131. <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/video/2008-131>



"Exposure to Stress: Occupational Hazards in Hospitals" DHHS (NIOSH) Publication Number 2008-136. <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2008-136>

"Application of the ILO International Classification of Radiographs of Pneumoconioses to Digital Chest Radiographic Images" DHHS (NIOSH) Publication Number 2008-139. <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2008-139>



NIOSH Docket Archive: Docket Number 135 Healthcare Workers Safety and Health. <http://www>.

cdc.gov/niosh/docket/nioshdocket0135.html

“NIOSH Protecting Workers in Construction - Preventing Injuries Related to Motor Vehicles and Equipment”
<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/programs/const/insights/insightsconstruction.pdf>

“NIOSH Protecting Workers in Agriculture - Preventing Tractor Overturn Injuries: The New York ROPS Retrofit Social Marketing Intervention” <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/programs/agff/insights/insightsagrops.pdf>

Spanish versions of the following NIOSH documents are now available:

- “Preventing Fire Fighter Fatalities Due to Heart Attacks and Other Sudden Cardiovascular Events” DHHS (NIOSH) Publication Number 2006-147 http://www.cdc.gov/spanish/niosh/docs/wp-solutions/2006-147_sp/
- “Workplace Solutions: Preventing Injuries from Installing Drywall” DHHS (NIOSH) Publication Number 2007-133 http://www.cdc.gov/spanish/niosh/docs/2007-133_sp/

NIOSH Health Hazard Evaluations

Evaluation of potential exposure to radio frequency radiation. The HHE Program responded to a union request at a weather station. The request concerned potential radio frequency (RF) radiation exposure to electronic technicians repairing equipment. HHE Program investigators reviewed incident and maintenance logs and conducted confidential medical interviews with employees. The investigators found that a RF health and safety program did not exist. The investigators found that employees were doing repairs and using equipment that they had not been trained for. Investigators recommended that managers ensure that employees are properly trained and enforce proper documentation of repairs and maintenance in their logs. Investigators also recommended that managers implement an effective RF health and safety program and enforce training and safety protocols. HHE Program investigators also recommended that managers restrict access to areas where spatial average electric field strength may exceed recommended guidelines and post signs marking these areas. Additionally, investigators recommended that employees immediately inform managers of any workplace exposure and then seek medical evaluation. The final report is available at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/hhe/reports/pdfs/2007-0095-3063.pdf>.

Evaluation of potential noise exposure. The HHE Program responded to a management request at a fire department. The request concerned potential exposure to noise by 911 dispatchers and mechanics in the fire station. HHE Program investigators monitored noise exposure to mechanics and dispatchers and looked at hearing test results. Investigators also interviewed workers and looked at injury and illness records for trauma to the ears. The investigators found that mechanics’ exposure to noise was above the NIOSH recommended exposure limit, and that their exposures occurred over short periods of time. Investigators also found that the potential for harm to 911 dispatchers’ hearing was low. Investigators recommended that managers enroll mechanics in a hearing conservation program and require that mechanics wear ear plugs or ear muffs when working with loud equipment. HHE Program investigators also recommended that a communications center be built for 911 dispatchers or modify the existing center to meet recommended indoor noise criteria for buildings. The final report is available at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/hhe/reports/pdfs/2007-0235-3064.pdf>.

Evaluation of health symptoms at an indoor water park. The HHE Program responded to a request for assistance at an indoor water park. The request concerned the cause of symptoms involving irritation to the

eyes, nose, skin, and respiratory systems of employees. HHE Program investigators tested the air for [trichloramines](#), soluble chlorine compounds, and endotoxins. Investigators tested the water for fecal contamination, *Legionella*, mycobacteria, endotoxin, sulfites, and sulfates. Additionally, investigators reviewed the ventilation system and water system designs. HHE Program investigators found that some trichloramine concentrations were at levels previously reported to cause mucous membrane irritation and that air endotoxin concentrations were at levels that have been associated with cough and fever. Investigators recommended that managers assess the ventilation system to ensure adequate air movement and proper removal of contaminants. Investigators also recommended that managers consider reducing water attraction cycle times and use larger droplet discharge nozzles to reduce aerosolization of contaminants. Investigators recommended that managers consider redesigning the spray feature piping system to make sure that water used in the pools is taken directly after the filtration and treatment cycles. Additionally, investigators recommended that employees report any work-related symptoms to their supervisors. The final report is available at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/hhe/reports/pdfs/2007-0163-3062.pdf>.

Upcoming Events

Save the Date: NIOSH To Host DREAM Workshop in November

NIOSH will host the “DREAM (Direct Reading Exposure Assessment Methods) Workshop” on November 13 – 14, 2008, in Arlington, VA. The workshop will bring together stakeholders from academia, labor, management, method development and research, government and manufacturing to discuss research needs in the area of direct reading methods for assessing occupational exposures. Input from the workshop will be used to set research priorities for the methods. Information on the workshop will be available on the NIOSH Web page, <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/drm>.

Nominations Being Accepted for First “Safe in Sound” Award

NIOSH and the National Hearing Conservation Association (NHCA) have established a new award to be given each year to companies or organizations that exemplify Excellence in Hearing Loss Prevention. The first “Safe in Sound” award will be presented at the NHCA annual conference in February 2009 and will recognize organizations that document measurable achievements in hearing loss prevention programs, obtain information on their real-world successes, and widely disseminate information on how others can use these successful strategies or benchmark their own programs. Additional information and submission details can be found at <http://www.safeinsound.us>. Nominations will be accepted until September 1, 2008.



2008 Worker Safety and Health Technical Conference Scheduled

The 2008 U.S. National Response Team Worker Safety and Health Technical Conference will be held October 28-29, 2008, in Washington, D.C. Further information about potential topics, registration, and lodging can be found at <https://frink2.sraprod.com/wsh/>

Look for Us

“International Association of Fire Chiefs Fire Rescue International 2008”

August 14 – 16, 2008, Denver, CO. Booth #1372. <http://www.iafc.org/displaycommon.cfm?an=1&subarticlebr=356>

“Association of Occupational Health Professionals”

September 17 – 20, 2008, Denver, CO

“National Safety Council Expo”

September 22 – 24, 2008, Anaheim, CA

Call for Abstracts

“American Industrial Hygiene Conference and Expo”

May 30 – June 4, 2009, Toronto, Ontario, Canada. Deadline for Professional Development Course Proposals is August 15, 2008. Deadline for Technical Papers, Poster Abstracts and Roundtable Panel Program submissions is October 6, 2008. <http://www.aiha.org/aihce09/>

“EMS Update 2009”

March 25 – 28, 2009, Seven Springs Resort, Champion, PA. Deadline is September 10, 2008.

“American Occupational Health Conference 2009”

April 26 – 29, 2009, San Diego, CA. Deadline for Individual Scientific Abstracts is September 15, 2008. Deadline for Academic Abstracts is January 31, 2009
<http://aohc2009.abstractcentral.com>

“Partners in Emergency Preparedness Conference”

April 14 – 15, 2009, Tacoma, WA. Deadline is September 15, 2008.
<https://capps.wsu.edu/conferences/emergencyprep>

“Association of periOperative Registered Nurses Congress 2009”

March 15 – 19, 2009, Chicago, IL. Deadline is October 1, 2008.
<http://www.aorn.org/Education/EducationEvents/CallForProposals>

“American Occupational Health Conference 2009”

April 26 – 29, 2009. Deadline is December 15, 2008.
http://www.acoem.org/aohc09_abstracts.aspx

“2009 Emergency Nurses Association Annual Conference”

October 7 – 10, 2009, Baltimore, MD. Deadline is January 15, 2009.
<http://ena.org>

Upcoming Conferences

“International Association of Fire Chiefs Fire Rescue International 2008”

August 14 – 16, 2008, Denver, CO. <http://www.iafc.org>

“American Association of Occupational Health Nurses Conference for Leadership Advancement”

September 10 – 12, 2008, Atlanta, GA. <http://www.aaohn.org>

“14th International Society for Respiratory Protection”

September 14 – 18, 2008, Dublin, Ireland. <http://www.isrp.com/dublin/>

“20th Annual Occupational Medicine Update”

September 19 – 20, 2008, Sandestin, FL

<http://www.soph.uab.edu/dsc/continuingeducation/20thAnnualOCCMED>

“2008 National Occupational Injury Research Symposium (NOIRS)”

October 21 – 23, 2008, Pittsburgh, PA. <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/noirs/2008>

“2008 Worker Safety and Health Technical Conference”

October 28 – 29, 2008, Washington, DC. <https://frink2.sraprod.com/wsh>

“PCIH 2008”

November 8 – 11, 2008, Tampa, FL. <http://www.aiha.org/pcih08/>

“8th Conference of the European Academy of Occupational Health Psychology”

November 12 – 14, 2008, Valencia, Spain. <http://www.ea-ohp.org>

“International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM) 2008 Annual Conference”

November 15 – 20, 2008, Overland Park, KS. <http://www.iaem.com>

“International Roofing Expo”

February 3 – 5, 2009, Las Vegas, NV. <http://www.theroofingexpo.com>

“2009 SME Annual Meeting” and “CMA 111th Annual National Western Mining Conference”

February 22 – 25, 2009, Denver, CO. <http://sme2009.abstractcentral.com>

“Emergency Nurses Association Leadership Conference”

March 4 – 8, 2009, Reno, NV. <http://www.ena.org>

“29th Triennial Congress of the International Commission on Occupational Health (ICOH 2009)”

March 22 – 27, 2009, Cape Town, South Africa.

<http://www.icoh2009.co.za>

“American Association of Occupational Health Nurses 2009 Symposium and Expo”

April 17 – 23, 2009, Orlando, FL

<http://www.aaohn.org/education/symposium-expo/cfp/index.cfm>

“Fire Department Instructors Conference (FDIC) 2009”

April 20 – 25, 2009, Indianapolis, IN.

<http://downloads.pennnet.com/fe/fdic2008/2009indycallforpapers.doc>

ASSE Professional Development Conference and Exposition “SAFETY 2009”

June 23 – July 1, 2009, San Antonio, TX. <http://www.asse.org>

“19th International Symposium on Shiftwork and Working Time”

August 2 – 6, 2009, Venezia, Italy. <http://www.shiftwork2009.it>

Word of the Month

Trichloramines: Byproducts that can occur in swimming pools as a result of chemical interaction between perspiration and chlorine disinfectants. At given levels, trichloramines can irritate mucous membranes.

[NIOSH eNews on the Web: www.cdc.gov/niosh/enews/](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/enews/)

NIOSH eNews is Brought to You By:

Acting Director	Christine M. Branche, Ph.D.
Editor in Chief	Max Lum
Story Editor	Tara Hartley
Public Affairs Officer	Fred Blosser
Technical Lead	Glenn Doyle
Technical Support	Joseph Cauley

Please send your comments and suggestions to us at nioshnews@cdc.gov.