HHE Health Hazard Evaluation Program

A GUIDE FOR OSHA

Learn how our expertise in field evaluations can complement your work

Department of Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health

HHE Health Hazard Evaluation Program

Do you know that the **NIOSH Health Hazard Evaluation (HHE) Program** and **OSHA** have complementary services that address occupational safety and health issues and help create healthy workplaces?

What is the HHE Program?

We respond to requests to evaluate potential health hazards in workplaces throughout the United States. Requests can come from employers, unions, or employees at a facility. Or, you can request an HHE. Our staff of about 40 includes occupational health physicians, epidemiologists, industrial hygienists, psychologists, and health communicators who work together in a team customized to respond to each request. Some staff are fluent in Spanish.

The HHE Program has similarities to the OSHA Consultation Program, but should be considered for novel hazards or when a team involving medical professionals is needed.

What does the HHE Program do?

Our investigators assess background information about the concern to decide if a field investigation is needed. We may interview or survey workers, do medical tests, measure exposures, evaluate exposure controls, and make recommendation for reducing or eliminating hazards. Our final report is shared with the employer and employees at the workplace and with OSHA. In some cases, we are able to provide assistance without a field investigation. Although we have no enforcement authority, we have good evidence that our recommendations help create healthier workplaces.

When should you use the HHE Program as a resource?

Consider referring others to our program or requesting an HHE when:

- Exposures to unregulated agents are occurring.

- Current conditions and exposures are causing health effects among employees, even when exposures are below the permissible exposure limit.
- The situation represents an emerging hazard with exposures and health effects that are not well understood.
- New methods need to be developed to accurately assess the workplace environment.
- The effectiveness of control strategies needs to be evaluated.

Reports from completed HHEs may be helpful when you encounter an issue unfamiliar to you. Search our report repository at:
http://www2a.cdc.gov/hhe/search.asp

How and when should an HHE request be made?

Use our online request form or print out a paper form at:
http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/hhe/request.html

You can:

- Submit a request. It is advisable to call us first.
- Recommend that an employer request an HHE.
- Encourage employees or unions at a workplace to request an HHE.

If you are in a compliance action, an HHE request would be appropriate when the case is closed. However, you can consider requiring the employer to request an HHE as part of a settlement agreement.

We are happy to discuss specific situations with you. We can be reached at **513-841-4382** or **HHERequestHelp@cdc.gov**. For situations that solely involve respiratory health concerns, we may also be contacted at **800–232–2114**.

Delivering on the Nation's promise: safety and health at work for all people through research and prevention

To receive NIOSH documents or more information about occupational safety and health topics, contact NIOSH at

1–800–CDC–INFO (1–800–232–4636)
TTY: 1–888–232–6348
E-mail: cdcinfo@cdc.gov

or visit the NIOSH Web site at **www.cdc.gov/niosh**.

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