

SAFETY / OSHA UPDATE

A Newsletter from High Safety Consulting Services, Ltd.

Information on Safety & Health in Your Workplace



OXYGEN IS NOT FLAMMABLE!

I had the occasion to review my daughter's science paper in which she summarized a lab they did in class. Her conclusions included "oxygen is a very flammable gas". I pointed out that this was incorrect. I explained that oxygen is a catalyst which accelerates the combustion process, but oxygen in and of itself is classified as a non-flammable gas (DOT division 2.2). That is, oxygen alone does not readily burn. Oxygen is needed for the combustion process to occur. She had created oxygen in class and had inserted an ignited wooden stick into the oxygen-enriched environment and it burst into flame. It would be reasonable to assume that in fact oxygen is flammable from this activity. She was now in a quandary as to what to do. She could change her paper to be correct and have the science teacher mark it wrong...or she could go with what she was told in class: oxygen is flammable. She decided to "go with the flow" and she did just fine on her lab report. This scenario is perhaps an example of how easily we can reach the wrong conclusion based on readily observed facts. The lab activity led to a reasonable conclusion regarding cause and effect which was incorrect. How many times do we make the same mistake in our own lives or professions? How can we know for sure if the effect we observe relates to a specific cause? If the accident rate increases, does it mean people aren't practicing safe work procedures? If someone becomes ill after working with a chemical substance, is the illness caused by the chemical exposure?

2005 COURSE SCHEDULE IS NOW AVAILABLE

I am really excited about our 2005 course schedule. This year we have partnered with High Industries, Inc. corporate safety and health department to offer more training options. Both High Industries and High Safety Personnel will be presenting courses in 2005. We also made some significant changes in our course pricing structure to bring you more for less. (High Industries, Inc. employees may sign-up for these programs through the safety and health department at no cost). Some of the programs we will be offering include an instructor-trainer program for overhead crane operations, Power press safety and guarding (Presented by Rockford Machine Guarding), defensive driving and many more. Our printed catalog will be out soon...until then, a complete listing is available at: <http://www.highsafety.com/hsl/resources/courses/>

KOSH CENTER

As some of you know the KOSH center administration has changed hands and is now administered by Indiana University of Pennsylvania (I.U.P.). If you are an OSHA-instructor, and had your instructor's course through KOSH (with me or others), you will need to send requests for student cards to Kathy McCurdy at IUP. If you need the contact information, send us an e-mail or call.

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SELECTING A LABORATORY

Approximately 50% of our business is involved in the assessment of air quality by evaluating biological or chemical exposures in various environments. We use a number of different labs for the analysis of samples based on the sample type. Selection of a lab involves much more than determining the lowest prices. We select labs based on their reliability, consistency, service offerings and expertise. First and foremost, the lab must be accredited for the type of work being performed. Accreditation by the American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA) for the specific analysis is an absolute must! Labs without proper accreditation exist and are used by many – likely without the realization that the lab is not accredited for the analysis being performed.

How do you determine if a lab meets the quality requirements necessary for accreditation? Request a copy of both pages of their AIHA accreditation certificate. This certificate will list which analyses the lab has been accredited to perform and the methods for each. These are broken down as 1) IHLAP – organics, inorganics and asbestos; 2) ELLAP – environmental samples; 3) EMLAP – fungal or bacterial; 4) FOODLAP – food analyses. So not only should the lab be AIHA accredited, but the accreditation must be of the proper type for the samples being collected.

SECURITY OF HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

The DOT security regulations for the handling of hazardous materials are in place and if you are covered by these rules, you should be up to speed with your security plan and training of Hazmat employees. A security plan is required (by September, 2003) if you transport or offer for transport any of the following: 1) Class 7 Radioactive, 2) more than 55 lbs. of Division 1.1 to 1.3 explosives, 3) hazard zone A inhalation hazard in quantity of 1 liter or more, 4) bulk packaging of 3,500 gallons of liquid or gas of a hazardous material or more than 13.24 cubic meters of a solid hazmat, 5) 5000 lbs. of non-bulk packaged hazardous materials for which a placard is required, 6) a select agent or toxic regulated by the centers for disease control (CDC), or 7) a quantity of hazardous material that requires placards. The last requirement pulls many companies under the plan requirement. If you are covered, you must have a plan and you must train your employees on the plan.

Even if you are not required to have a plan, you must still train your employees on general security awareness if you are defined as a hazmat employer by DOT and have hazmat employees – a person who is employed by a hazmat employer and directly affects hazmat transportation safety including those individuals involved in loading, unloading or handling a hazmat, testing, repairing, modifying, marking or representing packages as qualified for hazmat transportation or transporting or overseeing the transport of hazardous materials. If you need only do general security training, DOT has a great audio-visual program on their website that can be downloaded for employee training. See: http://hazmat.dot.gov/hmt_security.htm (Six links from the top.)

HEXAVALENT CHROMIUM EXPOSURES

OSHA is proposing to lower the permissible exposure limit (PEL) for hexavalent chromium and for all CrVI compounds from 52 ug/m³ to 1 ug/m³ of CrVI per cubic meter of air as an 8-hour time weighted average. The proposed rule also includes provisions for employee protection similar to other chemical standards (Lead, Benzene, etc.) Hexavalent chromium (CrVI) compounds are used in the chemical industry in pigments, metal plating, and chemical synthesis as ingredients and catalysts. CrVI can also be produced when welding on stainless steel or CrVI-painted surfaces. The major health effects associated with exposure to CrVI include lung cancer, asthma, nasal septum ulcerations and perforations, skin ulcerations (or chrome holes), and allergic and irritant contact dermatitis. If you have a potential for Cr-VI exposures, you may want to have them evaluated now before this law is implemented. Curt Wittman, MS, CIH or Lisa Krug, BS can assist you with these assessments.

GIVE YOUR EMPLOYEES A HOLIDAY GIFT FROM THE HEART

With the holidays around the corner, you might consider taking advantage of our limited time offer on Automatic External Defibrillators (AED's). From now until the end of the year, we are offering you an opportunity to make your facility "Heart Safe". Heart disease is the number one killer of Americans, and AED's can make the difference between life and death for your employees. The device is completely safe, very easy to use, and helps by shocking the heart back into a normal rhythm. Most companies that don't have one, have a "reason" for not providing this live-saving device in their workplace. The reason may be cost, liability or perceptions that it isn't needed. None of these are valid reasons to risk the life of workers or yourself!

For every minute that an AED is not applied, the probability of survival goes down by 7-10% for someone in cardiac arrest. Since most EMS units can not respond faster than 10 minutes, the probability of survival goes from "good"

to “no chance” -- (consider the time to place the call, for EMS to be dispatched and respond, reach the patient and apply the device). We have a few stock units which are valued in our inventory at \$2250 (our cost) with a list price of \$2995. Until the year end, we will make these available for \$1895 each! - An \$1100 savings from list price. In addition, we will include a free response bag (valued at \$139!). We only have a few of these units remaining.

These are NOT the lowest priced units on the market. In fact, the lowest priced unit on the market was just recalled for failure to shock and the company has gone into chapter 11 – You get what you pay for! For more information on this opportunity call Kevin Keith at 877-285-1129.

UPCOMING TRAINING PROGRAMS presented by HSCSL:

Rough Terrain Forklift Course (December 8, 2004) This ½ day program will be offered through Associated Builders & Contractors (ABC) Keystone Chapter. Call them at (717) 653-8106 or visit their website www.abckeystone.org to register.

Electric and Arc Blast Seminar (February 17, 2005) This lunch-time seminar is being presented by Steve High and offered by the Lancaster County Industrial Safety Council. Contact Craig Schroll at (717) 354-2411 or Craig@FIRECON.com for more information.

Risk Allocation Presentation (March 17, 2005 **OR** April 21, 2005) Steve High will be presenting in “The Big Easy” (New Orleans) for this event sponsored by Captive Resources. Contact Andy Johnson of Captive Resources at 847-879-2371 or ajohnson@captiveresources.com for more information.

Safety and the Bottom Line (May 10, 2005) This presentation by Steve High will be held as part of the Bureau of Worker’s Compensation Conference at the Hershey Convention Center in Hershey, PA. Contact them at (717) 783-5421 for more information.

NOTE: All of our prior newsletters are archived on our website under the “Contact Us” Tab

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