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Safe Work Sound Business Award



Jeff Holmes, Administrator, Algoma Health Unit accepts the Award.

Health & Safety Professionals Inc. is proud to have nominated the Algoma Health Unit for this year's Safe Work Sound Business Award in honour of Don Watson. This award recognizes businesses using safe work management systems, participating in workplace and/or community injury prevention programs, and having exceptionally good injury frequency and injury severity performances. The Sault Ste. Marie Safe Communities Partnership sponsors this award which was presented on October

20, 2005 as the Sault Chamber of Commerce celebrated Business Excellence at their 116th annual meeting.

Over the last year, the Algoma Health Unit (AHU) has worked with Health and Safety Professionals Inc. to update its Health, Safety, and Wellness System. The Algoma Health Unit is in the process of including the entire system on its intranet, where it will be available to all employees form any work station.

AHU staff members have spent considerable time identifying significant and secondary hazards in the workplace. Orientation and ongoing staff training will be based on these findings.

The AHU demonstrates forward thinking and regard for safety in the workplace through leading innovations that promote a safe work environment. An on-line risk assessment is being developed which will enable staff to research the work they are planning to undertake and identify any risks and control measures associated with it. Risk assessments will be kept on file electronically for due diligence, or may be sent to management for immediate review, if concerns are identified. Summary and detailed reporting features with exporting capabilities will also be incorporated into this risk assessment system to provide valuable information to staff, managers, and Board members in a variety of ways and in a time efficient manner. Injury and illness statistics will be generated from the on-line database and will be based on the significant and secondary hazards identified. This information will assist the Algoma Health Unit with ongoing occupational health and safety programming. Policies and procedures will be gathered electronically in this system and will be located easily by use of a search tool. That is, key words entered by the user will produce a list of policies and procedures for viewing or printing, as desired.

Another exciting component of the AHU's strategy for health and safety is its affiliation with DataTel Inc. The Algoma Health Unit monitors the safety of all its field employees in real-time. Staff members, who are on the road throughout the day, sign in and out with TeleSafety using their standard issue mobile phones or satellite phones. If, for any reason, the staff member does not sign out of the system at the specified time, procedures are in place to assess the situation, and ensure that the employee is safe. These procedures range from phoning the last known place of contact to communicating with emergency services.

With its progressive approach and adherence to policies and procedures, the AHU reflects the sound business practices recognized by Health & Safety Professionals Inc.

Congratulations Algoma Health Unit!

By Louise Caicco Tett, RN, BScN
President, HSPI

LEGISLATION: WSIB RELEASES NEW INJURY/DISEASE REPORTING FORM

FORM 7 - EMPLOYER'S REPORT OF INJURY/DISEASE. The Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) has released a newly revised **FORM 7** to be used by employers to report workplace injuries and illnesses. Features include:

- simpler to use and understand
- check boxes to assist in documenting the part of body injured, and the type of activity that resulted in the injury
- larger area in which to describe what happened to cause the injury
- collects more complete earnings information
- time saving for both employers and WSIB staff by reducing the number of follow-up calls required to make entitlement decisions and pay benefits appropriately
- better aligned with the Health Professional's Report (Form 8)
- better aligned with the Worker's Report of Injury/Disease (Form 6)
- information can be cross-referenced and reviewed more easily

If an employer does not comply with the reporting requirements, a fine of \$250 may be imposed for each of four offences:

- Late reporting
- Incomplete reporting
- Not reporting on a pre-approved version of the form
- Failing to provide a copy of the Form 7 to the worker

In addition, under provincial law, employers could be subject to a fine of \$25,000 or up to 6 months in jail, or both; and \$100,000 for corporations.

Although the form is available on the WSIB web site (see address below), and can be completed on your office computer, it must be mailed or faxed after completion. Print a copy for your files, before signing off, or the information will be lost.

In addition, a new and revised **Form 6 (WORKER'S REPORT OF INJURY/DISEASE)** was issued at the same time as the Form 7. A detailed guide, for both employers and workers, is available on the web site to assist in its completion.

Form 7 <http://www.wsib.on.ca/wsib/wsibsite.nsf/LookupFiles/DownloadableFileReportofInjuryForm7/File/Form7.pdf> Guide <http://www.wsib.on.ca/wsib/wopm.nsf/Public/150102>

By Patricia V. Story, RN, DOH, COHN(C), HSPI Associate

Cooling Tower Caused Outbreak

A rooftop cooling tower has been identified as the source of the Legionnaires' Disease outbreak at Seven Oaks Home for the Aged. Twenty residents died and 127 people became ill from the outbreak that began September 25. Toronto public health officials report that lab tests have showed that the air conditioning cooling tower on the roof of Seven Oaks contained the same legionella bacterium found in samples taken from residents. An air intake is located near the cooling tower. Droplets containing the bacterium were spread through the home by the air handling system. The disease then affected a vulnerable population of elderly residents as well as staff and visitors. The cooling tower had been turned off since October 6, the day Legionnaires' was identified as the cause of the outbreak. (Source: Canadian Occupational Health and Safety News, Oct 31, 2005 Vol.28, No. 43).

It is the responsibility of employers to be knowledgeable about the hazards caused by Legionella bacteria and to put in place necessary precautions to protect workers. Legionnaires' disease is a form of pneumonia caused by Legionella bacteria and is most often contracted by breathing in contaminated mist from warm water sources.

Employers must ensure that appropriate preventive maintenance programs are in place to prevent workplace health hazards arising from Legionella bacteria. In the event contamination takes place resulting in a hazard to workers, remediation strategies and worker protection measures must be implemented.

Note: Legionnaires' Disease is discussed in HSPI's course, BIOLOGICAL HAZARDS IN THE WORKPLACE ~ This four-hour module assists participants to identify the main types of biohazardous agents in the workplace, and their related health effects. The concepts of recognition, assessment and control of biological hazards are reviewed and standard precautions are outlined.

By Lorena Bressan, RN, BScN, BSc, HSPI Associate

DID YOU KNOW?

Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) to be Extended to Protect Agricultural Workers.

Chris Bentley, Minister of Labour (MOL) and Steve Peters, Minister of Agriculture and Food announced on June 29, 2005, that the Ontario Government in a effort to provide better protection for the province's agriculture workers were extending the OHSA to include agriculture. Farmers and farm workers in Ontario have been exempt from the OH&S Act, making this province one of the few jurisdictions in North America with such an exemption for agricultural workers. This extension of coverage will come into effect on June 30, 2006. This coverage will provide safer working conditions and better protection for farm employers and employees, both domestic and foreign. In addition, the new regulation will help raise awareness of the importance of health and safety on the owner-operated farms. By Sandy Boudah, HSPI Associate

New Regulation Respecting Asbestos on Construction Projects

According to the Ministry of Labour, the government has made a new regulation (O.Reg. 278/05), which revoked and replaced O. Reg. 838. The new regulation updates safe work measures and procedures and enhances respiratory protection for workers who may encounter asbestos in the course of their work. The new regulation came into effect on November 1, 2005. by Lorena Bressan, RN, BScN, BSc, HSPI Associate

WELLNESS HEALTH TIP

GOOD PRACTICE ~ 5 MINUTE BREAK

People who do continuous, intensive computer work, such as data entry, for prolonged periods during a shift are at increased risk of developing a number of health problems. These include: visual fatigue, headaches, upper limb musculoskeletal injuries (e.g., carpal tunnel syndrome), and back pain.

(Further information on these issues can be found in the Canadian Standards Association's [Guideline on Office Ergonomics](#) (Z412 00) or in the Ministry of Labour guideline, [Computer Ergonomics: Workstation Layout and Lighting](#) dated September 2004).

Where the computer work is intensive, (i.e. **continuous keyboarding for an hour or longer, uninterrupted by other activities**), good workstation design should be augmented by having the operator take a 5-minute break away from the computer operation in each hour:

- ~ 5 minute breaks should not be accumulated;
- ~ short, frequent breaks are much more effective in preventing excessive injury than longer, less frequent breaks; and
- ~ 5-minute break doing other work, not involving a computer or a full break which the operator does not do alternative work is recommended.

Note: In facilities governed by the Regulation for Health Care and Residential Facilities, this is required by section 24. Although the duration and frequency of computer rest breaks are not specified in the regulations for other sectors, employers do have the general duty to take every reasonable precaution in the circumstances for the protection of workers under the [Occupational Health and Safety Act](#).

By Lorena Bressan, RN, BScN, BSc, HSPI Associate

FINES: Ministry of Labour

Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board fined \$75,000 for health and safety violation

THUNDER BAY, Ont. – on Sept. 16, 2005, The Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board, which operates 22 schools in the Thunder Bay area, was fined \$75,000 for a violation of the Occupational Health and Safety Act that resulted in serious injuries to an employee.

On November 9, 2004, a custodian was plugging in a vacuum cleaner into an electrical outlet in a classroom when the custodian saw an arc of electricity and heard a crackly noise. An electrical shock rendered the custodian unconscious. A Ministry of Labour investigation found the electrical outlet was damaged and not functioning properly at the time of the incident. The custodian did not normally work at the school, but had been called in to replace a worker. The custodian did not receive any permanent injuries as a result of receiving the shock. Two other people had also previously received shocks from the same outlet. The incident occurred at St. Paul's school at 539 Grenville Avenue in Thunder Bay.

The Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board pleaded guilty, as an employer, to failing to ensure the electrical outlet was maintained in good condition. This was contrary to Section 25(1)(b) of the act.

In addition, the court imposed a 25-per-cent victim fine surcharge, as required by the Provincial Offences Act. The surcharge is credited to a special provincial government fund to assist victims of crime.

SUPERIOR HEALTH & SAFETY CONFERENCE

Best Western, Gr. Northern Rd.,
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Come visit us at our booth!
Health & Safety Professionals Inc.

MAY 9 & 10, 2006

Learn More - Be Prepared Today for Tomorrow

2006 WINTER

TRAINING SCHEDULE

Basic Certification Training

January 24 - 26
 Feb 28, March 1, 2
 April 4 - 6

Managing Organizational Change

January 17

Heat Stress & Cold Stress Emergency Preparedness

February 7

Working At Heights, WHMIS

February 8

Hiring a Safe Contractor

Feb 9

Stress in the Workplace

Feb 15

Confined Spaces Lockout of Machinery & Equipment/Safe Machine Guarding

Feb 21

Prevention of Musculoskeletal Injury

Feb 22

Violence in the Workplace Slips, Trips & Falls

Feb 23

Noise in the Workplace

March 7

*Our full 2006 schedule is posted at
www.hspinc.ca. In-house sessions are also
 available, please contact us.*

Where is it on the Web?

Algoma Health Unit: visit the AHU website at www.ahu.on.ca

Legionnaires' Disease – for more information, refer to the following sites:

Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS)

www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/diseases/legion.html

Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dbmd/diseaseinfo/legionellosis_g.htm

Ministry of Labour (MOL)

www.labour.gov.on.ca (health and safety tab/publications/workplace health and safety guidelines-Legionella)

Farm Safety: additional information

can be found at www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/news/2005/05-83.html or www.farmsafety.ca

New Regulation Respecting Asbestos on Construction Projects and Rest Breaks for Computer Operators:

www.labour.gov.on.ca (health and safety tab)

PUBLICATION INFORMATION

This newsletter is intended as an information overview of health and safety issues. While we strive to publish accurate information, the contents of this publication are not intended as legal or professional advice.

The information and recommendations contained in Safety In Action have been compiled from sources believed to be reliable. However, HSPi makes no guarantee as to, and assumes no responsibility for, the correctness, sufficiency or completeness of such information or recommendations. Other or additional safety measures may be required under particular circumstances.

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COMPANY INFORMATION

Health and Safety Professionals Inc. is a Northern Ontario consulting and training firm. We are a WSIB approved provider of Basic Certification training; as well, our Supervisor Training Program meets Algoma Steel's requirements for Construction Supervision.

We are committed to professionalism; excellence; timely and efficient service and customer satisfaction.

