

SAFETY / OSHA UPDATE

A Newsletter from High Safety Consulting Services, Ltd.

Information on Safety & Health in Your Workplace



October - 2003

STARS AWARDED!

I had the recent opportunity to attend our sister organization's Voluntary Protection Program (VPP) STAR ceremony at High Steel Structures, Inc. The audit process re-affirmed the organization's commitment to occupational safety and health with the re-certification as a STAR site. Currently there are only 652 companies in the US that have received this award from the OSHA agency. The future participation requirements for VPP are under review by the agency. Mr. Henshaw (OSHA Head) wants to see the program expand to 8000 sites. The current requirement is that the organization must operate below the BLS national statistics for their industry in order to be eligible for auditing. In order to make the program more accessible, the current proposal is to allow applicants to have one of the past three years below the national average. The argument for this is normal statistical variation. The argument against this is that it lowers the bar.

Since small company statistics vary more significantly than larger organizations this might be a viable consideration for some smaller companies. My thought: Take an average of the national statistics over the past three years and compare this to the average for the company over the same period. If the average for the three years is below the national average for three years or if the most recent results are below the national average, the company should be permitted to participate in the review process. Small company statistics could be evaluated for statistical variation to determine if significance in the variation can be attributed to chance or an actual change.

Another approach is to create several levels of recognition (similar to the TRY or Merit Recognition). Jack Womer of our group used to

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participate in VPP STAR Auditing while he was with OSHA and can provide some direction to companies considering this endeavor.

MOLD CONTROL

The most important aspect of controlling mold is preventing water intrusion into your facility. Water can be from various sources from sweating pipes to improper drainage provisions. Once water has damaged materials, dry it out or remove it fast. If removed in 24-48 hours mold growth is not likely to occur. We are finding a lot of companies cleaning mold with bleach. There is limited information that demonstrates that bleach is effective. The best product for mold control is quaternary ammonia (not household ammonia).

Question: What's the difference between fungus, mold, and mildew?

Answer: Nothing. They all terms used to describe the same thing. Fungi is the proper scientific term for the common term 'mold' and mildew is what many people call a fungal growth in a bathroom especially when it involves discoloration.

CHARGE!

Still missing an Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) on your wall?

Suggestion: Develop a communication piece that will explain to the family of the deceased employee why the company decided not to make a one-time investment of less than \$3000 in a device that could have saved their life. Every minute that passes without defibrillation while someone is in cardiac arrest results in a 10% reduction in survivability. Typical EMS response time from call to AED application: 10 minutes (minimum) - You do the math. OSHA recommends them in the workplace. The American Heart recommends them in the workplace. We recommend them in the workplace (and we also sell them). The reality is that there is more to an AED program than simply purchasing a unit, and some workplaces might be better off spending money on other loss-prevention measures - but many workplaces are overdue for this life-safety device.

INTERESTING TO NOTE:

National Safety Council's Safety & Health Magazine (OCT 03 -pg 33) presents a list of fatalities by state. Interesting to see that PA had the 4th highest number of deaths in 2002 at 146 and the 6th highest number of work-comp cases reported. GA data is not available but judging from 2001, they would move PA to the fifth position for deaths.

BUT...PA was THE highest for compensation paid out (\$2.44 Billion in 2001). Also see article on page 46 - Great Author.

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SLIP RESISTANCE CAN BE DIRECTIONAL

I had the opportunity to do a slip-test for a hardwood decking product. The product did well in testing, but it offered more slip-resistance cross-grain than it did with the grain. Something I would expect...and the testing proved it out. Solution: One way signs? - I'm kidding!

I recently had someone interested in the Mark II testing (ASTM 1677) - While I can do this test and it is scientifically valid, I prefer the ASTM 1679 (English XL). The results between the two test methods will be similar...but the ASTM 1679 approximates human ambulation in that the heel-strike area is similar to that of a walking individual. The Mark II machine has a much larger surface pad. This might be beneficial when testing a very non-homogenous surface, in that few measurements could be taken, whereas with the English XL system, many more tests need to be performed to obtain an average result. The benefit here is that the English XL could discern variations in the surface slip-resistance that a Mark II may not. If slips and falls are concerns in your workplace, we can do a facility review for surfaces and slip control opportunities.

SAFETY COMMITTEE CERTIFICATION:

If your safety committee is certified in PA or attempting to be, remember:

- 1) EVERY member must be trained ANNUALLY by an accident and illness prevention provider as defined by the state.
- 2) The training must include at least these topics: a) Hazard Identification & Control, b) Accident Investigation, c) Committee Operations. I've seen this training delivered in one hour. I won't do less than 4 hours on these topics, because anything less won't cover the material adequately. I don't know if the state is considering the time frame of the training, but they should.

REMEMBER: WE OFFER TO ALL OF OUR CUSTOMERS AND POTENTIAL CUSTOMERS LIMITED FREE CONSULTATIONS. GOT A QUESTION? WANT A PEER TO BALANCE AN IDEA OFF OF? GOT A BURNING OSHA QUESTION? E-MAIL, PHONE, or FAX.

UPCOMING TRAINING PROGRAMS presented by HCSL:

OSHA 10 Hour General Industry Course at High Industries, Inc. Oct 20 to 21. Great for safety committee members, supervisors, everyone! Call for more information on register on-line: www.highsafety.com

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Rough Terrain Forklift Training Course November 11 (8-12) Course at ABC in Manheim, PA. Call them directly for registration 717-653-8106.

OSHA Compliance - Checking the Crystal Ball Held at the Lancaster Chamber - November 6 from 8:30-12:30. Visit www.lcci.com or call them at 717-397-3531.

A Pragmatic Approach to Mold Remediation November 18 4PM to 6PM. Delaware Chamber of ABC. Call 302-328-1111 to inquire. Curt Wittman will be discussing some reasonable approaches to mold issues.

Mold Management November 12 at the *Baltimore* Engineering & Industrial Show. A second session on November 20 at the *Greater Philadelphia* Engineering and Maintenance Show. Call us for free tickets. We will have a booth at these shows as well.

OSHA 10 HOUR Construction (November 17 & 18) - 1PM to 6:30 PM each day. Held at ABC in Manheim, PA. Call them directly for reservations: 717-653-8106.



An Affiliate of High Industries, Inc.

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