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--Christine M. Branche, Ph.D., Acting Director, NIOSH

Except for [Benjamin Button](#) and Peter Pan, we all get older. In the U.S. and indeed around the world, this fact of life presents an array of challenges for occupational safety and health professionals, centered on the aging of the workforce.

Life expectancy is increasing. The unusually large "baby boom" population is graying. The number of young people now entering or close to entering the workforce is smaller than the number of older people who have reached or are about to reach traditional retirement age. As a result, the workforce as a whole is growing older.

When an expert panel convened by the National Research Council assessed the health and safety needs of the aging workforce in 2004 at NIOSH's request, it reported that there are 93 million people in the U.S. age 45 and over, representing 44 percent of the population over age 15. By 2050, the panel noted, it is predicted that the number of people age 45 and over will grow to 170 million, representing 53 percent of the population. More recently, as further evidence for the graying of the workforce, 85 percent of unretired baby boomers surveyed by McKinsey & Co., a management consulting firm, said it was at least somewhat likely that they would continue to work beyond the traditional retirement age. Many of the respondents said they planned to

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continue working out of financial necessity.

To be sure, this trend of an older workforce has advantages. There is value in having work performed by someone who has years of experience from which to draw. There is value in having mentors who can teach the ropes to younger colleagues. For the person who likes the regularity, economic benefits, and camaraderie of going to work, a job can be stimulating -- even fun.

At the same time, many people may feel compelled to continue working when they would rather be retired, and many others may wish to continue working but will be challenged to do so for various reasons. These dynamics raise questions for safety and health that ordinarily would not be of concern for a younger working population, or at least not in the same ways. These are not abstract questions. They involve challenges that employers, workers, and workers' families will face on an average day on the job when an older worker punches the time clock at a construction site, takes the night shift at a nursing station, or staffs a phone bank at a call center:

- What are the physical effects of a strenuous job for a person over 45 who lifts heavy loads or performs repetitive movements?
- What difficulties do older workers face in adapting to new technologies and new ways of doing business?
- What challenges are posed for older men and women who come into the workplace with diabetes, hypertension, and other age-dependent conditions?
- What work-and-family conflicts exist for workers 45 and older who have responsibilities both for elderly parents and for children in school?
- What measures are needed to help people maintain good health and physical capability throughout their adult lives, reducing cumulative wear and strain as they enter their 50s, 60s, and 70s?

The 2004 National Research Council report, "Health and Safety Needs of Older Workers."

http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=10884, presented a thoughtful strategy for new research to address these and other concerns associated with the aging workforce. The recent downturn of the stock, credit, and banking markets has added new urgency in returning to these challenges and following up on the

panel's recommendations, as financial losses compel even more men and women in their 50s and early 60s to reassess their retirement plans.

Last month, in collaboration with the Society of Occupational and Environmental Health, the Association of Occupational and Environmental Clinics, CPWR-the Center for Construction Research and Training, the University of Maryland, Work and Health Research Center, the VA, and AARP, NIOSH held a national workshop, "Healthy Aging for Workers: Anticipating the Occupational Safety and Health Needs of an Increasingly Aging Workforce." <http://www.soeh.org/meeting/meeting.html> The workshop provided a forum for revisiting the 2004 report, assessing developments in the intervening five years, stimulating needed research, and renewing our shared pledge to meet the challenges outlined in the study. I recommend the NRC report to you, and I also invite you to watch for the report that will be prepared from last month's workshop, which is expected to be published later this year.

Do you have suggestions for research to fill data gaps, meet health surveillance needs, and develop interventions that will be necessary for progress in this area? Do you want to join in planning and executing this research? We invite your interest and participation in this valuable work. We are developing a web topic page to provide resources about issues of safety, health, and older workers, and to continue the dialogue begun with the NRC report and last month's workshop. We will announce the posting of the new web page in a future issue of eNews, and we hope you will use it to provide your suggestions for research, and to join us in this work.

When it is said that people want to enjoy their Golden Years, the phrase often has an undertone of irony and worry. Some older men and women may find it imperative to keep working because of financial necessity, but health impairments or physical disabilities can make it difficult or impossible to meet the demands of a job. Others enter this stage of their lives with energy and good health, and may wish to work. However, as they enter the hiring line, they may face a disadvantage because of generalizations about age, physical ability, and mental acuity, even though, on the whole, older workers tend to be more reliable and do not lose strength with age as quickly as might be expected. As the federal agency that conducts research and makes recommendations to keep the workplace safe and healthy, we want to take on those concerns as they relate to workplace factors. We and our partners want to keep the Golden Years truly golden for our working men and women.

NIOSH, WVU Partner on Flu Transmission Study

NIOSH and West Virginia University are collaborating on a study to help determine how flu may be spread through the air when an infected person sneezes or coughs and to assess the importance of this route of

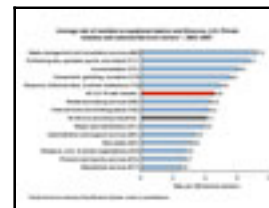
transmission in relation to other ways the flu virus may be transmitted. The results of the study will add to the knowledge needed for assessing healthcare workers' risk of occupational exposure to the flu and for pandemic flu preparedness. More information is available at <http://www.health.wvu.edu/newsreleases/news-details.aspx?ID=1065>. Local news media coverage of the study is available at <http://wboy.com/story.cfm?func=viewstory&storyid=51978>.

NIOSH Announces Application Deadline of May 15, 2009, for RFA-OH-09-001 National Center for Construction Safety and Health

NIOSH is soliciting applications for a national center to address outreach, research, and research dissemination for the construction sector in the U.S. The ultimate goal is to prevent and reduce fatalities, injuries, illnesses, and disabilities for construction workers. NIOSH expects to make one award for up to five million dollars per year for a maximum of five years. Application details and requirements for RFA-OH-09-001 may be found at <http://grants.gov/>, the NIOSH Web site <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/oep/> (under Funding Opportunities click on Cooperative Agreements), or by contacting CAPT Steve Inserra at (404) 498-2552 or email SInserra@cdc.gov.

Nonfatal Occupational Injuries and Illnesses, Three Industry Sectors 30% Above Average

This month's graph shows the average rates (per 100 full-time workers) of nonfatal occupational injuries and illnesses among the following three NORA Services industry sectors: Waste management and remediation (7.2); Performing arts, spectator sports and related industries (6.7); and Accommodations (6.0). Each of the three industry sectors exceeded the average rate among all private industry employers by more than 30%. The graph is available at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/enevs/enevs6n1chart.html>.



ACOEM Presents Its Highest Award to John Howard

The American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine awarded the William S. Knudsen Award, its highest honor, to former NIOSH Director John Howard for significant contributions to research and leadership in occupational and environmental medicine. The award cites Dr. Howard's accomplishments in positioning NIOSH research on nanotechnology; emphasizing sound science, core values, evaluation, and good management at NIOSH; establishing the r2p program; and advancing electronic communications. The

award will be presented formally at an April 26 ceremony.

NIOSH Hosts Japanese Scientists to Discuss Nanotoxicology Findings

NIOSH scientists involved in state-of-the-art research in nanotoxicology hosted a contingent of Japanese scientists from academia, government, and industry in Morgantown, WV, February 26-27. This visit was an opportunity for NIOSH to brief the Japanese delegation on the NIOSH results concerning the biological effects of pulmonary exposure to multiwalled carbon nanotubes. For more information on NIOSH Nanotechnology research go to:

<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/nanotech/>.



Follow Up on International Road Safety at Work Conference

This first international conference focusing on the occupational aspects of road safety took place in Washington DC in February. The International Conference on Road Safety at Work brought together 220 delegates from 44 countries to discuss strategies to prevent road traffic injuries in the workplace. The meeting was organized by NIOSH and co-sponsored by the World Health Organization, International Labour Organization, National Safety Council, World Bank, and U.S. Department of State. A proceedings document is currently being assembled. Please comment on the draft white paper by March 31st at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/programs/twu/global/pdfs/WhitePaper.pdf>.

American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists Recognize NIOSH Researchers

The American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists (ACGIH) Awards Committee will recognize two NIOSH researchers this summer during the 2009 American Industrial Hygiene Conference and Expo. Jessica Ramsey is the recipient of the 2009 ACGIH John J. Bloomfield Award. The Bloomfield Award is presented to an up-and-coming industrial hygienist who has made significant contributions to the profession by pursuing occupational health and safety hazards, primarily through field work. Vince Castranova is the recipient of the Herbert E. Stokinger Award that recognizes outstanding achievement in industrial toxicology.



NIOSH and NHCA Present First Safe-in-Sound Excellence in Hearing Loss Prevention Awards

On February 13, NIOSH, in partnership with the National Hearing Conservation Association (NHCA), announced the first annual recipients of the Safe-in-Sound Excellence in Hearing Loss Prevention Awards™, honoring companies that have shown their dedication to the prevention of noise-induced hearing loss through excellent hearing loss prevention practices in the work environment. Nominations for the next awards are being accepted until August 1, 2009. For further information please visit <http://www.safeinsound.us>.



Photo by Jack Foreman. **Back row**, top left to top right: Charlie Floyd (Domtar), Mark Skripol (P&W), Pam Graydon (NIOSH), Tim Brooks (P&W), Nancy Hitchins (P&W), Meg Gildea (P&W), Ed Nelson (P&W), Thais Morata (NIOSH), Dom Chiulli (P&W), Craig Thompson (P&W), Deanna Meinke (NHCA), Jim Newhall (NIOSH), and James Lankford (NHCA). **Front row (seated)**, left to right: Connie Muncy (MCWS), Debbie Davis (Domtar), Dave Russel (P&W), and Michael Santucci (Sensaphonics).

R2p corner

NIOSH, Raytheon Partner on Underground Mine Emergency Communication Research



NIOSH is collaborating with Raytheon to explore adaptation of the company's radio technology for wireless communication to help save the lives of miners trapped underground by a mine explosion or roof collapse. Raytheon's family of advanced military radios provides soldiers with simultaneous voice, video, data, and critical position information on the battlefield. The partnership supports NIOSH's response to the MINER Act of 2006. For more information on the research, contact Thomas Dubaniewicz at TDubaniewicz@cdc.gov. Note: Mention of a company or product does not constitute a commercial endorsement by NIOSH.

NORA

NORA Sector Council Leaders, Updated List



Some leaders of the National Occupational Research Agenda (NORA) have changed in recent months. An updated list is posted on the NORA Web site (<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/nora/>) identifying the current NORA Sector Council co-chairs and the manager of the NIOSH Sector Program that facilitates each Council's work. Contact the NORA coordinator (noracoordinator@cdc.gov) with any comments or suggestions.

News from Our Partners

NIOSH Principal Investigator Receives University Honor

Congratulations to Jane Lipscomb, Ph.D., R.N., professor in the School of Nursing at the University of Maryland, who was named the University's 2008 Research Lecturer of the Year. Among other achievements, the award recognized Dr. Lipscomb's role in "providing the foundation for the School of Nursing's first Center of Excellence, the Work and Health Research Center." She is principal investigator on three major research projects that further health and safety for healthcare workers and partners with NIOSH on activities related to the National Occupational Research Agenda (NORA). Jane served as a NIOSH senior scientist from 1994 to 1997.

Quebec Issues Nanoparticle Risk Management Guidance

On February 3, the Quebec Occupational Health and Safety Research Institute (IRSST) released a best-practices guide for managing potential occupational risks associated with engineered nanoparticles. *Best Practices Guide to Synthetic Nanoparticle Risk Management*, issued in collaboration with Quebec's *Commission de la santé et de la sécurité du travail* (CSST) and *NanoQuébec*, refers to and reinforces NIOSH findings and recommendations. The Quebec document is available at <http://www.irsst.qc.ca/files/documents/PubIRSST/R-599.pdf>.

Project Assesses Worker Exposure to Lead during Metal Recycling Tasks

Researchers from the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH), Bureau of Occupational Health, conducted the Metal Recycling Industry Project (MRIP) to assess workers' exposures to lead during typical metal recycling tasks. Significant lead exposure occurred when workers cut not only painted metals, but also unpainted metals and new steel—both considered lead-free by the industry. Lead dust contamination was also found throughout the metal recycling facilities, including areas that would be expected to be clean, such as lunchrooms, bathrooms, locker rooms, and on workers' hands before eating. The report and fact sheet are available on the NYSDOH website at http://www.nyhealth.gov/environmental/workplace/metal_recycling/.

NIOSH Science Blog: Your Comments Wanted

Share your thoughts with us and others on the following topics on the NIOSH Science Blog:

The current discussion is on violence against pharmacists.

http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/blog/nsb021709_pharm.html.

New Communication Products

Current Intelligence Bulletin 60: Interim Guidance for Medical Screening and Hazard Surveillance for Workers Potentially Exposed to Engineered Nanoparticles (NIOSH Publication No. 2009-116)

This document provides interim guidance about whether specific medical screening, including performing medical tests on asymptomatic workers, is appropriate for workers exposed to engineered nanoparticles.

<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2009-116/>

Nine Career Fire Fighters Die in Rapid Fire Progression at Commercial Furniture Showroom— South Carolina (F2007-18)

Provides information for fire departments and fire fighters to minimize risks related to this incident.

<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/fire/reports/face200718.html>

To order NIOSH publications, CDs, and videos click here: <http://wwwn.cdc.gov/pubs/niosh.aspx>. Order up to 18 titles. Order limits are listed for each document. If you need additional information, please contact Sherri Diana at sdiana@cdc.gov or by calling 513-533-8471.

New NIOSH Topic Pages Available en Español

Confined Spaces (Espacios Confinados) <http://www.cdc.gov/spanish/niosh/topics/confinados.html>

Ergonomics and Musculoskeletal Disorders (Ergonomía [desordenes musculoesqueléticos])
<http://www.cdc.gov/spanish/niosh/topics/ergonomia.html>

Stress (Estrés) <http://www.cdc.gov/spanish/niosh/topics/estres.html>

Violence (Violencia) <http://www.cdc.gov/spanish/niosh/topics/violencia.html>

Noise and Hearing Loss Prevention (La Pérdida del Oído Relacionada al Trabajo)
<http://www.cdc.gov/spanish/niosh/topics/oido.html>

Call for Abstracts

Third National Conference on Health Communication, Marketing, and Media—Deadline March 16

August 11–13, 2009, Atlanta, GA. Call for abstracts <http://www.cdc.gov/healthmarketing/NCHCMM2009/>

8th International Conference on Occupational Stress and Health. “Work, Stress, and Health 2009: Global Concerns and Approaches — Deadline March 16, 2009

November 5–8, 2009, San Juan, Puerto Rico. Call for proposals <http://www.apa.org/pi/work/wsh.html>

Understanding Small Enterprises: A Healthy Working Life in a Healthy Business—Deadline April 1, 2009

October 20–23, 2009, Elsinore (Helsingør), Denmark. Call for workshops and

papers. <http://www.use2009.dk/>

Colloquium of the ISSA International Section for Research on Prevention—Deadline April 14, 2009

October 15-16 2009, Dresden, Germany. Request for papers.

<http://www.dguv.de/bgag/de/veranstaltungen/weitere/ivss-kolloquium/index.jsp>

Upcoming Conferences

PPT Program Public Meeting—Look for us!

March 3, 2009, Pittsburgh, PA <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/npptl/>

Emergency Nurses Association Leadership Conference

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

FIERO Fire PPE Symposium—Look for us!

March 9–11, 2009, Charlotte, NC <http://www.fireppesymposium.com>

Association of PeriOperative Room Nurses—Look for us!

March 14–18, 2009, Chicago IL <http://www.aorn.org>

19th Annual Art and Science of Health Promotion Conference: What Works Best in Health Promotion?

March 16–19, 2009, San Francisco, CA. <http://www.healthpromotionconference.org>

Society of Toxicology 48th Annual Meeting & Expo—Look for us Booth #3072!

March 16-18, 2009, Baltimore, MD. <http://www.toxicology.org/AM/MEET/AM2009/index.asp>

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>

EMS Update 2009—Look for us!

March 27–28, 2009, Champion PA <http://www.emsupdate.com>

5th Annual Asbestos Awareness Day Conference

March 27–29, 2009, Manhattan Beach Marriott, CA.

<http://www.asbestosdiseaseawareness.org/events/conference.html>

American Association of Occupational Health Nurses 2009 Symposium and Expo—Look for us!

April 21–22, 2009, Orlando, FL <http://www.aaohn.org/education/symposium-expo/cfp/>

Fire Department Instructors Conference (FDIC) 2009

April 20–25, 2009, Indianapolis, IN <http://www.fdic.com/>

Ohio Innovation Summit—Look for us!

April 20 – 22, Dayton Ohio <http://www.ohioinnovationsummit.org>

Symposium on Radiology of the Pneumoconioses

April 24–27, 2009, in Chantilly, VA

http://www.acr.org/SecondaryMainMenuCategories/MeetingsandEvents/FeaturedCategories/acr_meetings/Pneumoconiosis042409.aspx

American Occupational Health Conference 2009—Look for us!

April 26–29, 2009, San Diego, CA <http://www.acoem.org/aohc09.aspx>

2009 Toxicology and Risk Assessment Conference

April 27–30, 2009, West Chester, OH. <http://www.team-psa.com/trac2009/home.asp>

Occupational Hygiene 2009: Promoting a Healthy Working Environment

April 28–30, 2009, Eastbourne, UK

http://www.bohs.org/resources/res.aspx/Resource/filename/1275/Initial_Announcement_OH2009.pdf

National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS)—Look for us!

April 30 - May 1 2009, Cincinnati OH <http://www.niehs.nih.gov>

2009 Nanotech Conference & Exposition—Look for us!

May 3–7, 2009, Houston, TX <http://www.nsti.org/Nanotech2009/>

Retail Industry Leaders Association (RILA)—Look for us! Booth #207

May 4- 5, 2009, Orlando FL <http://www.rila.org>

SOPHE 2009 Midyear Conference: All that Jazz: Harmonizing Health Education Practice and Research to Advance Health Equity

May 6–May 9, 2009, New Orleans, LA <http://www.sophe.org/>

American Industrial Hygiene Conference & Exposition (AIHce 2009)

May 30–June 4, 2009, Toronto, Canada <http://www.aihce2009.org/>

Thomas L. Petty Aspen Lung Conference, 52nd Annual Meeting—The Environment and the Lung: Detection, Prevention and Mechanisms of Disease

June 10-13, 2009, Aspen, Colorado <http://www.uchsc.edu/pulmonary/aspen/callforabstracts.shtml>

American Society of Safety Engineers (ASSE) Professional Development Conference and Exposition “SAFETY 2009”

June 28–June 30 2009, San Antonio, TX <http://www.asse.org>

2009 American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) Johnson Conference on Emerging IEQ Issues

July 13–16, 2009 in Burlington, VT. Email elight@building-dynamics.com for information.

19th International Symposium on Shiftwork and Working Time: Health and Well-being in the 24-h Society

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

Third National Conference on Health Communication, Marketing, and Media

August 11–13, 2009, Atlanta, GA <http://www.cdc.gov/healthmarketing/NCHCMM2009/>

Voluntary Protection Programs Participants Association Annual Conference— Look for us!

August 24–27, 2009, San Antonio, TX <http://www.vpppa.org/>

Academy of Certified Hazard Material Managers 2009 National Conference

August 30-September 2, 2009, San Diego, California. <http://www.achmm.org/sandiego2009/>

Measuring Air Pollutants by Diffusive Sampling and Other Low Cost Monitoring Techniques International Conference

September 15–17, 2009, Krakow, Poland <http://rsc-aamg.org/Documents/Programmes/KrakowCPF.pdf>

Colloquium of the ISSA International Section for Research on Prevention

October 15-16 2009, Dresden, Germany <http://www.dguv.de/bgag/de/veranstaltungen/weitere/ivss-kolloquium/index.jsp>

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8th International Conference on Occupational Stress and Health: Work, Stress, and Health 2009: Global Concerns and Approaches

November 5–8, 2009, San Juan, Puerto Rico <http://www.apa.org/pi/work/wsh.html>

Word of the Month

Benjamin Button: The main character in the 2009 Academy Award winning film 'The Curious Case of Benjamin Button,' that is adapted from the 1921 story by F. Scott Fitzgerald about a man who is born in his eighties and grows younger.

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