

COMMUNICATING WORKPLACE SAFETY AND HEALTH IN SPANISH

WHAT IS THE PUBLIC HEALTH ISSUE?

- Since 1992, work-related fatalities among Hispanic workers in the United States have increased by more than 50%.
- In 2000 alone, work-related fatalities among Hispanic workers increased by 12% in all U.S. industries and by more than 24% in the construction industry.
- Few resources are available to help Spanish-speaking workers and their employers learn about occupational safety and health.

WHAT HAS CDC ACCOMPLISHED?

Each year, CDC communicates key occupational research findings to the public and decision-makers. Targeted efforts to reduce illness and injury among Hispanic workers include translating this information into Spanish and communicating it in ways that are culturally and socially relevant to them.

Examples of Program in Action

- CDC conducts a Health Hazard Evaluation program to evaluate workplace hazards and recommend solutions when requested by employers, workers, or state or federal agencies. In 2003, the program increased its capacity to conduct evaluations and disseminate results and recommendations in Spanish. CDC is further exploring communication strategies to improve Hispanic workers' accessibility to the program.
- CDC implemented a Spanish-language answering system for its toll-free number and a system for responding to e-mail requests in Spanish. In 2003, during their first year in operation, about 900 Spanish-language requests for occupational safety and health were answered by these new systems.
- In 2003, over 12,000 visitors per month accessed Spanish-language occupational safety and health information through CDC's all-Spanish-language website, *NIOSH en Español*.

WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS?

- Supplement and enhance the occupational safety and health information provided on the *NIOSH en Español* website.
- CDC and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration will co-sponsor a Hispanic Summit on Occupational Safety and Health focusing on communication, training, and outreach.
- Continue to work with partners to explore best practices for communicating occupational safety and health information to Hispanic-owned small businesses and businesses with a large Hispanic workforce.