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### **From the Director's Desk**

**--Christine M. Branche, Ph.D., Acting Director, NIOSH  
July eNews 2009**

## **Going Green: Safe and Healthy Jobs**

[Green](#) jobs—good for the environment, good for the economy. But are green jobs good for workers? The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) and its partners recently launched the Going Green: Safe and Healthy Jobs initiative to make sure that green jobs are good for workers by integrating worker safety and health into "green jobs" and environmental sustainability.

Green jobs, which have been defined broadly as jobs that help improve the environment and enhance sustainability, offer opportunities as well as challenges for workers. Examples of green jobs include installation and maintenance of solar panels and generators; construction and maintenance of wind energy turbines; jobs related to recycling; jobs related to the manufacture of green products; and jobs where green products are used in traditional fields such as agriculture, healthcare, and the service sector. In some instances, the hazards to workers may be similar to those in established industries. For example, the safety and health issues involved in building wind turbines may be similar to those for constructing a multistory building. However, some green and sustainable practices may pose new health concerns for workers, such as the introduction of "green" substitutes for cleaning solvents (see NIOSH blog "Multifaceted Approach to Assess Indoor Environmental Quality" at <https://blogs.cdc.gov/niosh-science-blog/2009/04/09/indoor/>).

In developing a green economy in the United States, including efforts such as the [American Recovery and Reinvestment Act \(ARRA\)](#), new jobs are being created in industries such as [energy](#), [utilities](#), [construction](#),

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and [manufacturing](#). The new focus, coupled with the move in the U.S. toward energy efficiency and more environmentally friendly practices known as environmental sustainability, is resulting in changes to traditional jobs and the creation of new kinds of occupations. As we make technological advances in industry, we need to remain vigilant in protecting workers against emerging hazards. These changes may also present us with the opportunity to eliminate hazards through planning, organization, and engineering—a concept known at NIOSH as [Prevention through Design \(PtD\)](#).

As the Nation acts quickly to train workers for new occupations and new ways of working, we have unprecedented opportunities:

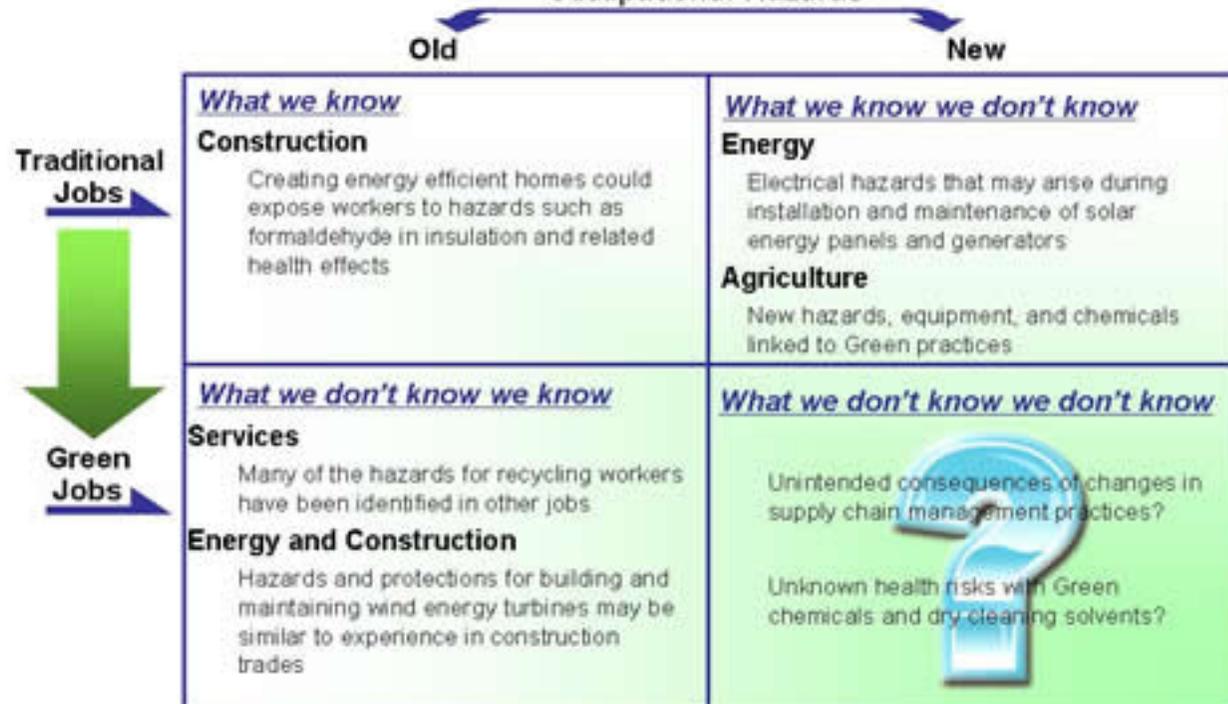
- to enhance the safety and health protection of the American workforce.
- to expand and apply our knowledge in occupational safety and health to new workplaces, processes, and products being formed each day.
- to ensure the training and re-training of the workforce that will fill these new jobs include relevant safety and health information.

An upcoming event in NIOSH's new initiative is the *Making Green Jobs Safer* workshop, which will be held from December 14 to 16, 2009, in Washington, DC. The workshop will bring together invited participants and a limited number of members of the public to help frame the issues around incorporating occupational safety and health into green and sustainability efforts.

I invite you to study our suggested framework for considering green jobs and occupational hazards, presented below. For additional perspectives on making green jobs safer, please read our forthcoming issue of *PtD In Motion*, the newsletter of the Prevention through Design initiative, which will be posted soon on the Going Green webpage.

I also invite you to read our current NIOSH Science Blog, in which I further discuss an important aspect of our initiative—the need to develop a working definition of green jobs that we can all share. The NIOSH Science Blog can be found at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/blog/>.

## Framework for Considering Green Jobs and Occupational Hazards



For more information, visit the NIOSH topic page “Going Green: Safe and Healthy Jobs” at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/greenjobs/>.

### White House Chief of Staff Highlights Importance of Teen Job Safety

The importance of keeping young workers safe on the job—during the summer employment season and all year long—was highlighted in a personal anecdote by White House Chief of Staff Rahm Emanuel in a May 17 commencement address at George Washington University: "I was working as a meatcutter and sliced my finger deeply and not being — being 17, went swimming in Lake Michigan, ended up—it was prom night; that’s a legitimate thing to do—ended up with five blood infections, two bone infections, gangrene, and a 105

fever, and in a hospital for two months, and for the first 96 hours I battled between life and death. ...[W]hat started as a minor mishap turned into a life-threatening infection." See "Transcript of Rahm Emanuel's Commencement address" at <http://blogs.gwhatchet.com/newsroom/2009/05/17/transcript-of-rahm-emanuels-commencement-address/>. NIOSH has developed materials that can be used by business, labor, and educators to prevent work-related injuries and illnesses among youths. <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/youth/>.

## **NIOSH Scientists, Colleagues Publish Study on Brain Cancers in Farmers**

An epidemiological study by NIOSH scientists and colleagues examining the incidence of brain cancer in farmers was published in the June issue of the American Journal of Epidemiology. Building on previous research, the study reported on statistical risks for brain cancer in regard to exposures associated with certain farm activities. The abstract for the article "Exposure to Farm Crops, Livestock, and Farm Tasks and Risk of Glioma: The Upper Midwest Health Study" (Ruder et al. [2009] Am J Epidemiol (169):1479–1491) is available at <http://aje.oxfordjournals.org/cgi/content/abstract/169/12/1479>.

Additional information on the Upper Midwest Health Study is available on the NIOSH topic page: Agriculture. <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/agriculture/UMHS.html>.

## **Scientists Note Importance of Understanding Nano/Bio Interfaces**

An article in the June issue of *Nature Materials* explains the importance of studying and understanding nano/bio interfaces, or the complex biological and biochemical interactions that occur when nanoparticles first come into contact with the body. With this knowledge, scientists can better predict potential health effects of nanomaterials and help guide their safe use. Dr. Vincent Castranova of NIOSH served as a co-author of the article "Understanding Biophysicochemical Interactions at the Nano–Bio Interface" (Nel et al. [2009] *Nature Materials* (8):543–557), which discusses several types of interactions that can occur, the features of the interactions, and the potential effects on proteins, membranes, DNA, cells, and other fundamental components of the body. <http://www.nature.com/nmat/journal/v8/n7/full/nmat2442.html>.

## **Protect Your Family From Asbestos-Contaminated Vermiculite Insulation**

In June 2009, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced its determination that a public health emergency exists at the Libby asbestos site in northwest Montana, where mining and processing of asbestos-contaminated vermiculite has led to extensive contamination and asbestos-related disease in the community (<http://www.hhs.gov/news/press/2009pres/06/20090617b.html>). EPA is launching a public awareness campaign to notify the public, including individuals whose jobs routinely put them in attic spaces, about the potential for vermiculite insulation to be contaminated with asbestos fibers. A new EPA guidance document, targeted for the general public, is available at <http://www.epa.gov/asbestos/pubs/verm.html>.

## **NIOSH Looking for Facilities to Provide Access for Occupational Safety and Health Research**

Are you in the manufacturing or construction industry and concerned about workplace safety and health? NIOSH's Industry Wide Studies Branch is in need of partners with facilities willing to provide site access for conducting exposure assessment studies. Interested companies should contact the listed scientific contact for more information.

For 2,2"-dithiobisbenzanilide (CAS# 135-57-9, DTBBA, a plasticizer), contact [Steve Wurzelbacher](#) (513-841-4322).

For 2-methoxy-4-nitroaniline (CAS# 97-52-9, 2M4Na, a dye), contact [Steve Wurzelbacher](#) (513-841-4322).

For diacetyl in food production (CAS# 431-03-8), contact [Brian Curwin](#) (513-841-4432).

For manganese compounds in welding fumes, contact [Kevin Hanley](#) (513-841-4113).

## **August 1, 2009-Last Day to Submit "Safe in Sound" Award Nominations**

NIOSH and the National Hearing Conservation Association are accepting nominations for the 2010 "Safe in Sound" award, which is given to companies or organizations that exemplify excellence in hearing loss prevention. Nominations will be accepted until August 1, 2009. Additional information and submission details can be found at <http://www.safeinsound.us>.

## **Meeting Focuses on Protecting Workers in Agriculture**

Mark your calendars! The Be Safe, Be Profitable: Protecting Workers in Agriculture Conference will be held January 27–28, 2010, in Dallas/Fort Worth, Texas. Co-organized by the Agricultural Safety and Health Council of America and NIOSH, the conference will unite leaders of agricultural organizations and agribusinesses with safety practitioners, researchers, producers, and workers. For more information go to [www.ashca.com](http://www.ashca.com).

### **Federal Register Notice**

NIOSH will evaluate a petition to designate a class of employees from the Norton Company, Worcester, Massachusetts, for inclusion in the Special Exposure Cohort under the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act. <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2009/E9-13662.htm>.

### **Public Meeting on Proposal to Establish Approval Criteria for Personal Dust Monitor**

NIOSH and the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) will hold a public hearing July 8 on a proposal to establish criteria for the approval of a new type of device, the continuous personal dust monitor, for use in measuring exposure to respirable dust in underground coal mines. The device holds promise for advancing efforts to prevent coal workers' pneumoconiosis, also known as black lung disease. <http://www.msha.gov/REGS/FEDREG/PROPOSED/2009Prop/E9-13585.asp>.

### **Global Happenings - EPINet Training Available in Spanish**

NIOSH researcher Walter Alarcon provided on-hands training to 15 epidemiologists, data managers, and government officials from several institutions of the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labor, and the university in Maracay, Aragua State, Venezuela, in the use of EPINet in Spanish. The training is based on a computer program called EPINet developed by the University of Virginia. NIOSH collaborated in the review and adaptation of the Spanish version. This two-day training is a component of the WHO/PAHO/NIOSH/IAES joint project to reduce occupational exposures to bloodborne pathogens among healthcare workers in Latin America. An advanced EPINet training is being planned for September 2009 as requested by the cooperating institutions in Venezuela. Contact Maria Lioce-Mata [mliocemata@cdc.gov](mailto:mliocemata@cdc.gov) for more information.

### **CSTE Announces Approved Position Statements and New**

## Recommendations

The Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists (CSTE) approved position statements on lead ([09-OH-02](#)), acute pesticide poisoning ([09-OH-01](#)), and silicosis ([09-OH-03](#)) during its 2009 CSTE Annual Conference. CSTE recommended a standardized definition for an elevated blood lead level (BLL). This definition includes a newly revised case definition for elevated BLL in adults (equal or greater than 10 micrograms/deciliter) and a recommendation that laboratories report *all* blood lead test results, not just ones defined as elevated. [http://www.cste.org/dnn/Portals/0/activeforums\\_Attach/09-OH-03\\_Lead2.doc](http://www.cste.org/dnn/Portals/0/activeforums_Attach/09-OH-03_Lead2.doc).

## Awards

NIOSH congratulates the following individuals:

Authors of "Assessing Total Fungal Concentrations on Commercial Passenger Aircraft Using Mixed-Effects Modeling" (McKernan et al. [2008] JOEH 5(1):48–58) received the Best Paper Award for 2008 by the American Industrial Hygiene Association Indoor Environmental Quality (IEQ) Committee and was published in the Journal of Occupational and Environmental Hygiene.



*Kenneth Wallingford and Lauralynn Taylor McKernan of NIOSH accept the award on behalf of the winning paper's authors.*

James Couch received the AIHA 2008 Outstanding Project Team Award in recognition of outstanding service

and dedication to the development of the AIHA publication, *Guideline on Occupational Exposure Reconstruction*.



## **NIOSH Seeks Comments on the Following:**

### **Prevention Through Design Plan for the National Initiative**

NIOSH is requesting comment on the draft *NIOSH Technical Report: Prevention through Design Plan*.  
Deadline for comments is August 22, 2009. <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/review/public/160/>.

### **Quality Assurance Requirements for Respirators**

NIOSH is requesting comment on the proposed rulemaking on *Quality Assurance Requirements for Respirators*. The comment period has been extended through October 9, 2009.  
<http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2009/E9-11947.htm>.

### **Three New Health Hazard Evaluation (HHE) Reports Now Available**

The HHE Program performed an ergonomic evaluation at a steel grating manufacturing

plant. Investigators recommended that management change work surface heights, implement work practice changes, and perform routine maintenance on all equipment. Investigators also recommended that employees take the time to work safely and become involved in the health and safety committee.



<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/hhe/reports/pdfs/2008-0074-3081.pdf>

The HHE Program evaluated physical and mental health symptoms among police department personnel 15 months after Hurricane Katrina; NIOSH conducted a similar survey with this population 2 months after Hurricane Katrina. Investigators recommended that management continue to encourage personnel with ongoing symptoms to seek follow-up care with a healthcare provider and implement an employee assistance program for those with ongoing needs for psychological support. It was also recommended that management obtain pre- and post-exposure medical screening for personnel involved in disaster response.

<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/hhe/reports/pdfs/2007-0067-3076.pdf>

The HHE Program evaluated hospital employees' potential exposure to ultraviolet wavelength C (UV-C) radiation in orthopedic operating rooms. Investigators recommended that UV-C lamp fixtures be removed from operating rooms to prevent UV-C exposure during surgeries. Since the last HHE site visit, the hospital has stopped using UV lamps for intraoperative infection control and moved the orthopedic operating room suite into an area equipped with laminar airflow, an alternative form of infection control technology.

<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/hhe/reports/pdfs/2007-0257-3082.pdf>

## **Morbidity and Mortality @Work**

### **Employment Distribution of Workers Without Disabilities and With Disabilities by NORA sector, May 2009**

Like all other workers, workers with disabilities are at risk of experiencing a work-related injury or illness. Workers with disabilities, however, may be at increased risk on the job due to characteristics of their disabilities such as limited mobility, limited awareness of their surroundings due to sensory deficits, or, in the case of individuals with developmental or other cognitive disabilities, lack of awareness of danger, difficulties communicating, and other factors. See the NIOSH workers with developmental disabilities web page for more information <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/wdd/>. An estimated 5.3 million persons with disabilities were employed in May, representing about 4% of total employment. Workers with disabilities were distributed among National Occupational Research Agenda (NORA) industry sectors in percentages similar to those workers without disabilities. (Source: Current population Survey). For more details, see the chart at

<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/enews/enewsv7n2chart.html>.

## News from Our Partners

### Dramatic New Video From the CSB

The U.S. Chemical Safety Board (CSB) has released a 20-minute safety video, *Emergency Preparedness: Findings From CSB Accident Investigations*. This video dramatically demonstrates the need for emergency response agencies, companies, and communities to work closely together to prepare for the kinds of tragic chemical accidents the CSB has investigated over the past decade. The video is available online at <http://www.csb.gov/videoroom/detail.aspx?vid=29> and on [YouTube](#).

### Massachusetts Committed to Addressing Work-Related Asthma

Asthma is a significant and growing public health problem in Massachusetts. According to a recent analysis of data, nearly 10% of adults reported a current diagnosis in 2007. Of these, 40% reported that their asthma was either caused or aggravated by exposures at work. As part of a concerted effort to address asthma throughout the state, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health recently released two documents: *The Burden of Asthma in Massachusetts* and a *Strategic Plan for Asthma in Massachusetts 2009–2014*. Both documents contain sections devoted to work-related asthma and can be found at [www.mass.gov/dph/asthma](http://www.mass.gov/dph/asthma).

### Worker Genetic Susceptibility to Mutagenic Risk

Researchers at the University of Illinois at Chicago are working to identify workers who, due to their genetic background, might be at increased risk of cancer from their workplace exposures to vinyl chloride. Epidemiologic results from Dr. Paul Brandt-Rauf indicate genetic variation in the ability to detoxify these exposures, and that the genetically determined ability to repair the DNA damage from such exposures contributes significantly to the workers' risk. These findings can potentially lead to methods for improving prevention. For more information, please contact Paul Brandt-Rauf, DPH, MD, DSCE, at [pwb1@uic.edu](mailto:pwb1@uic.edu).

### R2p corner

### Research to Practice Launches New Website



The NIOSH Office of Technology Transfer has launched a new research to practice (r2p) website, <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/r2p/>. Learn about r2p across NIOSH, r2p success stories, and partnership opportunities and resources. The site will be updated as new NIOSH licensing and partnership opportunities become available for collaboration on occupational safety and health research. For additional information about r2p, please email [researchtopractice@cdc.gov](mailto:researchtopractice@cdc.gov) or call 513-533-8662.

## NORA

### 2011 NORA Symposium Announced!

The next National Occupational Research Agenda (NORA) Symposium is planned for the spring of 2011 in Washington, DC. It will mark the 15th anniversary of NORA and the 40th anniversary of the creation of NIOSH. A NORA symposium is held every few years to celebrate successes and work toward future achievements (see the "Historical Information" section of the NORA Web site: [www.cdc.gov/niosh/nora](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/nora)). Contact the NORA coordinator ([noracoordinator@cdc.gov](mailto:noracoordinator@cdc.gov)) with your suggestions for a great NORA symposium.



## NIOSH Science Blog

### Secondhand Smoke and Casino Dealers

Simply working in a casino does not mean dealers must gamble with their health. There is nothing lucky about developing a respiratory illness, lung cancer, or heart disease—especially if you are a healthy nonsmoker. Read more and comment at <https://blogs.cdc.gov/niosh-science-blog/2009/06/16/smoke/>.

### Going Green: Safe and Healthy Jobs

Are green jobs good for workers? Read about the new NIOSH Going Green initiative and provide input on upcoming efforts on the NIOSH Science Blog. Read more and comment at <https://blogs.cdc.gov/niosh-science-blog/2009/07/01/green/>.

## Communication Products

## Healthcare and Social Assistance Fact Sheet Now Available Online

This new fact sheet from the National Occupational Research Agenda (NORA) Healthcare and Social Assistance Program includes safety and health risks faced by workers in this sector and recommendations to eliminate occupational diseases, injuries, and fatalities through a focused program of research and prevention. This is the first of three documents. <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2009-149/>

### NIOSH has recently released the following Fire Fighter Fatality Investigation Reports:

Volunteer Fire Fighter Dies While Lost in Residential Structure Fire—Alabama

<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/fire/reports/face200834.html>

Career Fire Fighter Fatally Injured When Struck in the Head by the Boom of an Aerial Platform—Louisiana

<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/fire/reports/face200833.html>

Career Fire Fighter Dies in Fall From Roof at Apartment Building Fire—New York

<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/fire/reports/face200719.html>

### More...

To see other new NIOSH communication products, including documents and new and updated topic pages, go to the NIOSH “What’s New” page. <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/whatsnew/>

### Call for Abstracts

#### American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine: 2010 American Occupational Health Conference

Call for session proposals and scientific abstracts. Deadline, August 16.

<http://aohc2010.abstractcentral.com/>

#### American Industrial Hygiene Association: American Industrial Hygiene Conference and Exposition 2010

Call for Professional Development Course Proposals. Deadline August 15.

<http://www.aiha.org/courseapps/Instructions.htm>

## Upcoming Conferences

A comprehensive list of upcoming conferences can be found at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/exhibits.html>.

## Word of the Month

**Green** – concerned with or supporting environmentalism or tending to preserve environmental quality (as by being recyclable, biodegradable, or nonpolluting) – (Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary).

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