

National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) is the Federal agency responsible for conducting research and making recommendations for the prevention of work-related disease and injury. The Institute is part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Although workplace safety and health issues are often forgotten, they potentially affect every American. Each day, an average of 16 workers die from injuries on the job. An estimated 137 additional workers die each day from workplace diseases. Even those not in the work force can be exposed to hazardous workplace substances unknowingly brought home on a worker's clothing, tools, or vehicle.

NIOSH is responsible for conducting research on the full scope of occupational disease and injury ranging from lung disease in miners to carpal tunnel syndrome in computer users. The philosophy of NIOSH is articulated in the Institute's vision statement: Delivering on the Nation's promise: safety and health at work for all people...through research and prevention.

NIOSH AND OSHA

Distinct Organizations with Distinct Missions

NIOSH was established by the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 which also established the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). Although NIOSH and OSHA were created by the same Act of Congress, they are two distinct agencies with separate responsibilities. OSHA is in the U.S. Department of Labor and is responsible for creating and enforcing workplace safety and health regulations. NIOSH is in the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services and is a research agency. NIOSH and OSHA often work together toward the common goal of protecting worker safety and health.

In addition to conducting research, NIOSH

- investigates potentially hazardous working conditions when requested by employers or employees
- makes recommendations and disseminates information on preventing workplace disease, injury, and disability
- provides training to occupational safety and health professionals

NIOSH is a diverse organization made up of employees representing a wide range of disciplines including industrial hygiene, nursing, epidemiology, engineering, medicine, and statistics.

Headquartered in Washington D.C., NIOSH has offices in Atlanta, Georgia and research divisions in Cincinnati, Ohio; Morgantown, West Virginia; Bruceton, Pennsylvania; and Spokane, Washington.

NIOSH researchers work together to reduce the enormous toll of workplace injury and disease on our country. In 1995, occupational injuries alone cost \$119 billion in lost wages and productivity and related costs. This figure does not include the cost of occupational illnesses.

This drain on human and economic resources can be drastically reduced. Much progress has been made to date, largely based on the science and knowledge generated from occupational safety and health research. Most of this research is conducted or funded by NIOSH.

To lead occupational safety and health research into the next decade, NIOSH and its partners have developed the *National Occupational Research Agenda*. For more information about the *Agenda*, NIOSH, or workplace safety and health issues, call

1-800-35-NIOSH

(1-800-356-4674)

or visit the NIOSH Homepage on the World Wide Web:

<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/homepage.html>