Safety Update
2010 Ohio Safety Congress Saving lives … Saving money
Focus on Safety in Today's Economy

March 30 to April 1, 2010 at the Greater Columbus Convention Center

Join 5,000 safety-minded individuals at Ohio's largest and most established occupational safety and health event. Your competition will be there, and here's why you should, too.

- Reduce training costs for you and your employees at 150 educational sessions.
- Earn free CEUs for accreditation and BWC discount programs.
- Streamline your product purchases at the Expo Marketplace.
- Solve problems with peers at roundtable discussions.
- Discover solutions to real-life safety scenarios.
- Save on registration fees and out-of-state travel expenses.
- Fewer injuries mean lower workers' compensation costs.

Save the date. Save the money. It's worth your time. Registration begins February 1, 2010 at http://www.ohiobwc.com/employer/programs/safety/SHRegistration.asp

Safety Update
New BWC Requirement for Some Group Rated Employers

Safety is important in the workplace and now some Group Rated employers will be required by the BWC to provide an additional 2 hours of safety training beyond the normal day-to-day safety training in the workplace.

Reduce any additional expenses associated with this requirement by taking advantage of one-hour safety webinars offered through Frank Gates by safety professionals. Webinars available are Developing an Effective Safety Team Tuesday, September 22, 2009, 3:00-4:00 pm, OSHA and BWC Recordkeeping: Avoiding Costly Mistakes, Thursday, December 17, 2009, 3:00 -4:00 pm, What Safety Training Am I Required to Do? An Overview of Safety Training Requirements, Thursday, February 18, 2010, 3:00 – 4:00 pm, and Defining the Supervisor's Role in Safety Thursday, May 13, 2010, 3:00 – 4:00 pm.

Each Webinar is $40 and to register for any of these webinars – email your registration request to frankgates@safex.us or call 1-888-588-9848.

Safety Update
Ohio Safety Congress & Expo among options to meet new two-hour training requirement

Earlier this year, the Ohio Legislature passed OAC 4123-17-68, which requires group-rated employers who have experienced one or more claims in 2007 or 2008 to obtain two hours of safety training. We have many ways for employers to access the required training.

1. An employer can easily achieve the two hours of needed training at our Ohio Safety Congress & Expo, which will be held March 31 to April 1, 2010, in Columbus (registration will be available in February).

2. Our Division of Safety and Hygiene Training Center also provides half- and full-day courses to meet the requirement. You can view those courses offered and the dates and locations here.

3. In addition, we offer online safety courses that you can access by visiting bwclearningcenter.com. They include:

- Avoiding Back Trauma (2 hours);
- Getting Started with Safety (4 hours);
- Preventing Slips/ Trips /Falls (1 hour);
- Industrial Hygiene Overview (1 hour);
- Preventing Cuts and Lacerations (35 minutes);
- Ladder/Stairway Safety (45 minutes).

NOTE: Students must complete *all pages* of an online course and *pass the test* before they can print a certificate from the student transcript in the BWC Learning Center located in the "Personal Learning Center" online.

For more information about our online course offerings, visit ohiobwc.com or call 1-800-OHIOBWC.

Safety Update
Avoid costly claims through ongoing safety efforts

Continued success in the group rating program depends on your ability to avoid costly claims through ongoing safety efforts. The Nine Key Safety Program Parameters reflect a sound approach to workplace safety. The BWC recommends these steps to all employers in all rating plans. We urge you to consider how you can best integrate them into your work environment.

1. WRITTEN SAFETY AND HEALTH POLICY
2. VISIBLE ACTIVE SENIOR MANAGEMENT LEADERSHIP
3. EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT AND RECOGNITION
4. COMMUNICATIONS
5. ORIENTATION AND TRAINING FOR ALL EMPLOYEES
6. PUBLISHED SAFE WORK PRACTICES
7. ASSIGNING AN INDIVIDUAL THE ROLE OF COORDINATING SAFETY EFFORTS
8. EARLY RETURN-TO-WORK STRATEGIES
9. INTERNAL PROGRAM VERIFICATION

Contact your Frank Gates/Avizent Account Executive, Catherine Pletz ARM,AIC,AIS for further information at 800-777-4283, ext 25429.

Safety Update
Safety Resource

The BWC Division of Safety & Hygiene offers educational and safety consulting services at no additional cost. Safety & Hygiene consultants assist employers by identifying safety and health hazards and assessing safety programs and making recommendations for improvements. The Division of Safety & Hygiene provides the following services:

- Safety Audits
- Ergonomic Studies
- Industrial Hygiene Consulting
- Reference Materials, Videos, etc.
- Safety Publications
- Employee Safety Training
- Safety Councils
- All - Ohio Safety and Health Congress

For more information, call their toll free number at 1-800-OHIOBWC or 1-800-644-6292, ext. 22.

Courtesy of The Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation

Safety Update Reducing Workplace Eye Injuries

Every year, approximately 70,000 eye-related injuries occur in the workplace costing businesses nearly $450 billion, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). The BLS reports most workplace eye injuries can be related to the following:

- Flying/falling objects or sparks striking the eye – These cause over half of all eye accidents and many of the objects are smaller than a pinhead.
- Improper equipment operation –This is responsible for more than 30% of eye-related injuries.
- Contact with chemicals – This causes approximately 20% of eye injuries.
- Poor choice of eyewear – Although injured workers are often wearing eye protection, many are not wearing the right kind.
- Improper fit – This contributes to 94% of the injuries due to objects or chemicals going around or under eyewear.
- Lack of awareness – Many injured workers report that they did not realize eye protection was necessary in the situation.

The following tips, provided by Vision Care Holdings/The LASIK Vision Institute, can help ensure workplace safety:

- Require the usage of eye protection. In most jurisdictions, protective eyewear is now required by workplace safety organizations such as Occupational Safety Health Administration (OSHA). Some industries are constantly exposed to eye hazards where workers should be required to wear safety-rated eye protection, such as goggles, face shields, helmet visors, or protective eyeglasses.
- Provide the highest quality protection gear. Polycarbonate lenses, which are found in high-end protective eyewear, provide the best, extreme eye protection.
- Protective eyewear should be customizable and adjustable, allowing employees to fit eyewear to their own faces. Protective eyewear that fails to do this will cause employees to remove their eyewear to relieve discomfort.
- Keep employees' protective eyewear clean; and inspect them regularly for cracks, breaks, loose frames, or other deficiencies.
- Conduct regular safety seminars to remind workers that most industrial accidents, eye-related or not, occur because of carelessness more than anything else.
- Employ a medical professional who can provide immediate clinical aid to help prevent long-term eye injury.
- Conduct regular workplace assessments to determine if current eye protection measures are sufficient, and if there have been changes in the work environment that require new eye protection measures.

Safety Update
Slips and falls

Although statistics vary greatly by industry, falls account for 14 percent to 40 percent of non-fatal occupational injuries. Injuries related to falls are more common among older workers than younger workers. This could be caused by more falls among older workers or at least more significant injuries when falls do occur.

Tips:

- Maintain exterior walkways in good condition, free from cracks, raised areas, ice and snow accumulation, and provide good quality illumination.
- Wear snug-fitting footwear with firm non-slippery soles. Encourage workers to wear shoes with pliable soles and low heels. Shoes that tie are preferred.
- Ensure high-quality illumination for walking areas, particularly stairwells and other changes in elevation.
- Provide color contrast in stairs and other changes in elevation to draw attention to the change and to make the surface easier to identify.

Courtesy of BWC Division of Safety & Hygiene

Safety Update
Indoor Air Quality

IAQ investigations often begin with the measurement of temperature, relative humidity, and carbon dioxide in order to identify a potential source of the symptoms. For example, when inadequate amounts of fresh outdoor air are brought into a building, carbon dioxide concentrations may increase. When carbon dioxide concentrations increase, occupants become drowsy, get headaches or function at lower activity levels. The carbon dioxide is not the cause, but is an indicator that there may be other low levels of pollutants present.

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) reports that poor ventilation is an important factor in many sick building cases. Building ventilation involves bringing in outdoor air, conditioning and mixing the outdoor air with some portion of indoor air, distributing this mixed air throughout the building, and exhausting some portion of the indoor air outside. When one of these steps is inadequate or interrupted, the quality of indoor air may deteriorate.

Some of the areas that should be addressed include the following.

- HVAC system operation and maintenance: Regular maintenance and inspections are critical.
- Record keeping: Document the IAQ complaints and the steps taken to remedy each complaint.
- Pollution control: Identify indoor pollution sources such as chemical usage, blueprint copiers, kitchens and break rooms.
- Occupant activities: Eliminate practices which may restrict air movement.
- Building maintenance activities: Increase ventilation rates during painting, renovation, and pesticides use.
- Energy conservation: Temperature set backs and percentage of fresh air entering the system can significantly impact the air quality.

Contact your Frank Gates/Avizent Account Executive for further information at 1-800-777-4283.

Safety Update
Ergonomics

According to OSHA, poor job design has resulted in more than $20 billion in direct workers compensation cost. NIOSH estimates musculo-skeletal disorders affect several million workers each year with costs exceeding $100 billion. Annually, back injuries cost $60 billion to American companies and more than 1 million workers suffer back injuries. Although the total number of ergonomic injuries is declining, the costs continue to escalate. Depending on the severity of a particular injury, workers' compensation costs (medical, lost-time benefits, disability ratings, and potential litigation) could total $100,000 or more per injury.

Ergonomics includes restructuring or changing workplace conditions, to make the job easier, and reducing stressors that cause musculoskeletal disorders. In the area of materials handling and storing, ergonomic principles may require controls such as reducing the size or weight of the objects lifted, installing a mechanical lifting aid, or changing the height of the pallet or shelf.

Ergonomic related back injuries are one of the main concerns in any manual material handling tasks. These back injuries may occur from improper lifting or overexertion and poor working postures. Although no approach completely eliminates back injuries resulting from lifting materials, a substantial number of these back injuries can be prevented by implementing an effective ergonomics program and by training employees in appropriate lifting techniques.

Contact your Frank Gates/Avizent Account Executive for further information at 1-800-777-4283

Safety Update
Computer Workstation Ergonomics

One surprising fact is that musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) accounted for 30% of injuries and illnesses with days away from work. That number is quite high considering there are some minor changes that we can do with our own workstations to reduce MSDs. To help reduce the development of MSDs on the job, follow this 12 step evaluation.

1. Ensure that your lower back, lumbar spine is being supported.
2. Place the monitor directly in front of the user and have
the top inch of the screen at eye level.
3. Move either the light source or the monitor from glares or
reflections from windows and lights.
4. The monitor should be positioned in such a way that when sitting properly, there is no need for squinting or leaning forward to properly see the monitor screen.
5. Feet should be rested firmly on the floor. If the chair and/or desk will not adjust, a foot stool may be used to get the feet in the proper position.
6. Use document holders when working extensively from documents to the screen. This will reduce leaning or twisting of the neck.
7. Wrists need to be in-line with the forearm when using the mouse or keyboard. This will reduce wrist strain.
8. The elbows should form a 90 º angle when using the keyboard and mouse. The shoulders should be at a relaxed positioned and elbows should not be positioned out from the body.
9. The monitor and keyboard should be directly in-front of the user. There should be a straight line when moving from the user's nose past the keyboard and onto the monitor.
10.The keyboard should be tilted back and NOT toward the user, this will reduce the wrist angle.
11.When working at a computer station, it is important to take mini-breaks. Approximately 30 seconds to two minutes is enough to rejuvenate the musculoskeletal system.
12. Stretch the neck, arms, back and legs to loosen up tight or tired muscles.

Ask for a formal ergonomic assessment if the above steps do not relieve the strain placed on the body during computer workstation responsibilities. For further information to identify and prevent these types of injuries in your workplace, contact the Frank Gates/Safe X Safety Hotline at 1-888-588-9848 or our Ask a professional email: frankgates@safex.us

Safety Update
Is Your Building Sick?
6 Areas to monitor for Indoor Air Quality

A committee of the World Health Organization estimates that as many as 30 percent of new or remodeled buildings may have unusually high rates of sick building complaints. Sick building complaints refer to situations without a clear identifiable cause. The symptoms are fairly general, such as dry mucous membranes and eye, nose, and throat irritation. These disorders lead to increased employee sick days and reduced work efficiency, not to mention lower morale. IAQ investigations often begin with the measurement of temperature, relative humidity, and carbon dioxide in order to identify a potential source of the symptoms. For example, when inadequate amounts of fresh outdoor air are brought into a building, carbon dioxide (a gas that is produced when people exhale) concentrations may increase. When carbon dioxide concentrations increase, occupants often become drowsy, get headaches, or function at lower activity levels. The carbon dioxide is not the cause of these symptoms, but is an indicator that there may be other low levels of pollutants present. The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) reports that poor ventilation is an important factor in many sick building cases. Building ventilation involves bringing in outdoor air, conditioning and mixing the outdoor air with some portion of indoor air, distributing this mixed air throughout the building, and exhausting some portion of the indoor air outside. When one of these steps is inadequate or interrupted, the quality of indoor air may deteriorate. The EPA recommends that building managers and occupants or tenants work together to improve and maintain indoor air quality. Some of the areas that should be addressed include the following;

- HVAC system operation and maintenance: Operate the ventilation system in a manner consistent with its design. Regular maintenance and inspections are critical. Include checking louvers that are computer controlled.
- Record keeping: Maintain records of all HVAC system problems, maintenance and inspection activities. Document the IAQ complaints and the steps taken to remedy each complaint. These records may be useful to the IAQ investigator in solving future problems.
- Pollution control: Identify indoor pollution sources such as chemical usage, blueprint copiers, kitchens and break rooms. Source removal or special ventilation techniques in these areas may be appropriate.
- Occupant activities: Eliminate practices which may restrict air movement such as furniture placement relative to air vents and installation of new offices without relocating HVAC.
- Building maintenance activities: Increase ventilation rates during painting, renovation, and pesticides use. If possible, schedule these activities when they are less likely to impact building occupants.
- Energy conservation: Reexamine energy conservation practices with regard to indoor air quality considerations, employee health, and productivity costs. Temperature set backs and percentage of fresh air entering the system can significantly impact the air quality.

For further information to identify and prevent these types of injuries in your workplace, contact the Frank Gates/Safe X Safety Hotline at 1-888-588-9848 or our Ask a professional email: frankgates@safex.us.

Safety Update
Repetitive Motion

Repetitive motion injuries are the result of microscopic tears in tissue as a result of stress and strain on some part of the body from motion that is repetitive in nature. When the body is unable to repair these tears as quickly as they are being produced, swelling occurs. The swelling will consequently result in pain. If untreated, the symptoms will progressively worsen and possibly cause a complete loss of function in the affected area all together. Some of common injuries are carpal tunnel syndrome, bursitis and tendinitis.

Carpal tunnel Prevention tips:
- Short, frequent breaks from work causing repetitive wrist motions. Perform relaxation exercises.
- Stand up and move around whenever you feel symptoms beginning.

Tendinitis and bursitis Prevention tips:
- Be sure to properly warm-up and cool-down for strenuous work activities
- Avoid activities that make your condition flare up until healed
- Practice range of motion exercises to ensure there will be little to no decrease in function
- Use immobilization devices to decrease the strain on the affected tendon.

For further information to identify and prevent these types of injuries in your workplace, contact the Frank Gates/Safe X Safety Hotline at 1-888-588-9848 or our Ask a professional email: frankgates@safex.us.

Safety Update
Office Fires

One result of the recent trend toward open office environments is that smoke from office fires is not contained or isolated as effectively as in less open designs. Open office designs allows smoke to spread quickly and the incorporation of many synthetic and other combustible material in office fixtures (such as furniture, rugs, drapes, plastic wastebaskets, and vinyl covered walls) often makes "smoky" fires. In addition to being smoky, many synthetic materials can emit toxic materials during a fire. For example, cyanide can be emitted from urethane which is commonly used in upholstery stuffing. Most burning materials can emit carbon monoxide. Inhalation of these toxic materials can severely hamper an office worker's chances of getting out of a fire in time. This makes it imperative for office workers to recognize the signal to evacuate their work area and know how to exit in an expedient manner.

For emergency evacuation, the use of floor plans or workplace maps that clearly show the emergency escape routes and safe or refuge areas should be posted. All employees must understand what actions they are to take in the work area and assemble in a safe zone. All new employees should discuss how they should respond to emergencies with their supervisors shortly after starting work and whenever their responsibilities under the plan change.

Courtesy of Office of Health and Safety, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

For further information to identify and prevent these types of injuries in your workplace, contact the Frank Gates/Safe X Safety Hotline at 1-888-588-9848 or our Ask a professional email: frankgates@safex.us.

Safety Update
Labeling of Chemicals

The United States and many other countries have developed a Globally Harmonized System for the Classification and Labeling of Chemicals (GHS). The purpose of the GHS is to promote common, consistent criteria for classifying chemicals according to their health, physical and environmental hazards, and to encourage the use of compatible hazard labels, material safety data sheets for workers, and other hazard communication information based on the resulting classifications. By promoting common, consistent criteria for classifying chemicals and

developing compatible labeling and safety data sheets, the Globally Harmonized System is intended to enhance public health and environmental protection, as well as reduce barriers to trade. Countries lacking systems for hazard classification and labeling are to adopt the GHS as the fundamental basis for national policies for the sound management of chemicals; countries that already have systems will align them with GHS

GHS hazard classification criteria have been adopted by consensus for physical hazards (flammability, explosivity, etc.) and key health and environmental effects, including: acute toxicity, carcinogenicity, germ cell mutagenicity, reproductive/developmental toxicity, respiratory and skin sensitization, skin and eye irritation/corrosion, target organ/systemic toxicity, and aquatic toxicity. Standardized label elements (symbols, signal words and hazard statements) for each of these hazard classes have been developed and agreed, along with a standard format and approach to presentation of GHS information in safety data sheets. The GHS document also includes guidance on other issues relevant to implementation of the system, including product identifiers, confidential business information, and precedence of hazards.(EPA). For more information visit:
http://www.epa.gov/oppfead1/international/globalharmon.htm#ghs2

For further information to identify and prevent chemical exposure types of injuries in your workplace, contact the Frank Gates/Safe X Safety Hotline at 1-888-588-9848 or our Ask a professional email: frankgates@safex.us

Safety Update
Stress at Work

According to research, the percentage of Americans who are stressed at work is high, and it's only getting higher. According to the CDC's National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health, studies have found the number of Americans who are "extremely stressed at work" range between 29% to 40%.

Unfortunately, work stress has significant health consequences that range from the relatively benign -- more colds and flu -- to the more serious, heart disease and metabolic syndrome. Because stress at work is so common, finding a low-stress job may be difficult or impossible for many people. A more realistic choice would be to simply adopt more effective strategies to reduce stress at work. Here are some stress management techniques to try.

1. Start Your Day Off Right. If you start off the day with good nutrition, proper planning, and a positive attitude, you may find the stress of the workplace rolling off your back more easily.

2. Be Clear on Requirements. One of the factors that contributes to job burnout is unclear requirements. If you don't know exactly what's expected of you, or if the requirements keep changing with little notice, you may find yourself much more stressed than necessary. It may help to have a talk with your supervisor and go over expectations, and strategies for meeting them. This can relieve stress for both of you!

3. Stay Away From Conflict. It's a good idea to avoid conflict at work as much as possible. That means don't gossip, don't share too many of your personal opinions about religion and politics, and try to steer clear of colorful office humor. Try to avoid those people at work who don't work well with others.

4. Stay Organized. Even if you're a naturally disorganized person, planning ahead to stay organized can greatly decrease stress at work. Being organized with your time means less rushing in the morning to avoid being late and rushing to get out at the end of the day.

5. Be Comfortable. Another surprising stressor at work is physical discomfort. You may not notice the stress you experience when you're in an uncomfortable chair for a few minutes or office noise can be distracting and cause low-grade frustration. Do what you can to ensure that you're working in a quiet, comfortable and soothing workspace.

6. Forget Multitasking. Multitasking was once heralded as a fantastic way to maximize one's time and get more done in a day. Then people started realizing that when they had a phone in their ear and were making calculations at the same time, their speed and accuracy (not to mention sanity) suffered.

7. Walk at Lunch. Many people are feeling ill effects from leading a sedentary lifestyle. One way you can combat that, and manage stress at work at the same time, is to get some exercise during your lunch break and perhaps

take short exercise breaks throughout the day. This can help you blow off steam, lift your mood, and get into better shape.

8. Keep Perfectionism In Check. Being a high achiever can help you feel good about yourself and excel at work. Being a perfectionist, on the other hand, can drive you and the people around you a little nuts. Especially in busy, fast-paced jobs, you may not be able to do everything perfectly.

9. Listen to Music on the Drive Home. Listening to music brings many benefits, and can offer an effective way to relieve stress after work. It can make you less stressed when you get home, and more prepared to interact with the people in your life.

Source: Stress…At Work. NIOSH Publication No 99-101.

For further information to identify and prevent chemical exposure types of injuries in your workplace, contact the Frank Gates/Safe X Safety Hotline at 1-888-588-9848 or our Ask a professional email: frankgates@safex.us