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From the Director’s Desk

An age-old disease, tuberculosis continues to afflict men and women around the world in the 21st Century. Internationally, 9.2 million new cases of TB and 1.7 million deaths from the disease occurred in 2006, according to World Health Organization (WHO) estimates. In the U.S., it is an occupational health concern for people who have an increased, work-related risk of exposure to the TB bacteria, such as workers in health-care facilities and correctional institutions.

In the decades after World War II, thanks to strides in detection and control, significant inroads were made against the disease. However, in the 1980s, this progress stalled as a result of several factors, and TB resurged. The public health community redoubled efforts to control the disease.

As part of its research and outreach mission, NIOSH stepped up to help protect men and women who were at increased risk of work-related infection from TB’s resurgence. On one track, working with our colleagues elsewhere in the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other health institutions, we were at the table in helping to craft broader national initiatives in the renewed campaign against the disease. Our scientific findings and our insights into the dynamics of the workplace were important for incorporating occupational health protection as a critical part of national TB control guidance. A recent example is CDC’s 2005 guidelines for controlling TB transmission in health-care settings, [http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/PDF/rr/rr5417.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/PDF/rr/rr5417.pdf).

At the same time, responding to our stakeholders with direct assistance, we also helped employers and employees to identify risk factors in their workplaces and to institute effective protective measures. We have provided extensive technical assistance and guidance in the form of published guidelines, training materials, health surveillance data, health hazard evaluation reports, presentations at professional conferences, chapters in textbooks, and other resources. These materials include valuable resources not only for occupational health programs in health-care facilities, but also for programs in other places where work-related risks exist, such as correctional facilities, nursing homes, and homeless shelters.

To a significant extent, the renewed efforts here in the U.S. and abroad have been successful. For example, WHO estimates that the number of new TB cases per capita globally has fallen since 2003. In the U.S., the incidence rate of TB among health-care workers declined during the period from 1994 to 2000. [http://www2l.cdc.gov/NIOSH-Chartbook/ch2/ch2-10-6.asp](http://www2l.cdc.gov/NIOSH-Chartbook/ch2/ch2-10-6.asp). However, as long as the disease exists, the potential for infection remains. In 2006, according to CDC statistics, 408 healthcare workers and 17 correctional workers were diagnosed as having TB. This is 425 cases too many. Two recent reports also highlight trends that further demonstrate the need to stay vigilant.

WHO reported on March 17 that progress in controlling TB world-wide slowed in 2006, the most recent year for which the international data were available. One important factor is the continued growth of multidrug-resistant TB, which poses ongoing challenges for diagnosis and treatment. The WHO report is essential reading for health professionals. [http://www.who.int/tb/publications/global_report/2008/en/index.html](http://www.who.int/tb/publications/global_report/2008/en/index.html).

An article in the March 21, 2008, issue of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* found a similar slowdown in progress against TB in the United
States. Recommendations in the article for vigorous actions to address this problem, and to push for the eradication of TB once and for all, involve roles for NIOSH and its partners. Among the recommendations: “improved case management and contact investigation, intensified outreach and testing of populations at high risk, better treatments and diagnostic tools, improved understanding of TB transmission, and continued collaboration with other nations to reduce TB globally.” [http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5711a2.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5711a2.htm)

Clearly, our ongoing NIOSH resources for employers and workers continue to meet a critical need. They include:

- “Protect Yourself Against Tuberculosis,” an easy-to-read guide that answers questions frequently raised by health-care workers about respiratory protection against TB, and provides key information about selecting, using, and maintaining respirators. Respiratory protection is a key measure in health-care facilities because engineering controls, such as the use of isolation rooms, may not completely contain the risk of exposure. [http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/tb.html](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/tb.html)

- “TB Respiratory Protection Program in Health Care Facilities: Administrators’ Guide,” a practical guide for administrators and managers who are responsible for instituting and maintaining respiratory protection programs for health-care workers who may be exposed to patients infected with TB. [http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/99-143.html](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/99-143.html).


NIOSH has also contributed to the development, assessment, and guidance for use of environmental control measures such as ventilation and filtration, airborne infection isolation rooms (AIIR), portable air cleaners, and ultraviolet germicidal irradiation (UVGI), to the advancement of knowledge about personal protective equipment, and to improvements in methods for assessing TB exposure. These advances add to the base of knowledge that will be needed for protecting workers – and indeed, the public as a whole – as efforts against TB proceed in the 21st Century. NIOSH’s work is described in an evidence package presented to the National Academies last year for independent scientific review of the quality, relevance, and impact of our strategic research program for preventing occupational respiratory diseases. [http://mtn.niosh.cdc.gov/drds/about/RDRP/ch6.1.htm](http://mtn.niosh.cdc.gov/drds/about/RDRP/ch6.1.htm)

For health professionals, the ultimate goal is not simply the containment or control of TB. The ultimate goal is eradication. NIOSH is honored to be a partner in this historic enterprise. For more information about our resources for occupational health professionals, employers, and workers, please visit our topic page at [http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/tb](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/tb).

### National Asbestos Awareness Week

April 1 – 7, 2008 was National Asbestos Awareness Week. NIOSH joins our partners to reemphasize the need to reduce health risks for workers who may be exposed to asbestos. The NIOSH Asbestos Topic Page, [http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/asbestos](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/asbestos) provides links to existing NIOSH recommendations for controlling work-related exposures. It also offers information about “Asbestos and Other Mineral Fibers: A Roadmap for Scientific Research,” NIOSH’s partnership to advance scientific research for reducing current uncertainties in developing worker protection policies for asbestos.
2008 National Work Zone Awareness Week

National Work Zone Awareness Week (NWZAW) will be observed April 7 – 11, 2008. Scheduled events include the Ninth Annual National Media Event, hosted on April 8 by the California Department of Transportation, at the California State Capitol in Sacramento. Roadway work zones are hazardous for motorists and workers. One hazard that road crews face each day is being struck by motorists passing through work zones. By slowing down, obeying posted speed limits, and exercising caution when driving through work zones, motorists make work zones safer for workers, other drivers and themselves. The following links provide additional information about: NWZAW (from the Federal Highway Administration), [http://www.ops.fhwa.dot.gov/wz/outreach/wz_awareness.htm](http://www.ops.fhwa.dot.gov/wz/outreach/wz_awareness.htm); NIOSH work zone safety research, [http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/highwayworkzones](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/highwayworkzones); and a national resource for work zone safety, [http://wzsafety.tamu.edu](http://wzsafety.tamu.edu).

Town Hall Meeting on Preparedness and Response Research Portfolio

NIOSH hosted a stimulating town hall meeting on March 25 in Arlington, VA, for stakeholder comment on the strategic goals of the NIOSH program portfolio for research in health and safety for emergency preparedness and response. The docket for comments will remain open until April 13. More information about the program portfolio, the town hall meeting, and ways to contact us can be found at [http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/programs/epr/townhall.html](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/programs/epr/townhall.html).

REMINDER: NIOSH Seeks Applications for 2007 Director’s Award

NIOSH is soliciting applications for the 2007 NIOSH Director's Award for Outstanding Extramural Research in Occupational Safety and Health. This annual award recognizes outstanding scientific research in the field of occupational safety and health that has made a major impact or has the potential of making a major impact for practitioners and workplaces. Researchers who are currently receiving independent investigator-initiated grant support from NIOSH are eligible for the competitive award, which provides a $15,000 supplement in total costs to the grant that is the basis for the work cited in the award. Go to the NIOSH Web page at [http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/oep](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/oep) for the full announcement.

NIOSH Teams on Innovative Safety Outreach with Hispanic Media

NIOSH has partnered with the Spanish-language television network Telemundo, CPWR – the Center for Construction Research and Training, and Hollywood Health and Society to introduce an occupational safety storyline that began April 1 on a popular Telemundo telenovela or dramatic series. The storyline on the series “Pecados Ajenos” focuses on the consequences of a serious workplace injury involving a fall from ladder on a construction site. A public service announcement was scheduled to air with the episodes of the telenovela. Further information about the safety risks and preventive measures highlighted by the telenovela can be found at [http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/features/constructionfalls/telenovela_falls.html](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/features/constructionfalls/telenovela_falls.html). NIOSH Spanish-language resources for diverse industries and types of work are available at [http://www.cdc.gov/spanish/niosh](http://www.cdc.gov/spanish/niosh).
**NIOSH Board of Scientific Counselors to Meet April 23, 2008**

The NIOSH Board of Scientific Counselors (BSC) will meet April 23, 2008 in Arlington, VA. The meeting is open to the public. The BSC provides guidance to the NIOSH Director on research and prevention programs, and evaluates the degree to which NIOSH activities conform to appropriate scientific standards, address current and relevant needs and produce intended results. Contact Roger Rosa, BSC Executive Secretary at RRosa@cdc.gov for more information.

**REMEMBER: Comments Invited for Draft NIOSH Alert on Preventing Chronic Beryllium Disease**

Comments accepted until May 12, 2008.

NIOSH is conducting public review of a draft NIOSH document entitled, “NIOSH Alert: Preventing Chronic Beryllium Disease and Beryllium Sensitization.” The draft Alert describes the nature of chronic beryllium disease and other health effects that can occur from exposure to beryllium and beryllium-containing materials. Recommendations for companies and workers to minimize the health risk to workers are also provided. When submitting comments to the NIOSH Docket, be sure to reference Docket Number 120. Guidelines for submissions can be found at [http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/review/public/120](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/review/public/120).

**NIOSH Provides Input for Global Road Safety Resolution**

The United Nations General Assembly adopted Resolution A/62/L.43 on “Improving Global Road Safety” on March 31, 2008. The Sultanate of Oman introduced the resolution, which was sponsored by more than 90 countries and adopted unanimously. The resolution includes encouragement for "organizations in both private and public sectors with vehicle fleets to develop and implement policies and practices that will reduce crash risks for vehicle occupants and other road users." As members of the federal Global Road Safety Interagency Working Group, Stephanie Pratt and Jane Hingston of NIOSH provided input that strengthened this portion of the resolution. For the first time, a United Nations resolution includes specific language that notes the importance of fleet operations to worker safety and public safety. This gives corporations, governments, and other stakeholders strong justification to take action to improve road safety for workers around the world. For more information, contact Stephanie Pratt at SPratt@cdc.gov or Jane Hingston JHingston@cdc.gov. To read the full text of the resolution, visit [http://www.who.int/roadsafety/about/resolutions/A-RES-62-L-43.pdf](http://www.who.int/roadsafety/about/resolutions/A-RES-62-L-43.pdf).
Applications Being Accepted for 2008 Robert W. Campbell Award

Deadline is May 31, 2008
The Robert W. Campbell Award is currently accepting applications for the 2008 Award year. This international award honors organizations that achieve high levels of excellence by integrating environmental, health and safety (EHS) management into their overall business operating system. Final submittals for the Campbell Award must be postmarked by May 31, 2008. Please visit [http://www.CampbellAward.org](http://www.CampbellAward.org) for further information or email [CampbellAward@nsc.org](mailto:CampbellAward@nsc.org).

NIOSH Facility Contributes to Morgantown Wellness Designation

The city of Morgantown, WV is one of only ten cities nationally to receive the designation of “Well City” from the Wellness Council of America (WELCOA). The NIOSH Morgantown facility was one of twenty area employers that contributed to this designation by being named “Well Workplaces” by WELCOA. Members of the local business community in cooperation with the Wellness Council of West Virginia and WELCOA have been working towards the “Well City” designation since 1998. Brett Rice, Director of the NIOSH Morgantown Wellness Program, is a long-time member of the Well City Initiative Committee.

New Director of NIOSH Division of Applied Research and Technology Announced

Gregory Lotz has been appointed to the position of Director of the NIOSH Division of Applied Research and Technology (DART). Greg has served in various capacities since joining NIOSH in 1992, including DART Associate Director for Science from January 2003 to August 2007 and most recently Interim DART Director. His research has focused on the effects of exposure to physical agents, including radiation, noise and hot and cold environments, and he served as a member of U.S. interagency committees and national and international review panels.

“Simple Solutions” Document Recognized by IIE Award

“Simple Solutions: Ergonomics for Construction Workers” was one of six finalists in the Training and Education category of the Ergo Cup® Competition at the 11th Annual Applied Ergonomics Conference held March 10 – 14 in Orlando, FL. Authors Jim Albers and Cherie Estill attended the conference in order to participate in the competition and to promote recent NIOSH ergonomics publications. The Ergo Cup® is an internationally-recognized award presented by the Institute of Industrial Engineers to organizations that have developed an effective ergonomics solution or education initiative within the last 24 months.

David Byrne Received Public Health Service Award

NIOSH Research Audiologist David Byrne has been selected to receive the 2008 Josef Hoog Award given by the U.S. Public Health Service. The award is one of four Therapist Category awards, and was created in memory of Josef Hoog, a USPHS physical therapist from 1952 – 1970. Lieutenant Commander Byrne’s article, “Comparison of Speech Intelligibility Measures for an Electronic Amplifying Earmuff and an Identical Passive Attenuation Device,” has subsequently been submitted for publication. The award will be presented in June at the USPHS Scientific and Training Symposium in Tucson, AZ.
Congratulations to Marilyn Adams, founder of Farm Safety 4 Just Kids, who was awarded Volvo's prestigious Volvo for Life Award on March 18 as "America's Greatest Hometown Hero." The award recognized Marilyn's tireless educational efforts with parents and children in rural communities throughout North America to prevent farm injuries and deaths involving children. Marilyn and Farm Safety 4 Just Kids are long-time NIOSH partners in advancing safety for young people who work and live on farms. Further information on the award is available at http://www.volvoforlifeawards.com/cgi-bin/iowa/english/home/index.html and http://www.fs4jk.org/adamsaward.html.

William A. Hustrulid Is Elected to One of Engineering's Highest Honors

William A. Hustrulid, PhD, a senior scientist at NIOSH's Spokane Research Laboratory, was elected to the National Academy of Engineers (NAE). This is one of the highest honors that can be awarded to an engineer. Bill was inducted to the Academy during a ceremony at NAE’s annual meeting in Washington, DC, in recognition of his “contributions to the theory and practice of geomechanics in the design of safe and efficient underground mining systems.” Congratulations to Dr. Hustrulid.

NIOSH Science Blog

Be sure to check out and comment on the latest NIOSH Science Blog topics.


- The March 31, 2008 posting by Edward Fries, Engineer in the NIOSH National Personal Protective Technology Laboratory, discusses protecting healthcare workers from pandemic influenza with the use of personal protective equipment (PPE). http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/blog. NIOSH’s draft action plan of short and long term strategies for influenza pandemic research, development and investigative testing for the personal protective technology program is available for public comment at http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/review/public/129.

r2p Corner

NIOSH Signs Agreement with OSHA and National Hearing Conservation Association

On February 21, NIOSH, the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration, and the National Hearing Conservation Association signed an agreement for outreach and resources to prevent work-related hearing loss. More information about the alliance can be found at http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/updates/upd-03-24-08.html.
NORA Public Safety Sub-Sector Draft Agenda

The NORA Public Safety Sub Council is requesting comments on its draft *National Public Safety Sub-Sector Agenda* [http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/nora/comment/public](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/nora/comment/public). Over the past year the Sub Council members developed a set of 16 strategic goals to guide the nation in research and research-to-practice efforts for four groups of workers: law enforcement, firefighting, corrections and emergency medical services. The Sub Council also seeks organizations to join partnership efforts to advance the draft priorities.

NORA Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing Draft Agenda

The NORA Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing Sector Council is requesting comments on its draft National Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing Agenda that includes nine strategic goals to guide the nation in research and research-to-practice efforts aimed at top safety and health problems. [http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/nora/comment/public](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/nora/comment/public). The Council also seeks organizations to join partnership efforts to advance the draft priorities.

NORA Mining Sector Council Update

The NORA Mining Sector Council has been charged to improve outreach to small mines through partnering. For details or to volunteer, go to [http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/nora/councils/mining](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/nora/councils/mining).

NORA Awards deadline this month

The last day to submit nominations for the two NORA awards is Wednesday, April 30. [http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/nora/symp08/award08.html](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/nora/symp08/award08.html).

As always, contact the NORA Coordinator at noracoordinator@cdc.gov for any NORA-related issues.

State-based Occupational Health updates

Collaborative state response to an emerging occupational health hazard.

Bronchiolitis obliterans, a rare, life-threatening lung disease, was found among microwave popcorn manufacturing workers and linked by NIOSH to the chemical diacetyl, an ingredient in artificial butter flavorings. At the June 2006 Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists’ (CSTE) annual meeting, the California state health department and NIOSH reported a similar outbreak of lung disease among diacetyl-exposed food flavoring manufacturing workers [http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5616a2.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5616a2.htm). To respond to this emerging hazard, members of NIOSH’s 15-state Consortium of Occupational State-based Surveillance (COSS) group conducted an array of occupational public health activities. States have:

- Informed workers, employers, and health care providers of the health risks of workplace food flavoring exposures.
- Conducted worksite visits or employer surveys to assess diacetyl and food flavoring use.
- Helped state OSHA programs identify worksites using food flavorings.
Responded to reports of possible health risks of restaurant use of diacetyl-containing oils. To access Washington’s Fact Sheet, go to http://www.lni.wa.gov/Safety/REsearch/Files/DiacetylFactSheet.pdf

For information about state-based activities to prevent flavoring-related lung disease, contact Barbara Materna Barbara.Materna@cdph.ca.gov.

**News From Our Partners**

**Fatigue and Work Seminar**

The National Safety Council is cosponsoring the “Fatigue and Work” Seminar on May 9, 2008 as part of The Big Sleep Show in Chicago, IL. The seminar will focus on workplace issues such as drowsy driving, shift work, healthy sleep and napping. Speakers include leading experts and authors from NASA, industry and the research community. The Big Sleep Show on May 9-10, 2008 is the first-ever consumer health expo solely dedicated to sleep and alertness. http://www.thebigsleepshow.com

**National Safety Council Webinar Schedule for April and May**

The National Safety Council will host the following webinars in April and May.

- “Fatigue in the Workplace: Enhancing Employee Safety and Health”
  April 14, 2008, 10:00 – 11:00 AM CDT
  https://www.livemeeting.com/lrs/nsconline_ccc/Registration.aspx?pageName=pn9rs6vlj0ps5h9h

- “PPE: WHO PAYS?”
  April 23, 2008, 10:00 – 11:00 AM CDT
  https://www114.livemeeting.com/lrs/nsconline_ccc/Registration.aspx?pageName=zvj3slq85gmfxd0p

- “Are You Communicating Safety?”
  May 14, 2008, 10:00 – 11:00 AM CDT
  https://www.livemeeting.com/lrs/nsconline_ccc/Registration.aspx?pageName=fmq49vzgxkrsd9mm

- “Accident Investigation to Correct and Prevent Future Incidents”
  May 20, 2008, 10:00 – 11:00 AM CDT
Nanotechnology

- “NIOSH Nanotechnology Field Research Effort” DHHS (NIOSH) Publication Number 2008-121 [http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2008-121]
- “NIOSH Nanotechnology Metal Oxide Particle Exposure Assessment Study” DHHS (NIOSH) Publication Number 2008-122 [http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2008-122]

The following NIOSH publications are now electronically available in Spanish.

- “Older Drivers in the Workplace: Crash Prevention for Employers and Workers” DHHS (NIOSH) Publication Number 2005-159 [http://www.cdc.gov/spanish/niosh/docs/2005-159sp.html]
Look for Us

The NIOSH Exhibit Booth will be at Booth 248 at the “Fire Department Instructors Conference,” April 9 – 12, 2008 in Indianapolis, IN. http://fdic08.events.pennnet.com/fl/index.cfm

Call for Abstracts

“14th International Society for Respiratory Protection”

ASSE Professional Development Conference and Exposition “SAFETY 2009”

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

Upcoming Conferences

“Fire Department Instructors Conference 2008”

“9th Annual Transforming Fall Prevention Practices”

“American Association of Occupational Health Nurses”

“International Association of Fire Chiefs 2008 International Hazardous Materials Response Teams Conference”

“2008 American Industrial Hygiene Conference and Exposition”

“NSTI Nanotech Annual Conference”

“2008 World Safety Conference and Exposition”
Word of the Month

Ultraviolet Germicidal Irradiation (UVGI): Use of ultraviolet light to break down and inactivate infectious organisms such as TB bacteria.

NIOSH eNews on the Web: www.cdc.gov/niosh/enews/

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