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From the Director's Desk

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

December begins, and the holiday season is upon us. In industries that are particularly busy this time of year, such as retail sales, food service, and transportation, employers traditionally augment their regular workforce with part-time and temporary help to meet the expected increase in business over the next month. Many of us, in part-time and full-time employment alike, face the pressures of completing necessary work while trying to make time for our families and friends. Employers adjust work schedules to accommodate holiday leave while making sure that customers' needs are met. This year, for many, in the wake of turmoil in the stock market and the banking system, the joy of the season is tempered by concerns about job security and financial stability in 2009.

Industry analysts cautiously predict a good holiday season for retailers this year, based on consumer traffic and sales during the "Black Friday" weekend after Thanksgiving. This is welcome economic news. However, it also means that employers should be prepared with ways to prevent work-related injuries associated with crowding in stores and parking areas during peak shopping times. The death of a temporary retail employee in a reported crowd surge at a Long Island store in the early hours of Friday, November 28, was a tragic reminder that crowding can pose risks for serious physical injury.

As we celebrate this month's festivities and hope for a fulfilling new year, it is important to remember that the risk of occupational injury or illness never takes a holiday. We should also recognize that many factors for such risks are accentuated by the seasonal character of the workforce, seasonal demands on work schedules, and seasonal weather.

- Many temporary or part-time workers between now and New Year's Day are likely to be teenagers who hope to earn income for gifts and other purposes. We encourage employers, young workers, their co-workers, their families, and educators to visit our web page at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/youth/>. NIOSH provides many resources about occupational risk factors for teen workers, their legal rights under child labor laws, and ways to keep their working experience safe and fulfilling.
- As employers seek to meet year-end quotas or to ensure that needed tasks are performed during the holiday vacation season, they may schedule longer work shifts or irregular shifts. Working night shifts, working overtime, or working other kinds of irregular schedules can result in one becoming tired or sleepy. This can make it difficult to concentrate, increasing the risk of errors or unintentionally performing an unsafe act. The demands of shiftwork can also aggravate adverse health conditions such as heart disease and digestive disorders. NIOSH recommends that employers recognize these safety and health implications in considering ways to improve shiftwork schedules. NIOSH's findings and recommendations can be found at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/workschedules/>.
- Work stress can be an unwelcome feature of the holidays as we seek to balance job demands and family responsibilities. NIOSH recommends that employers identify potential sources of stress in their workplaces and design appropriate interventions. Our resources for managers and workers are available at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/stress/>. In particular, I would note our booklet, "Stress ... at Work," a valuable source of information and practical recommendations <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/atwork.html>, and its companion educational video program, "Working with Stress" <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/video/stressdvd1002.html>.
- Big-box items such as televisions, computers, and appliances are popular holiday gifts. Transporting, stocking, and displaying them involves physical labor, with associated risks for job-related musculoskeletal injuries. NIOSH provides strategic recommendations for designing and establishing workplace programs for the safe lifting, lowering, filling, and carrying of containers, and alternatives to manual handling <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2007-131/>. Additional resources for preventing strains, sprains, stresses, and other musculoskeletal injuries can be found at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/ergonomics/>.

I hope that NIOSH's products are useful to you and your loved ones as you enjoy a safe and bountiful holiday season. And we look forward to your continued partnership in the new year.

NIOSH Construction Research, Hazard Evaluation Programs Receive High Marks

Scientific review panels convened by the National Academies gave high marks to the relevance and impact of NIOSH's construction research program and NIOSH's health hazard evaluation program, while also making recommendations for ongoing activities and future directions. The full National Academies' report on the construction research program is available at http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=12530#toc. The report on the health hazard evaluation program is available at http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=12475#.

NIOSH Researcher is 2008 Recipient of Excellence in Aerosol Research Award

Paul A. Baron, PhD of the NIOSH Division of Applied Research and Technology recently received the David Sinclair Award for excellence in aerosol research and technology by an established scientist still active in his/her career. Dr. Baron's contributions to aerosol science as a researcher, author, and educator span more than 30 years. More information on the award and Dr. Baron's accomplishments are available at http://www.aaar.org/index2.cfm?section=Awards&content=David_Sinclair.



NIOSH-Approved Spirometry Training Program Changes

Two important program changes to the NIOSH Spirometry Training Program (<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/spirometry/>) will take effect January 1, 2009. First, a time limitation will be placed on the certificates awarded to students who successfully complete NIOSH-approved spirometry training. Second, NIOSH will begin reviewing and approving dedicated spirometry refresher training courses designed for technicians who have previously completed a NIOSH-approved spirometry course and are seeking recertification. For additional information contact Lu-Ann Beeckman-Wagner at lbb3@cdc.gov.

NIOSH, ACR to Hold Radiology Symposium in April

NIOSH and the American College of Radiology will jointly sponsor a Symposium on Radiology of the Pneumoconioses on April 24–27, 2009, in Chantilly, VA. The symposium is designed to provide training to radiologists and other physicians in the use of the International Labor Office (ILO) system for classifying chest radiographs for monitoring changes associated with the pneumoconioses. Trainees will have the opportunity to take the NIOSH B Reader certification or recertification examinations at the Symposium. More information is available at http://www.acr.org/SecondaryMainMenuCategories/MeetingsandEvents/Featured/Categories/acr_meetings/Pneumoconiosis042409.aspx.

NIOSH Fire Fighter Fatality Investigation and Prevention Program Seeks Public Input

NIOSH held a public stakeholders' meeting in Chicago, IL, on November 19 to seek input on the progress and strategic goals of the NIOSH Fire Fighter Fatality Investigation and Prevention Program. Meeting attendees included representatives from the International Association of Fire Fighters, International Association of Fire Chiefs, National Fallen Firefighters Foundation, National Fire Protection Association, Fire Department Safety Officers Association, United States Fire Administration, and National Institute of Standards and Technology. Written input on the program and draft strategic plan will be accepted until December 19 at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/review/public/063-A/>. NIOSH will consider all input received at the meeting and through the NIOSH Docket Office to identify modifications for the program and finalize the program's strategic plan..

NIOSH Group Recognized by the Performance America Consortium

The Performance America Consortium, a working group of federal, state, and local government agencies coordinated by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management, helps agencies measure and improve organizational effectiveness. Each year, the Consortium recognizes high-performing organizations based on organizational survey results. At the 2008 annual conference held on November 18, 2008, the NIOSH Hazard Evaluation and Technical Assistance Branch received an award for setting benchmark highs for "very small organizations" in the areas of Work Environment, Diversity, Teamwork, Supervision, Employee Involvement, Rewards & Recognition, and Employee Engagement. More information on the Performance America Consortium is available at <http://www.opm.gov/surveys/services/PerfAmConsortium.asp>.

NIOSH Hazardous Drug Document Provides Guidance to Mayo Clinic Workgroup

A recent article in the journal *Professional Safety* describes how the Hazardous Drug Workgroup at the Mayo Clinic used NIOSH guidance from the 2004 NIOSH document *Preventing Occupational Exposures to Antineoplastic and Other Hazardous Drugs in Health Care Settings* as part of its evaluation process of the medical center's practices for handling hazardous drugs. Author Joseph W. Klancher, MPH, CSP, says "the (NIOSH) guidance documents were a great help creating positive change in our organization." The complete article is available at <http://www.asse.org/professionalsafety/>. The NIOSH recommendations are available at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2004-165/>.

Partnership Examines Effectiveness of Interventions at Aircraft Manufacturing Plant

NIOSH is working with partners to evaluate occupational injury risks, implement intervention solutions, and evaluate the effectiveness of the interventions at a Sikorsky Aircraft Corporation helicopter manufacturing plant. Partners for the five-year research project include Sikorsky Aircraft Corporation and the International Brotherhood of Teamsters. More information about the project is available from Harlan Amandus at HAmandus@cdc.gov.

NIOSH Data Leads to Changes In OSHA's National Emphasis Program

In August 2008 the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) issued a directive to implement a revised National Emphasis Program (NEP) to reduce occupational exposures to lead, superseding the 2001 program (CPL 02-00-130). Significant changes in the directive include the utilization of data generated by NIOSH under the Adult Blood Lead Epidemiology and Surveillance (ABLES) Program for 2002 (<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/ABLES/ables.html>) to assist OSHA's field offices in determining industries at risk for lead exposure. Additionally, inspections will now be conducted in establishments where reported employee blood lead levels were at or above 25 µg/dL. The complete revised program is available at http://www.OSHA.gov/OshDoc/Directive_pdf/CPL_03-00-0009.pdf.

NIOSH Seeks Input on Hexavalent Chromium Criteria Document

NIOSH will hold a public stakeholders meeting January 22, 2009, at the NIOSH Robert A. Taft Laboratories in Cincinnati, OH, to seek input on the draft document, *NIOSH Criteria Document Update: Occupational Exposure to Hexavalent Chromium*. Persons wanting to provide oral comments at the meeting should notify the NIOSH Docket Office (nioshdocket@cdc.gov) no later than January 7, 2009. Written input on the document will also be accepted online until January 31, 2009. More information is available at <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2008/E8-24728.htm>.

NIOSH Science Blog: Your Comments Wanted

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

Diacetyl and Food Flavorings. What are the logistical sampling differences between the NIOSH and OSHA methods for diacetyl? What is on the horizon for diacetyl and food flavoring sampling? What are some general steps that can be taken to reduce exposure to workers handling diacetyl and other flavoring chemicals? http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/blog/nsb111008_diacetyl.html.

Fire Fighter Fatality Investigation and Prevention Program. How can NIOSH better reach and engage smaller fire departments. Are there more effective ways in which we can provide the information? Do fire service personnel in small and rural fire departments have unique needs? How can we work to better meet these needs? <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/blog/>

NORA Liaison Committee Public Meeting Announced for January

The next NORA Liaison Committee meeting, *Partnerships to Advance the National Occupational Research Agenda*, will be held January 22, 2009, in Washington, DC. Attendees can also participate online. Past meetings have afforded an opportunity for representatives of organizations with a national scope (employers, unions, professional associations, and others) to learn about the progress of NORA and to further enhance the success of NORA by identifying possible partnerships with each other or with NIOSH. Details on the meeting will be posted at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/whatsnew.html>. For more information or to preregister to attend in person or online, contact the NORA Coordinator noracoordinator@cdc.gov.

r2p Corner

NIOSH Partners to Develop a Light Emitting Diode Cap Lamp for Miners



NIOSH Pittsburgh Research Lab (PRL) entered into a partnership with EnerSys, a mining cap lamp manufacturing company, to develop a more effective [light emitting diode \(LED\)](#) cap lamp for miners. This collaborative effort is being undertaken to improve the safety of miners by researching the technological and human performance issues related to the use of currently available LED cap lamps. This effort will result in an LED cap lamp light that can be used successfully in areas containing smoke and or dust. More information is available from John Sammarco at jsammarco@cdc.gov.

The Following NIOSH Docket Items Are Currently Open for Public Comment:

Draft Strategic Plan for the NIOSH Fire Fighter Fatality Investigation and Prevention Program (FFFIPP) (NIOSH Docket Number 063-A). Comments accepted through 5pm EST, **December 19, 2008**. <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/review/public/063-a/>

Development Plan for Air-Fed Suit Respirator Performance Requirements (NIOSH Docket Number 148). Comments accepted through 5pm EST, **January 15, 2009**. <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/review/public/148/>

Powered Air-Purifying Respirator (PAPR) Discussion Topics (NIOSH Docket Number 008-A). Comments accepted through 5pm EST, **January 16, 2009**. <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/review/public/008-a/>

Revision of Open-Circuit, Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) End of Service Time Indicator (EOSTI) Performance Requirement (NIOSH Docket Number 034-A). Comments accepted through 5pm EST, **January 16, 2009**. <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/review/public/034-a/>

New Communication Products

Three new NIOSH Mining Publications Are Available:

TN 532: Technology News 532—Collapsible Drill Steel Enclosure for Reducing Roof Bolting Machine Drilling Noise (September 2008, NIOSH Pub. No. 2008-146)

NIOSH has developed a drill steel enclosure to reduce noise generated by the Roof Bolting Machine. <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/mining/pubs/pubreference/outputid3036.htm>

TN 531: Technology News 531—Engineering Controls for Reducing Continuous Mining Machine Noise (September 2008, NIOSH Pub. No. 2008-145)

NIOSH has developed two engineering noise controls to reduce noise generated by the CMM conveyor system. <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/mining/pubs/pubreference/outputid3021.htm>

IC 9505: Age Awareness Training for Miners (June 2008, NIOSH Pub. No. 2008-133)

This document and accompanying training curriculum provides trainers and health and safety professionals with information and resources to address changes in a normal aging workforce. <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/mining/pubs/pubreference/outputid2701.htm>

Three new Fire Fighter Fatality Investigation Reports are available:

A Volunteer Mutual Aid Captain and Fire Fighter Die in a Remodeled Residential Structure Fire—Texas (F2007-29)

<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/fire/reports/face200729.html>

Four Career Fire Fighters Injured While Providing Interior Exposure Protection at a Row House Fire—District of Columbia (F2007-35) <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/fire/reports/face200735.html>

Career Fire Fighter Dies and Captain is Injured During a Civilian Rescue Attempt at a Residential Structure Fire—Georgia (F2007-16) <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/fire/reports/face200716.html>

Three New NIOSH Health and Safety Web Topic Pages: Preventing Stings and Bites

The following Web pages provide information for employers to educate their workers about risk of exposure to insects, scorpions, spiders, or snakes; how to prevent and protect themselves from stings and bites; and what to do if stung or bitten.

Insects and Scorpions <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/insects/>

Venomous Spiders <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/spiders/>

Venomous Snakes <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/snakes/>

Three New Health Hazard Evaluation Reports Now Available

Investigators evaluated exposures to carbon monoxide (CO) and metals at a state vehicle maintenance garage. Recommendations were made that vehicles not be permitted to idle in the garage and that garage doors be kept open and exhaust fans used to reduce CO levels when vehicles are running. Investigators also recommended that the bench grinder and chain saw sharpener workbench surfaces be cleaned each day after use and that employees wash hands before eating, drinking, or smoking to prevent ingestion of lead and other metal contaminants.

<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/hhe/reports/pdfs/2006-0336-3059.pdf>

Investigators evaluated exposures to silica, volatile organic compounds, and dry powders at a pottery shop. Recommendations were made for local exhaust ventilation to be installed in high dust-generating task areas and that the central building ventilation improved. Investigators also recommended that employees wear respirators when doing high dust generating tasks.

<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/hhe/reports/pdfs/2007-0127-3068.pdf>

Investigators evaluated heat stress, noise, and musculoskeletal hazards at an automotive parts manufacturing facility. Recommendations were made to reduce heat stress for loaders and unloaders, such as positioning fans above those workstations, allowing workers to rest completely after loading and unloading parts, and having employees drink plenty of fluids. Investigators also recommended changes to reduce ergonomic stressors for certain jobs.

<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/hhe/reports/pdfs/2003-0268-3065.pdf>

Call for Abstracts

2009 Emergency Nurses Association Annual Conference—Deadline January 15, 2009

October 7–10, 2009, Baltimore, MD (<http://www.ena.org/research/abstracts/>)

American Occupational Health Conference 2009—Deadline January 31, 2009

April 26–29, 2009, San Diego, CA. Call for academic abstracts submissions (<http://aohc2009.abstractcentral.com>)

American Association of Occupational Health Nurses 2009 Symposium and Expo—Deadline March 1, 2009

April 17–23, 2009, Orlando, FL. Call for poster presentation submissions (<http://www.aohn.org/education/symposium-expo/cfp/index.cfm>)

19th International Symposium on Shiftwork and Working Time—Deadline February 28, 2009

August 2–6, 2009, Venezia, Italy. Call for abstract submissions (<http://www.shiftwork2009.it>)

Upcoming Conferences

International Roofing Expo

February 3–5, 2009, Las Vegas, NV (<http://www.theroofingexpo.com>)

1st Annual Voluntary Protection Program Association for Construction (VPPAC) Conference

February 5–7, 2009, Las Vegas, NV (www.vppac.org/conference)

International Conference on Road Safety at Work

February 16–18, 2009, Washington, DC (<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/programs/twu/global/>)

19th Annual Construction Safety Conference & Expo—Look for us!

February 17–19, 2009, Rosemont, IL (<http://www.buildsafe.org/Conference/2008/index.html>)

2009 Society of Manufacturing Engineers (SME) Annual Meeting and Colorado Mining Association (CMA) 111th Annual National Western Mining Conference

February 22–25, 2009, Denver, CO (<http://www.smenet.org/>)

Emergency Nurses Association Leadership Conference

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

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>)

American Association of Occupational Health Nurses 2009 Symposium and Expo

April 17–23, 2009, Orlando, FL (<http://www.aaohn.org/education/symposium-expo/cfp/index.cfm>)

Fire Department Instructors Conference (FDIC) 2009

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

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

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

2009 Nanotech Conference & Exposition

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

American Industrial Hygiene Conference and Expo (AIHce)—Look for us!

May 30–June 4, 2009, Toronto, Ontario (<http://www.aiha.org/aihce09/plan/>)

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

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

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

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

Word of the Month

Light Emitting Diode (LED) Light Emitting Diode (LED)—An efficient source of electrical lighting, typically lasting 50,000 to 100,000 hours.

[NIOSH eNews on the Web: www.cdc.gov/niosh/enews/](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/enews/)

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