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THE OSHEP NEWSLETTER

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The Occupational Safety and Health Education Program: Partnership for Safe, Secure & Healthy Workplaces

The new OSHEP newsletter is now formatted to provide the same great information in a neat, succinct and easy to follow format. Future editions will provide information on important developments on safety and health as well as upcoming events around the state and region.

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Around the Tri-State Area...

...PSEG Power, a subsidiary of New Jersey utility giant Public Service Enterprise Group, was cited for alleged unsafe working conditions at its Hamilton power plant.

...Fed-OSHA issues an additional \$304,000 in fines to a Rochester, N.Y.-based solid waste collection company, for allegedly failing to correct hazards cited during a 2008 inspection, and for new and recurring safety hazards.

...OSHA has proposed \$72,000 in fines against Sorbara Construction, a Lynnbrook, N.Y., concrete contractor, for alleged repeat and serious violations of safety standards after a worker fell at a New York City worksite.

...Following four recent fatal construction fall accidents in a week in southwestern Pennsylvania, the U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has called on construction companies to ensure employees working above six feet have the proper equipment to protect themselves from falls on the job. The first of the fatal falls happened on Friday, Aug. 15 and they ranged in heights from two to 13 stories.

...An electrical worker was killed on August 25 when the boom of a crane fell and crushed him on the Throgs Neck Bridge in New York. The worker, William Barnes, 48, of Port Washington, N.Y., was operating the hydraulic boom when a cable snapped. The boom pinned him against the vehicle the authorities said.

...The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) introduced a new construction safety training resource on September 3, 2009 for Spanish-speaking construction workers to community and faith-based leaders from Hudson Valley, New York City and Long Island in a presentation held at OSHA's Tarrytown Area Office. Diana Cortez, OSHA's regional Hispanic coordinator in New York Cortez and a representative from the Construction Safety Council, presented Focus 4 Hazards, a bilingual training kit that summarizes, in a clear, concise and easy-to-understand manner, the four major construction hazards and the steps workers can take to recognize, avoid and eliminate those hazards. Focus 4 Hazards was developed by the Construction Safety Council under an OSHA Susan Harwood Training Grant and is available in English, Spanish and Polish. More information is available at http://www.buildsafe.org/Focus_4.html.

...The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) also renewed a successful alliance with El Centro de Hospitalidad, a Staten Island, N.Y., faith-based, community organization, to provide safety and health training and information in Spanish to the island's low-wage workers, including construction laborers, landscapers, and factory and domestic workers.



The State of New Jersey is offering free vaccinations for the 1.3 million uninsured New Jerseyans at public health clinics in every county throughout the State. For those insured, the vaccine will be covered by their provider.

“Trainers who fail to provide appropriate safety training will pay a stiff price for their fraudulent behavior.”

Jordan Barab, Acting Assistant Secretary of OSHA, U.S. Department of Labor

OSHA Establishes “Watch List” for Outreach Trainers

In an effort to police Outreach Trainers, the U.S. Department of Labor OSHA has established an “Outreach Trainer Watch List.” This list will publish the names of outreach trainers who have had their trainer authorizations revoked or suspended. Acting Assistant Secretary of OSHA, Jordan Barab said, “Trainers who fail to provide appropriate safety training will pay a stiff price for their fraudulent behavior.”

One of the most recent investigations by OSHA in the Las Vegas area resulted in the

revocation of a trainer authorization for an instructor who was cited for infractions ranging from lying about time spent on different topics to inappropriately advising students not to contact OSHA about hazards. As with other cases, the instructor’s name was added to the Watch List.

The aim of the program is to ensure that more people are receiving quality OSHA training. For more information about the Watch List and the to view the list, visit the OSHA website on www.OSHA.gov.

Communication is key in preventing Work Related Musculoskeletal Disorders in healthcare

According to a report released by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and reported in the USA Today, the number of Hispanic workers who die on the job has risen by 76% since 1992, in spite of a decline in the number of overall workplace deaths.

Hispanic workers deaths increased from 533 in 1992 to 937 in 2007 while total fatalities in all jobs nationwide fell from 6,217 to 5,657. Last year, officials at the Occupational Safety and Health Administration office in Dallas investigated 50 Hispanic workplace deaths in Texas alone.

AFL-CIO Safety and health director Peg Seminario said the increased number of Hispanic workers can account for some of these deaths as statistics show that Hispanics represent 14% of the U.S. Labor force in 2007 as compared to only 10.4% in 1998. Data from the Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries show that Hispanics are overrepresented in jobs that are more risky such as in construction. This and the low-wage jobs of the Hispanic force explain why U.S. Labor Secretary Hilda Solis is particularly concerned about

the Hispanic force.

Language barrier may still be a concern especially for older generation Hispanics who were not able to receive education before entering the country. However, Secretary Solis told a national daily newspaper that there can be no excuse for negligence in protecting workers, not even language barrier. For some, discrimination is still a problem. Some employers have a negative outlook regarding Hispanic workers because of the latter’s illegal immigration issue.

In response to these sobering statistics, all of us in the safety and health community can take steps to eliminate this disparity. There are numerous resources available including the following:

- There are Hispanic/ESL coordinators from OSHA who can assist Hispanic workers.
- Publications such as posters and safety and health information bulletins have Spanish versions. Availability of information should not be a problem. OSHA’s website has a Spanish version as well as links to other Spanish-language resources which can be referred to.

ASSE launches new online Teen Workplace Safety Game

Teens face many hazards in the workplace today with the various jobs they may have in both their high school and college years. A lack of awareness regarding workplace hazards and how to protect yourself against them is more likely to lead to serious injuries or fatalities for teens in the workplace. In an effort to better reach teenage workers, the American Society of Safety Engineers (ASSE) has launched a new interactive online computer game called "Don't be a Zombie at Work." The game is offered free of charge and aims in helping the youth of today stay safer in the workplace.

The ASSE has assembled "Don't be a Zombie at Work" for its members and the public as a tool to prevent workplace injuries and fatalities. Some of the other free youth worker tools are "Be Safe at Work: Tips for Teens" as well as a brochure titled, "Important Workplace Safety Guide for Young Workers" and "Preventing Roadway Crashes." All of these resources are available by contacting ASSE by email at customerservice@asse.org or by calling 1-847-699-2929. These interactive tools are a

good way to have teens become interactive with safety because they are fun and easy to do. The game works by presenting different levels of safety and health hazards that the player encounters along the way that must be fixed. The new interactive game can also be accessed via the internet at www.dontbeazombieatwork.org.

These useful tools provided by the ASSE will hopefully help offset some alarming statistics regarding teens and the workplace. For example, in 2007 alone, a total of 117 teens under the age of 18 died from work-related injuries and another 77,000 teen workers were hurt seriously enough to end up in hospital emergency rooms. According to the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), nationally, about 230,000 teens suffer from work-related injuries, with most of these injuries occurring in the retail or service industries.

Federal Flu Guidelines for Employers

With the recent number of H1N1 (Swine Flu) cases growing by the day, three cabinet secretaries from HHS, DHS and Commerce announced the release of new federal guidelines for pandemic flu. Commerce's Gary Locke urged companies to be prepared for a "depleted workforce and to try to cut down on travel and face-to-face meetings. Kathleen Seblius, of Health and Human Services, is urging companies to encourage their employees to get vaccinated once it becomes available.

The Center for Disease Control is expecting a vaccine to be available sometime in the fall. There should not be a shortage of the vaccine but demand, at this point, can not be predicted. The first to receive the vaccine should be adults with underlying medical conditions, pregnant women, young people under the age of 25, health care workers and parents and guardians of infants.

As of today, there have been over 200,000 known cases of H1N1 and at least 2,000 dead world-

wide. Hopefully, the federal government and business community's proactive approach against the spread of this disease will transfer into the local communities and slow the spread of this virus.

The New Jersey State Department of Health and Senior Services offers real time information online regarding the Novel H1N1 virus and information and tools for preparedness and protection.

For weekly updates through the Influenza Surveillance System, visit the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services online at <http://www.state.nj.us/health/flu/fluinfo.shtml>.

For a free occupational safety and health seminar on infection control and disease prevention, contact OSHEP at 609-989-8289.



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The OSHEP Partnership

The New Jersey State AFL-CIO and the Rutgers University School of Management and Labor Relations work together to make workplaces safer and to enhance the skills of New Jersey's workforce. Funded by a grant from the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development, OSHEP partners with employers, local unions and other organizations to create an active "culture of safety" in workplaces through innovative training and education.

For more information on training and other services provided by OSHEP, please contact OSHEP at 609-989-8289 or visit us on the web at www.njafclcio.org/oshep.

We're on the Web!

<http://www.njafclcio.org/oshep>

The Disturbing Trend in Hispanic Worker Deaths

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compared to only 10.4% in 1998. Data from the Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries show that Hispanics are over-represented in jobs that are more risky such as in construction. This and the low-wage jobs of the Hispanic force explain why U.S. Labor Secretary Hilda Solis is particularly concerned about the Hispanic force.

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