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Information Circular 9498: "Proceedings of the International Workshop on Rock Mass Classification in Underground Mining," [DHHS \(NIOSH\) Pub. No. 2007-128](#).

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From the Director's Desk

NIOSH has a long history of working with partners to achieve our mission of protecting workers from illness and injury. The Research to Practice (r2p) initiative has confirmed NIOSH's commitment to partnership involvement throughout the research process promoting the adoption of technologies, interventions, and knowledge in the workplace.

Since being introduced in 2004, r2p has demonstrated its effectiveness through new formal partnership agreements, collaboration with standard setting organizations, dissemination, and commercialization of NIOSH products. The establishment of formal partnerships allows NIOSH and partnering organizations to build on each others strengths, resulting in optimal utilization and deployment of resources to help protect workers safety. A recent partnership agreement between NIOSH and The U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board (CSB) reflects a commitment to cooperate in the protection of the American public from exposure to hazardous chemicals. Also, our partnership with the American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA) has given us the opportunity to disseminate information to health and safety professionals. Furthermore, AIHA provides input and feedback on relevance and reaching workers.

In addition to combined resources, NIOSH researchers provide technical expertise to consensus standards setting bodies. This aspect of r2p adds a proactive dimension to the long tradition of partnership by NIOSH researchers in helping to craft scientifically sound benchmarks for workplace safety and health. NIOSH, in collaboration with ISEA (International Safety Equipment Association) and manufacturers, AIHA (American Industrial Hygiene Association) and industrial hygienists, and ASTM (American Society for Testing and Materials), developed the Permeation Calculator which is a computer tool for automating the permeation testing data analysis. It is intended to help industrial hygienists avoid labor intensive hand calculations while preventing experimenter bias, thus ensuring identical results to be obtained from a given data file. The Permeation Calculator is completing the ASTM process to become a standard practice entitled "Standard Practice for Permeation Testing Data Analysis by Use of a Computer Program."

Another example of our efforts with consensus standards setting bodies includes NIOSH's combined effort with partners to validate a standardized portable fluorescence method for determining trace beryllium in workplace air and wipe samples. Accreditation is available for this field-portable technique through the American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA) Laboratory Accreditation Program.

Equally as important as the research we do, is making sure that our research findings are disseminated to those who can use them in a manner that is most useful to them and adopted in the workplace. A partnership with the National Safety Council (NSC) has led to a series of web-based seminars called, webinars, highlighting NIOSH research on the occupational health and safety implications of nanotechnology, Prevention Through Design, and prevention of occupational injuries and illnesses among young workers, starting this July and running through August. These provide an opportunity for NIOSH in conjunction with the NSC to disseminate information to occupational safety and health professionals throughout the U.S. To learn more about the different webinars, visit www.nsc.org.

Not only is it important to disseminate our research findings, it also important to transfer the technologies into the market place and ultimately into the workplace by fostering partnerships with commercial entities. NIOSH researchers developed a new method to quickly access the location and levels of methamphetamine contamination on surfaces to protect police officers, public health, safety and security professionals from this significant health risk. In partnership with SKC, Inc., two commercial available products resulted: MethAlert™ and MethCheck™. (Mention of any company name or product does not constitute a commercial endorsement by NIOSH.)

The value of r2p is being seen beyond NIOSH. It is encouraging to see that research to practice is now a theme in many conferences. The Western Agriculture Safety Conference last fall and the National Institute for Farm Safety Conference last month placed emphasis on moving research into practice. Upcoming conferences with a similar theme include:

- WorkLife Symposium: *Bethesda, MD, September 10-11, 2007*
- Building the Science of Dissemination and Implementation in the Service of Public Health: *Bethesda, MD, September 10-11, 2007*
- Work, Stress, and Health 2008: Health and Safe Work Through Research, Practice, and Partnerships: *Washington, DC, March 6-8, 2008*

Over the last three and half years, NIOSH has been dedicated to ensuring that all research places a high value on relevance and results in impact. The success of r2p can be seen by the substantial increase in formal partnership agreements and the numerous innovations that have been moved into the workplace. As r2p moves forward, we continue to expand NIOSH's partnership base and the utility of NIOSH-funded research in the workplace. Please see the article in "r2p Corner" elsewhere in this issue for links to further information on the initiatives mentioned above, and please visit our r2p topic page at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/r2p/> for ongoing developments.

Public Comments on Draft Asbestos Research Roadmap are Posted

On July 3, NIOSH posted public comments on the draft document, "Asbestos and Other Mineral Fibers: A Roadmap for Scientific Research," along with presentations from a May 4, 2007, public meeting on the draft document. The public comments and presentations will be considered by NIOSH in developing a final version of the document. The public comments and presentations are online at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docket/NIOSHdocket0099.html>. The draft document is available at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/review/public/099/>.

NIOSH Scientists Recognized for Collaborative Efforts

On June 14, Tim Merinar and Nancy Stout of the NIOSH Division of Safety Research received the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Leveraging/Collaboration Award for their participation in an interagency team. The team was recognized "for dedicated and exceptional performance in determining and implementing actions that address the postmarket adverse events associated with oxygen regulator fires."

NIOSH and FDA teamed in identifying a risk of spontaneous ignition and fire associated with improper use of plastic gaskets on oxygen resuscitator regulators stored on emergency vehicles and in healthcare facilities. The agencies issued a joint bulletin in June 2006, alerting healthcare and fire and emergency medical service personnel to the danger of fires due to the incorrect use of these types of gaskets. Since the bulletin was released, the FDA has received feedback from health care, fire safety professionals, and patient caregivers about its positive impact. The notice can be viewed at <http://www.fda.gov/cdrh/safety/042406-o2fires.html>.

Understanding and Reducing Health Disparities

The NIOSH Office of Extramural Programs announces a new funding opportunity to encourage behavioral and social science research on the causes of, and solutions to, health and disabilities disparities in the U.S. population. PAR-07-379 was released on June 7 and applications are due by September 19, 2007. The announcement focuses on health disparities between three groups (racial/ethnic populations, lower socioeconomic classes, and rural residents) and the overall U.S. population. Emphasis is placed on research in three broad areas: public policy, health care, and disease/disability prevention. Particular attention is given to reducing “health gaps” among groups. Proposals that utilize an interdisciplinary approach, investigate multiple levels of analysis, incorporate a life-course perspective, and/or employ innovative methods such as system science or community-based participatory research are particularly encouraged. The announcement can be found at <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PAR-07-379.html>.

Update: International Workshop on Chronic Lymphocytic Leukemia

NIOSH and the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry recently cosponsored an international workshop on [chronic lymphocytic leukemia \(CLL\)](#) and monoclonal B-cell lymphocytosis (MBL). Physicians, laboratory scientists, and epidemiologists gathered to revisit CLL in light of the most recent discoveries about its pathogenesis. Two major considerations prompted the workshop: renewed questions about environmental risk factors and increased attention to a precedent condition most often referred to as monoclonal B-cell lymphocytosis. The workshop was convened to reassess laboratory and epidemiologic strategies for determining the role of environmental exposures in B-cell lymphoproliferative diseases. A special issue of *British Journal of Haematology* (<http://www.blackwellpublishing.com/journal.asp?ref=0007-1048>) will be devoted to the proceedings of this conference.

NIOSH Says Goodbye to Two Outstanding Scientists

On June 24, Dr. James Stephens was named Associate Director for Science for the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Dr. Stephens previously served as the NIOSH Associate Director for Science. Dr. Stephens came to NIOSH in 1992 as a research chemist and later served as a senior scientist in the NIOSH Office of the Director.

After 30 years of service at NIOSH, Dr. Mary Lynn Wuebkenberg will retire effective August 3. Dr. Wuebkenberg has been with NIOSH since 1976, serving in numerous capacities, including conducting research on personal sampling methodologies for nitrogen dioxide, leading the National Occupational Research Agenda (NORA) Exposure Assessment Methods Team, and serving as a senior scientist in the NIOSH Office of the Director. Since 2004 she has served as the Director of the NIOSH Division of Applied Research and Technology.

NIOSH Welcomes Dr. Christine Branche

Dr. Christine Branche has accepted the position of NIOSH Principal Associate Director effective July 23. In this capacity, Dr. Branche will ensure coordination within the NIOSH Office of the Director (OD) and between the OD and NIOSH divisions, laboratories, and regional offices.

r2p Corner

Several notable partnerships and initiatives under NIOSH’s Research to Practice (r2p) program are discussed elsewhere in this issue, in “From the Director’s Desk.” More information on these accomplishments is available from the following sources:



- The recent partnership agreement between NIOSH and the U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board (CSB): Matt Gillen, NIOSH, at Mgillen@cdc.gov.
- Partnership with the American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA): DeLon Hull, NIOSH, at Dhull@cdc.gov.
- Partnership in developing the new Permeation Calculator: Pengfei Gao, NIOSH, at PGao@cdc.gov.
- NIOSH's combined effort with partners to validate a standardized portable fluorescence method for determining trace beryllium in workplace air and wipe samples: Kevin Ashley, NIOSH, at KAshley@cdc.gov.
- The new method to quickly access the location and levels of methamphetamine contamination on surfaces to protect police officers and public health, safety, and security professionals from this significant health risk: Eric Esswein, NIOSH, at Eesswein@cdc.gov.

NORA

NORA Sector Council Workgroups

Want to get involved in setting the National Occupational Research Agenda (NORA)?

Volunteer to become a Corresponding Member on one of the workgroups of a NORA Sector Council. The NORA Sector Councils have been defining priority topics in preparation for drafting strategic plans for their sector. The small council workgroups have been charged with defining the scope of the problems and identifying research gaps and opportunities. To join, simply look at the lists of topics being considered by each Council under "Activities" on the NORA Sector Council Web pages (<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/nora/councils>), contact the Coordinator listed, and volunteer to become a Corresponding Member and serve on a workgroup to which you could contribute. Send a note to NORACoordinator@cdc.gov to discuss any NORA-related issue.



News From Our Partners

CDC's Injury Center summarizes the cost of violence in the U.S.

A new fact sheet from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Center for Injury Prevention and Control estimates that costs associated with nonfatal injuries and deaths due to violence totaled more than \$70 billion in 2000. Estimates for lost productivity and medical costs, and ways to reduce the economic burden of these injuries, are also included in the fact sheet, <http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/factsheets/CostOfViolence.htm> Learn more about NIOSH's research to reduce violence in the workplace at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/violence>.

\$10.1 Million Available from OSHA for New Safety and Health Training Grants

Proposals are currently being accepted for safety and health training and educational programs under the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) Susan Harwood Training Grant Program. Fourteen training topics were selected for the announcement and include driver safety, roofing hazards, and preparing small businesses for influenza pandemic. Details on the grant application, including a link to the Federal Register announcement, can be found on the OSHA Web page, <http://www.osha.gov/dcsp/ote/sharwood.html>.

Communication Products

- “Ergonomic Guidelines for Manual Material Handling,” DHHS (NIOSH) Pub. No. 2007-131. <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2007-131>.
- Information Circular 9495: “Proceedings: New Technology for Ground Control in Multiple-seam Mining,” DHHS (NIOSH) Pub. No. 2007-110. <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/mining/pubs/pubreference/outputid2436.htm>.
- Information Circular 9498: “Proceedings of the International Workshop on Rock Mass Classification in Underground Mining,” DHHS (NIOSH) Pub. No. 2007-128. <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/mining/pubs/pubreference/outputid2437.htm>



Upcoming Events

Call for Papers

- “12th US/North American Mine Ventilation Symposium,” June 11-18, 2008, in Reno, NV. Deadline is August 1. <http://www.unr.edu/ventsymp2008>
- “International Association of Fire Chiefs Fire Rescue International 2008,” August 14-16, 2008, in Denver, CO. Deadline is September 1. <http://www.iafc.org>
- American Society of Safety Engineer’s “SAFETY 2008” Professional Development Conference and Exposition, June 9-12, 2008, Las Vegas, NV. Deadline is July 31. <http://www.asse.org/speakerpage08>

“2007 Johnson Conference: Workplace Aerosol Sampling to Meet ISO Size-Selective Criteria”

The conference will be held July 16-20 in Burlington, VT, and is sponsored by ASTM International. Information can be found at <http://www.astm.org> under Symposia and Workshops.

“International Association of Fire Chiefs Fire Rescue International 2007”

The conference will take place August 23-25 in Atlanta, GA. <http://www.iafc.org/displaycommon.cfm?an=1&subarticlenbr=356>

“3rd International Symposium on Nanotechnology, Occupational and Environmental Health”

The conference will take place in Taipei, Taiwan, on August 29-September 1. NIOSH is a cosponsor of the conference. <http://nano-taiwan.sinica.edu.tw/EHS2007/index.htm>.

“WorkLife 2007: Protecting and Promoting Worker Health Symposium”

The Symposium will be held by NIOSH and partner agencies and organizations September 10-11, in Bethesda, MD. <http://www.worklife2007.com/home.asp>.

“International Roofing Expo 2008”

The International Roofing Expo, 2008 will be held February 21-23, 2008 in Las Vegas, NV. <http://www.theroofingexpo.com/Roofing07/public/Content.aspx?ID=6980&left=0&Nav=0>.

“American Association of Occupational Health Nurses”

The conference will be held April 25-May 2, 2008, in Salt Lake City, UT. <http://www.aaohn.org/education/symposium-expo/index.cfm>

“Fire Department Instructors Conference 2008”

The conference will be held April 7-12, 2008, in Indianapolis, IN. <http://fdic08.events.pennnet.com/fl//index.cfm>

Word of the Month

Chronic lymphocytic leukemia (CLL): A form of leukemia in which abnormal cells multiply and replace normal lymphocytes in the body’s marrow and the lymph nodes. The profusion of abnormal cells compromises the body’s immune system.

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